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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

As an avid cyclist, and a 20-plus year Jackson resident, I would like to offer my thoughts on the BTNF E-Bike EA. I realize this is a contentious issue. When Class 1 full-suspension mountain E-bikes (eMTBs), were first introduced, I was opposed to their use on local trails. Now, with age, cancer, and multiple joint replacements, I feel that eMTBs belong on our trails.

1. There is a debate about the Class of eMTBs that should be allowed. I would love to see this restricted to Class 1 bikes, but honestly it does not really matter; there are recognition issues, and labeling issues. What does matter, is the speed and courtesy of all riders. An advanced rider on a traditional bike carrying excessive speed is every bit as dangerous as an eMTB. However, all bikes MUST have operable pedals; therefore, excluding e-motorcycles such as Surons.

2. The current trails available to eMTBs is insufficient. New trails must be constructed including Munger Mountain, Horsetail/Ditch Creek, Shadow Mountain, and Mosquito Creek as mentioned in the EA with the trails in wildlife restricted areas open from June 15-October 31. I do not believe building additional trails addresses the need. Trails from Teton Pass and possibly Cache Creek need to be opened to eMTBs.

3. One way to ease eMTB conflicts is to adopt an odd-even system like Salt Lake City's Mill Creek Canyon trail system. Bikes are only allowed on even-numbered days. This system could be applied to eMTBs on some trails within the BTNF.

4. Another approach is to allow riders to apply for exemptions based on age/disability. The EA states, "Current policy does not permit the Forest Service to offer exemptions or permit e-bike use for individuals that have physical limitations or are above a certain age. This is due to medical privacy and anti-discrimination laws." The Moab BLM District office is currently issuing such permits. Individuals must submit a letter explaining their limitations, and must present such certification on demand. I realize that USFS is USDA and BLM is DOI, but there should be some accommodations for riders who are not in need of full adaptive technology.

5. Honestly, all pedal bicycles should be allowed. The issues are truly excessive speed, yielding trail, and courtesy.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,

Ann Mattson, Ph.D.