

Comments Received as of January 13, 2022:

“For many years I rode my bike in the ACFL trails. As I aged I gave up trail riding and only rode on the road. That was becoming too difficult also until I bought an ebike two years ago. Now I ride anytime it is above 40 degrees and not raining. At 73 I hope I can still ride 3-4 more years. If I had bought a trail ebike I think could have ridden the trails for a couple more years. I strongly urge you to allow ebikes on the trails just like any trail bike.”

~John Pinquoch

“E bikes are motorized and they should follow the same rules as other motorized vehicles in the ACFL.”

~ Rick Haley

“I wish to note that activity in the ACFL is increasing significantly. There is limited capacity to handle this. Motorized activity has substantially greater impact than human feet. Providing ever greater access for heavier usage is not healthy for the long term or even in the near future. There have already been choices made for what areas will be open for more intense activity. The claim that it would be nice for some to have greater access for their particular activity does not bode well for the health of the system. For example, some would like (and have in fact built) down hill bike tracks. Motors on the lakes? Drones are entertainment for many. Where is the best place to set limits?”

~Dan Senour

“I am concerned with allowing Ebikes on trails. As an older woman who hikes the trails regularly, I already see the bikes using all trails even the restricted trails. They come fast and many do not slow for hikers. I have wound up on my butt in the bushes at the edge of a trail a few times. To add bikes that do more damage and can go faster is not a good idea. It is unsafe and damaging to the environment.”

~Jolynn Lucas

“We had a good Moto year last season. Lots of users, and not much wear and tear, despite there being much more use than previous seasons. The trails were in great shape and Steve did a superb job staying on top of the maintenance. During the season, I met quite a few new riders, and reconnected with some of the older ones. I crossed paths with a family out on trials bikes. Dad and two young ones. The kids had electric bikes and the dad was on a gas powered machine. I had to let him know that two-strokes are prohibited in the ACFL and he was quite disappointed. He loves the trails and, as do I, thinks they are a great place for young riders to learn the ropes in a safe yet challenging way. That said, I did run across quite a few riders over the course of the season riding two-stroke bikes and advised them of the rules. All were on new (2021) machines. The modern two strokes are fuel injected and do not have the “blue smoke trail” or noise the older carbureted models burning pre-mixed fuel have. These riders appealed to me to ask for a reconsideration of the ban. Not removing it, but limiting it to ONLY 2019 and later model bikes. This is the base year that modern two-stroke engines went to Fuel Injection.

By making it late model only, the benefits of less fuel consumption, and thus less pollutants, could be realized by recognizing the Fuel Injected bikes and the members of the community who use them. These bikes are also quite a bit lighter than four-stroke bikes and would result in minimally less wear on the trails. I was also impressed by how quiet and docile these machine were as the riders parted ways with me. Allowing use of modern two-strokes, limited to 300 cc displacement would allow many of the members of the community access to the trails they are currently not enjoying because of their choice of motorcycles.

E-bikes: I know the e-bike is contentious with some of the community members. However, I've got friends with the bikes who have been long-time members of the MTB community. They are getting older and use the bikes to allow them to ride with the younger folks. The e-bikes also let them get out on the trails for longer periods of time. It's great for their health and well being. They all have smiles on and seem "stoked" to be out on the trails. I have seen no more wear on the trails when I ride MTB with these folks or cross paths with other riders on e-bikes. These e-bikes have no more impact on the trails than a human-powered bike does despite what anti-ebikers say. I've seen aggressive and abusive riders on human-powered bikes destroy trails. There are always going to be folks who don't respect the land, yet we should not exclude everyone because of a few bad apples.

I recommend NO changes in policy or restrictions placed on to this group of the MTB community. In fact, I'd encourage it, so the folks who want to get out and ride our beautiful, challenging terrain have a chance to do so."

~John Meehan

"My preference is to keep the E-bikes on the motorcycle designated trails rather than on the hiker and mountain bike trails.

- As it is, I find it disconcerting to share the hiking trails with mountain bikes. The mountain bikers, though only human-powered, come up on us hikers very suddenly and often scare the willies out of us. I have occasionally, however, come across young mountain bikers who are extremely polite and announce their presence, especially when coming up from behind. I have very much appreciated such interactions.
- The mountain bikers require a lot of skill to use the ACFL trails and in most cases, are likely to have greater control over their bikes than the E-bikers, especially in the case of hiker and E-biker interactions. E-bikes are larger and heavier than mountain bikes. This is critical in the light of the fact that most of the ACFL trails are very narrow, often steep, and there is not a lot of room for maneuvering on the trails.
- Heavier E-bikes are likely to tear up the trails more than the mountain bikes currently do.

For hiker safety, I would prefer to have E-bikes on the same trails as the motorcycles and not on the trails shared by hikers and mountain bikers."

~Heidi Rooks

"I read with interest the article regarding reclassifying ebikes for use in the Forest Lands. As a frequent hiker I am in strong opposition to allowing more access to ebikes. Any use of motorized vehicles should be the same classification. It should be noted that there are now electric dirt bikes. Would we then allow those for use on bike trails just because the motor is not internal combustion? What would keep someone from installing a larger electric motor on a bicycle frame as has been done with gas motors already? It should be also noted that some today's Mountain bikes have larger tires than the early offroad motorcycles I rode in the '60s. Additionally, with low gear ratio to the rear wheel and a 200+ pound rider wheel slippage is greater on soft inclines than the Trials style Motorcycles we used to ride. We would receive extra points in competition for not leaving tracks or dislodging rocks or soil. Not so with today's bike races which have become more like Motocross than Trials riding. Today's Mountain Bikers take pleasure in skidding and jumping over roots and hills as well as skidding over downhill courses. This can be evidenced in the way trails are being eroded and muddied where they had not been 5-10 years ago. I will admit there are some very courteous riders on our trails however there are a number who are anything but. We have been hit several times by mountain bikes speeding along the trails, splattered by mud and disrupted by the sound of "coming through" or "on your left" as 4-6 bikes speed by with no intention of slowing or waiting for us to move off the trail. In all I am in favor of keeping the trails classified as Horse/ Motorized/ Bicycles/ and hikers. If anything were to change, I would suggest removing some of the bicycle access to trails that have not been graveled or in some way stabilized. There is an inherent value in the peacefulness of the Forest Lands for quiet walks and an escape from our already hectic world. This solace is already being threatened by bicycles and any further change could lead to devaluing what we in Anacortes consider one of our greatest treasures."

~David Lucas

"I enjoy walking in the Anacortes Forestlands for peaceful and quiet reflection, surrounded by nature. I'm not in favor of increasing E-bike accessibility therein. Though quieter than motorbikes, they are still motorised and are much heavier than regular bicycles. Despite being currently limited to Spring thru Fall months, they will still have a serious impact on the trail surfaces."

~Wendy Kendrick

"The following are my comments regarding allowing additional access to e-bikers in the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. It is my understanding that e-bikes are currently classified as motorcycles and have access to 15 miles of the approximately 50 miles of forest lands. I learned a lot about the different classes of e-bikes at the January 6, meeting of the Forest Advisory Board. Some speakers suggested limiting additional forest land access to Class 1 e-bikes. It was later said that it would be impossible to enforce that limitation. I agree with this. If additional access is allowed, it will be to all e-bike classes and riders regardless of the rule or their ability. Allowing e-bikes additional access to trails not earlier deemed safe for motorized access will increase liability from possible accidents and injuries to the riders and hikers. We are so lucky to have acres of paradise within our city limits for locals and visitors to enjoy. One of the feelings I love about hiking the forest lands is the peace and quiet that you can get within a few steps of entering this paradise. It is meditative, calming, centering it gives us a

connection with the earth and those who came before us. It is our responsibility as stewards of the land to preserve this to the best of our ability for those who will come after us. I especially love seeing families with small children introducing them to the wonders of nature. I like that the little ones are free to learn an appreciation and respect for the forest lands They need to be able to do this without the increased hazard of motorized riders on the trails. They will be the ones who take over the responsibility of this treasure. As history proves, humankind is forever making it possible for us to go faster, high and further. We are in the world of Extreme Games, X-Games and the like in almost all sports. I applaud the e-bike and know many people who love the opportunity to continue biking as we get older and our world of personal pleasure shrinks. However, as responsible citizens we need to consider what is best for everyone and for the forest lands that have been preserved for us. Allowing additional motorized access is not a move in the right direction. I believe the Forest Management Plan, the Forest Advisory Board, Friends of the Forest and City Parks and Recreation have done a fantastic job of managing this natural space. I feel the 15 miles of trails designated for motorized access were chosen with the riders' safety in mind as well as that of all trail users and which trails could best handle that use. I believe the current provisions in the management plan, allowing e-bikes the same access as motorcycles, is what is best and safest for everyone using the trails and also for the land. "

~Diane Guinn

"We walk the forest trails almost every day with our dog. Ron also has an E-bike which he bought mostly because of a heart condition and difficulty pedaling uphill. I have often wondered when I see the signs banning E-bikes on some trails and/or time of the year, "what is the difference between a E-bike and regular mountain bike on the Trails"? The E-bikes that I have seen are pretty quiet and that small amount of noise helps when coming up behind hikers. It seems as though having an E-bike would be beneficial for people with health conditions, age or just enjoy the ride to utilize the trails. Anyway as hikers on the trails, we have no problem with E-bikes on the Anacortes Forest trails and would encourage the change of expanding the access."

~Dawn & Ron Brown

"I am writing in support of allowing class 1 ebikes on the Anacortes Forest Land trails. The first time I saw an ebike was on a trail in Hood River, Oregon. It was being ridden by a man in his 80s who was so excited about his bike that he couldn't wait to tell us about it and let us try it. He said without the minimal assistance provided by this motor he wouldn't be able to climb the hills and ride on trails at this point in his life. An ebike opened the ability for him to enjoy the trails. We've ridden these bikes for several years now. I would argue that the people who ride eMTB bikes are just out to enjoy riding the trails and are less aggressive than many non motorized mountain bike riders. These bikes do not cause any more damage than a traditional mountain bike and do not cause any pollution. They are not motorcycles. They just provide a little bit of a boost to get up steep hills. These bikes allow people who like to go out in the forest, enjoy the trails and work as hard as they want to riding but it takes the misery out of steep climbs. I don't feel there is a valid reason to keep them off the same trails that traditional mountain bikes are allowed on."

~Sherry Peterson

"I am writing as a frequent user of the wonderful Anacortes Community Forest Lands. I am also the owner and frequent user of an E-bike. I strongly oppose using E-bikes on the Forest trails. The trails are already being impacted in a negative way by the use of off road bikes. I feel that allowing motorized bikes on the trails would tear them up even more. Please consider my opinion as you make this determination."

~Darlene Mindrum

"I live at 39th and "H" and walk the Forest trails frequently. I think anything that has a motor and is motorized should follow the guidelines for other motors in the AFL. Regular bikes are mostly polite but they do rough up the trails more than walkers. Motor assisted bikes are heavier and will cut up the trails even more, especially on the up parts of the trails...where they would be more inclined to use the assist."

~Jerlyn Caba

"Introduction: Evergreen Islands strongly encourages the Anacortes Parks and Recreation to require that the use of Ebikes and the Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL) be subject to the same restrictions and regulations that are required for motorcycles. **Discussion:** Since Ebikes are powered by electrical motors, E bikes are by definition 'motorized vehicles'. Consequently, Ebikes should be subject to the same ACFL Trail Use restrictions and regulations for motorcycles, and be prohibited on the same trails that motorcycle use is prohibited. Additionally, Evergreen Islands encourages the Forest Advisory Forest Board to take to heart the following comment submitted by Dan Senour, and ACFL trail committee member: "Ebikes are motorized vehicles. They have definite advantages over gas vehicles but they are still motor vehicles and getting more powerful as time goes on. There is no place in a protected environment such as the ACFL for motorized entertainment. The ACFL is getting much greater activity as the population density increases. There is less and less room for more powerful and faster equipment. These things belong to the paved world. I strongly urge that the ACFL be kept as natural as possible. Machinery should be kept for necessary maintenance only. The capacity to travel more miles at faster speeds is not conducive to the health of the forest. Nor to the health of its patrons." Conclusion: Evergreen Islands supports the Forest Advisory Board draft ACFL Ebikes policy that "Ebikes are regarded as motorized recreation~and are required to follow all motorcycle guidelines." Correspondingly, we will support this policy recommendation when it comes before the City Council."

~Tom Glade [attachment 1](#) [attachment 2](#)

"I have been riding, racing, and recreating on bicycles since 1983 and spent my "mountain bike introduction years" learning my craft on ACFL trails. These trails are some of the most technical and challenging trails in the country and allowed me to be competitive at an international level at the height of my career. Fast forward to 2017. Bad knees and shoulders, weight and diabetes are now my reality. As a part of my treatment, I started riding bicycles again and my Class 1 ebike was critical to my path to wellness. The ebike was critical due to the following:

- The assistance allowed me to have longer rides while keeping my heart rate manageable thus accelerating my recovery
- The bike is simply fun and gives me ample encouragement to ride more often

While riding, I am very conscious of my impact and find that in the ACFL, I cannot use my higher settings on my bike due to trail technicality (lots of turns, roots, step-ups, obstacles) and the very limited assistance is ample to successfully navigate the trails. When encountering other trail users, no one was aware that I was on an e-assist due to my speed (or lack there-of), or the bicycles appearance. Also, Trail users who were aware that I was on e-assist were curious about how the bike worked and not concerned of trail erosion/abuse. I know there has been comparisons regarding skiing and snowboarding to e-assist and analog bikes. I was also an early adopter of snowboards and can remember the difficulties in finding resorts open to allowing snowboards. And as JT stated – “Hopefully the bicycle industry will have better luck affecting, guiding, and accelerating change”.

~Cole Coleman

“I would like to make a few comments about giving E-bikes more access to Anacortes Community Forest Lands. I walk the Forest Land Trails frequently and have observed increased wear-and-tear on the trails. As the population in and around Anacortes increases, I see more and more people, dogs (on and off leash) bikes and horses (as well as increased trash and horse/dog poop) on the trails. The trails themselves are being damaged by increased use, especially by horses and bikes digging up the trail bed, as well as by people going off-trail, impacting drainage/run-off and causing many trail gouges. The increased use of the trails has also polluted the noise in the forest, severely impacting the experience of a meditative walk in nature. As I am sure you are aware, E-bikes are have gotten very popular in Anacortes in the last two or three years. Many of us, as we age, find that we can enjoy traveling the roads of Fidalgo Island and further afield, with more ease. Allowing all of us with E-bikes to come off the roads and to access the hiking trails will place further strain on the already stressed hiking trail system. I fear that this wonderful resource that we are blessed with here in Anacortes will be irretrievably damaged if E-bikes are further introduced to the Forest Lands. As an E-biker I say NO to E-bikes in the Forest Lands. Keep us E-bikers on the roads!”

~Bill Conner

“I would like to comment on the discussion relating to e-bike usage within the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. I am relatively new to the biking community and divide my usage in the ACFL fairly evenly between hiking and gravel bike/mountain biking. I also belong to a local bike club and regularly ride the amazing Skagit Valley roads with a group of riders, many of whom have transitioned to e-bikes. I think that e-bikes are a wonderful development. I have witnessed firsthand how the electric motor has allowed riders, with limited physical abilities, to resume riding for the first time in decades, or to continue riding when age-related health issues have restricted their ability to ride at their previous level. At this time, however, I would not be in favor of expanding the usage of e-bikes in the ACFL beyond those trails designated for motorcycle usage for the following reasons.

1. E-bike development is evolving very rapidly. New technologies are allowing ever more powerful electric motors in both pedal assist and non-pedal assist

applications. These higher powered motors are mostly for use off-road in order to give greater ability to climb up inclines and to increase speed and riding duration. Some of these electric motors are rivaling the performance of smaller gas powered cycles. While a current, low powered model pedal assist e-bike, being ridden in low-range assist, might not tear up the trails much more than the non-motorized version, once they are allowed on non-motorized trails it would be impossible to exclude those e-bikes with much more powerful motors.

2. The electric assist gives the rider the ability to not only climb steeper inclines, but also to ride longer distances. During a recent ride on my non-motorized gravel bike at Pilchuck Tree Farm, I spoke to a rider who had a new electric mountain bike. He commented that he could now make 5 or 6 runs during an outing with his e-bike where before he could only make 1 run with his non-motorized MTB. This increase in usage creates a greater per rider impact on the trail system.

I expect in the not too distant future, I will no longer have the strength or stamina to ride how I'd like and that I'll transition to an e-bike. When that time comes I will still have plenty of places to ride without needing to ride on non-motorized hiking/ mountain biking trails"

~Ray Desy

"This is an appeal to maintain the current policy of e bike trail access being limited to being on the same trails as motorcycles. Many trails are narrow with limited visibility around curves. To avoid impacts with walkers, hikers and other cyclist with fast moving e bikers let's keep the current policy. Slower moving park users often do not use a motorcycle designated trail as they prefer a quieter and less reactive trail experience. Please keep the current policy. The trails are famous!"

~Cheryl Willis

"I would love to see all the trails open to handicap individuals using e-bikes. In the past, I walked 10 miles a day. During my bike ride I could easily do 30 miles. I can now only walk a 1/4 mile and no bike riding. I have had 3 total knee replacements on the same leg,(an on the job injury) and now I need a new hip on the other leg from having so many issues with the right leg. Maybe we can come up with a handicap license plate for people with e-bikes so we are not shut out of enjoying the outdoors. I'm sure lots of people like me that have a permanent handicap sticker for their car, would love to buy a license plate for their e-bike so they could once again enjoy the outdoors. Please consider us that would love to get back into riding, but can't without help."

~Ardele Pyatte

"Our Parks Dept & FAB is to be re-evaluating the current policy with regard to EMTB's in the ACFL over the next several meetings. I wish to be part of those discussions so please allow me to introduce myself:

- I am a lifelong Anacortes resident and ACFL user. I have fond memories of riding my newspaper delivery bike on the trails to Little Cranberry for swimming adventures back in the late 60's

- I am a decades long member of and continuing contributor to the *Friends of the Forest*.
- My wife, Jean has been a Board member of the *Friends of the Forest* for decades and was the organizations Administrative Director for almost 10 years.
- We have made significant contributions to the conservation easement program
- I have contributed countless volunteer hours with trail maintenance work over many years.

I share this history to help you understand the depth of my commitment and love for our ACFL. I began riding MTB's in 1982 when I purchased my very first one from Tom Cleland at the old *Anacortes Cyclery*. This was during the infancy of the sport and Mt Bikes had just begun to be produced by major bike companies. My passion for the sport has only grown since then and for 40 years I have identified as a MTB'er. Unfortunately, a couple of heart-attacks over the last few years has put a significant damper on my physical abilities and I found myself struggling to continue with my passion. It was the purchase of a Class-1 E-MTB this past Spring which has allowed me to "get back on the horse" so to speak. It is my wish to simply continue riding our trails as I have for many decades. I have done a notable amount of research into Class-1 EMTB's and their negligible environmental and trail impacts. I look forward to sharing this knowledge and to working together with the FAB to hopefully craft a new Class-1 EMTB policy which allows for year-around riding to those of us whose physical disabilities otherwise prevent access. A few years ago I was not an EMTB proponent. This was due to my own ignorance and not understanding Class-1 EMTB's and their minimal impact on trails. It wasn't until I lost the ability to continue my MTBing passion that I began to consider them as an alternative. With research and education, I learned that there are significantly notable differences within the realm of EMTB's. I have further come to learn that riding my Class-1 EMTB is really no different than riding my analog bicycle in either speed, style or impact. The State of WA (along with many federal govt entities) have defined E-bikes into 3 categories or Classes:

- Class-1 Pedal Assist is a bike that only provides assistance if you are pedaling. No pedaling, no assistance!! These bikes are also limited to a potential maximum speed of 20MPH. Above that speed, there is no assistance. These are also the most common type of EMTB.
- Class-2 bikes are similar but have the notable difference of a throttle lever which allows the rider to get power without pedaling. They are also limited to 20 MPH.
- Class-3 bikes are similar to class-2 but are not speed limited until 28 MPH.

With regards to discussions about the ACFL, I want to make clear that I am ONLY speaking in support of Class-1 EMTB's. If you get power without pedaling, it is not a bicycle in my mind. After I began riding my Class-1 EMTB, I was quite surprised by the similarities to riding an unassisted/analog bike. The technology didn't require *any* change of riding style but did allow me to complete my 1-2 hour rides without physical exhaustion. The most significant difference of the ride is with hill climbing. The "assist" is just like having a gentle push from behind. There exists a fitness tracking app called *Strava*. It is extremely popular with cyclists for tracking their rides. I have used it for years and consequently have the data from before my heart attacks, after my heart attacks, and now since the purchase of my EMTB. I have found that data to be most interesting and worth sharing:

| | | Average riding speed for the duration of a ride |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---|
| Pre-Heart Attack - analog bike | Pre-2018 | 6.3 MPH avg |
| Post Heart Attack - analog bike | 2018-2020 | 5.0 MPH avg |
| Post Heart Attack - EMTB | 2021 | 6.1 MPH avg |

As you can see, the assist provided by my EMTB has simply allowed me to regain the abilities I previously enjoyed on my analog bike. **It is critical to understand that this technology does not operate in the same fashion as “motors” that we are all familiar with.** It is not as simple as “they have a motor; they are motor driven vehicles”. These bikes simply provide assistance to make pedaling easier. I think it would be extremely prudent for members of the FAB and Parks Staff to test ride a Class-1 EMTB. I feel it is critical for you to adequately understand the technology for which you are making decisions/recommendations about. How can one make an informed choice without adequate education/information? There are several of us proponents that will be happy to assist with making arrangements for any test rides. E-bikes are a fast growing technology and demand for trail riding areas is also growing. Presumably both Parks Staff and the FAB are concerned with changing existing rules to then see a notable increase of non-resident riders descend upon our cherished ACFL. I share this concern and think a slow and measured change may be an appropriate choice. An initial pilot program with a limited number of “permits” for qualifying riders would be a possibility worth considering. This would give the opportunity to provide access while allowing Staff to monitor any adverse impacts of a slow, measured change. To be clear, proponents simply wish to ride the same trails as those which are currently open to analog (non-assisted) mt bikes. People for Bikes is a national organization which provides guidance and educational materials for facilitating these types of changes. An example of these materials are attached to this email. I have reached out to the org and found them to be wonderful people who are extremely helpful. We have multiple proponents who would be willing to volunteer to assist with the data gathering and education component of a pilot program. I am sincerely grateful that Parks Staff and the FAB is taking the time to re-evaluate the current EMTB policy in the ACFL. I am confident that with due diligence and open-minded research, you too will learn that Class-1 EMTB’s do not pose any new threat to our forests or users and that they should be granted the same access as conventional Mt Bikes.”

~Bret Andrich [attachment 1](#) [attachment 2](#)

“I want to register my disapproval of the thought to expand forest trails to ebikes. Many who ride bikes generally in the forest lands are not thoughtful and can be down-right dangerous. Allowing more powerful bikes will only intensify the risk to hikers that include children and pets not to mention older people. : the trails have been damaged by bikes, sometimes resulting in unsafe footing. Additionally, they go off trail and damage the surrounding vegetation.”

~Sharon Stringer

"I am against expanding the use of E-bikes in the Anacortes Community Forest Lands for the following reasons.

1. Bikers are already "barrelling" down the trails without consideration of hikers on the trails. We live right next to the trail and use it all the time. Often I see dangerous speeds and little thought given by the bikers to the people walking the trails. Getting hit by a bicyclist is a real worry when walkers/hikers are using the trail.
2. Adding e-bikes would increase the bike traffic considerably, thus increasing the danger they represent to others who use the trail. As often as I walk the trails, I see families with children and dogs who, frankly, are in danger of being hit by reckless bikers.
3. E-bike users have so many places they can ride that adding these acreage to their use is going to decrease the ease with which hikers, families and friends of the forest can use the trails.
4. Walkers/hikers should have trails where there are no bikes allowed so we can enjoy the forest for what it is, a peaceful place to get away and enjoy nature. We shouldn't have to be looking behind our backs to see if a e-biker or bicyclist is heading our way.

I love my E-bike. I use it a lot. But I do not believe I should be using it in the Community Forest Lands."

~Betty Connor

"I am adamantly opposed to ebikes and other motorized vehicles being permitted on trails with hikers for several reasons, e.g.

they endanger hikers and other people on foot because of their speed and heft

they have plenty of other options in terms of miles and miles of forest roads, streets, etc.

on unpaved trails they increase ruts and speed up erosion

they interfere with enjoyment of nature for hikers who need to be wary of being hit by a hefty bike

I am a hiker and biker but keep my biking to paved trails because travel is easier and, of course, faster. My experience with bikers has been negative not only for the above mentioned reasons but being passed on a narrow trail by an ebiker was quite dangerous so I stepped off the narrow trail to let him pass. The bikers seem to enjoy speed over taking in the quiet beauty of the forest and mountains. Trying to accommodate everyone seems to end up with no one being pleased. Once the ebikers are permitted in parks and forest lands they will be difficult to ban. They have miles and miles of logging roads, streets, etc. on which to ride already while hikers have much more limited options."

~Gena DiLabio

"Hello, I would like to register my opposition to allowing the use of E-bikes on forestland trails. On my quiet nature walks, I don't mind running across active mountain bikers getting their exercise and enjoying the woods -- but E-bikes are not mountain bikes. I have nothing against them, in fact I'm researching the purchase of one at this time -- but it's for use on streets and as a form of transportation, not to take into the woods where people are enjoying the peace and quiet of nature. I appreciate the signage throughout the forest that informs us how the trails are allowed to be used: horses, bikes, hikers etc. But -- please no e-bikes."

~Therese Ogle

Trail use for me began in high school. Initially as a hiker, later becoming a trail and marathon runner. Eventually, in the mid-90's, Bret Andrich introduced me to mountain biking. Decades later we are still riding together, but aided by Class-1 e-MTB technology. My new mountain bike (below) is amazing. It is light and simple, no throttle -- and provides e-assistance only when pedaled. At a glance most can't tell that it's an e-bike. The boost they offer makes it possible for Bret and I to keep riding. Trail impact is driven more by user behavior than one's user group. While riding with my wife, I'm on my e-bike and she's on an analog (or standard) mountain bike - neither of us leave a trace. Maturity, trail etiquette and stewardship all go together. Year after year "over seventy-five (75) percent" of **Skagit Trail Builders** (STB's) donations and hours have come from our supporters that are "over fifty" years of age. This age group is formidable. They know what they want, they follow through - and have the capacity to help. Change is difficult for people, and trail politics can be fraught - but as leaders we must try. Of the following bullet points; the first two cover trail impact, the third goes into detail about a pilot study that is underway - all three documents are attached:

- An **American Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Study**
- A **Finding of No Significant Impact** by a USDA Forest Service region
- And lastly, an **eMTB Pilot Program in Stowe VT** that is underway

Age, health, and trail user education - in my opinion - should all be part of a potential e-bike pilot program. Bruce Rustad recently likened skiing and snowboarding to e-assist and analog bikes. Mount Baker is where I met Bruce. He was a ski patrol leader, I was the mountain's first snowboarding host. Years earlier, when I was a skier, I helped launch Crystal Mountain's host (a.k.a. guest services) program. Hopefully the bicycle industry will have better luck affecting, guiding, and accelerating change. The funny thing is, while this issue is fraught and contentious now, one day people will calmly ask - "What was the big deal?" Skier to snowboarder, marathoner to cyclist, and now as an e-bike enthusiast - for me it has always been about staying active. Thank you, in advance, for giving my thoughts your consideration."

~Jim Taylor [attachment 1](#) [attachment 2](#) [attachment 3](#)

"I am writing with my concerns about putting e-bikes on the trails in our local parks, specifically on the trails of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. Having worked on building trails in the past I feel invested in and support those people who do this work now. It's hard work and it is disheartening to see any trail destroyed by misuse. Regular mountain bikes on trails take a huge toll on many trails. They cut deep grooves in trails, and when it rains these grooves increase erosion. E-bikes are much heavier than regular bikes and this e-bike use is bound to create even more trail destruction. And then add to the fact that many bike users are already going off trail, creating more casual trails which lead to more damage to the parks and the natural resources. E-bikes are also fast and I find it already disconcerting/frightening in some cases to be walking a trail and have bikers speed down the trail and startle me with their speed. One time on a trail which was very narrow and steep I was almost knocked off the trail by a speeding biker. I think it's a dangerous idea to put e-bikes on trails shared with hikers. There are many WIDE open trails, paved trails, gravel based trails in Skagit, Whatcom and Island counties for e-bikers to ride on. Places where there is enough room and safety for a biker to move around a slower hiker. There

are also miles and miles of forest service roads where bikers can go as fast as they want to. I think biking is fun and it's a great way to get around, but I believe park planners should very much consider the energy and time trail builders put into creating trails and the loss one feels to see trails you've labored on destroyed. Planners should make safety for hikers and bikers a priority. Also, looking from a hikers perspective I go to trails on foot because I enjoy seeing nature along the way, I value the slower pace when I live in a world that is so fast paced. So being pushed aside or down a slope by a speeding bike is scary and no fun at all."

~Teresa Dix

"I frequently hike the trails. I am opposed to allowing E-bikes on the hiking trails."

~Gerri Gunn

"There is no place for additional motorcycles in the ACFL. It is really not the place for any type of motorcycle. The majority of residents use the forest lands for quiet peaceful exercise. Motorcycles electric or gas belong on roads. Not in our forest lands. There is enough pollution and noise from the Navy Growlers."

~Bruce Baglien

"Concerning the issue of E-bikes being allowed greater access to the forest lands. I am in favor of it. An E-bike is not in the same class as a motorcycle in any respect. They are incapable of the speed of a motorcycle, they do not go any faster than a fit rider would on a regular Mt bike. They do not have the torque of a motorcycle, and therefore do not have the ability to damage the trails the way motorcycles do. E-bikes are quiet unlike motorcycles, nor do they pollute and leave the smell of exhaust in their wake. If the concern is trail damage, do a one year test and re-evaluate. Yes E-bikes have a "motor", but that argument is flawed, it simply does not take into account the inherent differences of a motorcycle and an E-bike."

~Andy Pitz

"I am writing to support the change to allow e bikes on forest lands. As I get older I am using my mountain bike less and less and my e bike more, especially to get to the forest. Please allow the change."

~Tom Smiley

"I am strongly opposed to classifying ebikes as mountain bikes for use on the forestland trails. These are motorized vehicles and should remain classified that way. They are not compatible with sharing trails with the current users."

~Marsha Morris

"As a frequent senior user of the forest land trails, I have had close encounters with rapidly moving mountain bikes around hidden curves. I am definitely opposed to allowing the heavier, potentially faster e bikes to be classified as mountain bikes. Any collision with a hiker and an e-bike would lead to increased and more serious injuries. I mountain biked on forest service roads---never single track--- where I lived previously. E-bikes are NOT mountain bikes. Allow them on the established motorcycle routes where motorized bikes are allowed. Part of the joy

of walking in the forest lands is the bits of quiet, and experiencing the sounds of the water, the birds and other forest sounds. Adding the increase noise of the e-bikes and the increased usage on bike/hikers trails will diminish the experience of those who seek out the forest lands for rejuvenation. The other concern I have regarding e-bikes on trails is the potential for further trail erosion. In the past three years with the increase in mountain biking in the forest lands, there have been areas of increased trail erosion. I lived in Flagstaff, Az for 30 years and after the mountain biking explosion, the combined hiking/mountain biking trails became very eroded. Adding the heavy weight of an e-bike to the forest land trails will eventually cause increased erosion and therefore added maintenance and expense to the city. “

~V Jane Brandt

“Hi, I’m opposed to increasing access for ebikes in the ACFL. I’ve seen multiple instances of increased erosion up slopes where ebikes have “goosed” their throttle to get up a slope on soft surfaces and dug up the trail. I’m a cyclist, but I also volunteer for Washington Trails Association and see how much disturbance bikes make on forest trails. We built some new trails in King County, above Issaquah, and in just two years the mineral soil trail surface was eroded down to round river rock. At Larrabe, where I also work, bikes wind up creating V trenches mid-trail where water then channels, accelerating degradation. I think the motorcycle trails and limiting winter access is a reasonable policy. A majority of the ACFL trails are not optimally constructed for good drainage, adding more bike traffic is just likely to create deeper and wider mud holes.”

~Craig Illman

“I heard that the Forest Advisory Board is taking up the hot topic of e-bikes. As the organizer along with Ed Clauson of a mountain biking group representing approximately 40-50 ACFL riders. We have been meeting 2x per week for over 20 years and our members have been very active in helping maintain the forest land trails (as I am sure you are aware). It is the considered opinion of this group that Class I eMTBs should be allowed on designated mountain biking trails throughout the ACFL because of the following reasons:

1. They don’t in any way damage the trails or pose a health/safety risk to other trail users beyond that of a regular MTB rider
2. They allow older & less fit riders to participate in rides with younger and more fit riders (ie, expanding forest land access)
3. Pragmatically speaking, eMTBs are already extensively being used in the ACFL with no adverse effects and if the bicycle industry has anything to do with it is only a matter of time that we have Federal and State law formally classifying Class 1 eBikes as analog bicycles.

Thank you for giving my group of riders the opportunity to weigh in on this topic. If you would like any additional information or feedback, please let me know.”

~Kevin Welch

“I'd like to add my voice to those objecting to the notion of ebikes on trails in the forestlands. I think it would significantly and adversely impact the wonderful nature of these trails, and our use of them. The noise and the commotion would change the character of these properties,

which imho is one of the best things about living in Anacortes. Thanks for considering my input.”

~Shay Shual-Berke

“I am Geoffrey Holmes and live at xxxx. My wife, Jerlyn Caba, and I access the forest trails on the east and west side of H Ave. and at the trail access in the Orchards development. We utilize the ACFL 2 or 3 times a week. Our experience with bicycles on the trails is that they appear suddenly and quietly but generally are in control and use care when they encounter walkers. I have some apprehensions regarding the possible appearance of motorized bicycles on trails where they are currently excluded. Partly due to my experience with electrically assisted bicycles on the roads and streets as a non electric bicyclist, I would worry that these heavier bikes would have less control at points of encounter and tend to do more damage to the trails. Also in regard to my experience of these bicycles on the roads, is the fact that they enable people with little experience of bicycle riding road manners and protocols to navigate roads with less regard to other traffic. I would be concerned that electric assisted bikes could create a variety of hazards on woodland trails with bicyclists who may have less experience, fitness, and control. The ACFL are a great recreational resource for our community. I don't particularly want to see any one excluded but have concerns that usages be regulated appropriately in regard to safety, and trail damage. While electric bikes are not as noisy as motorbikes, their quietness and weight, and the fact that they enable less experienced and fit bicyclists the bicycle experience, seem valid reasons to continue to limit their access.”

~Geoffrey Holmes

“I have been riding a mountain bike in the forest lands for 25+ years and maintaining forest land trails for the past 15 years. The reason we started working on the trails was that a lot of the trail were not maintained or sustainable. Me and other volunteers have put in 100+ hours of trail maintenance over the past years including the re-routing of some trails around wet areas as well. Now I am 51 years old with an arthritic knee and shoulders, so I bought a Class 1 ebike which I have to pedal to make it go. It is just like a regular mountain bike but it has an electric motor to assist the pedalling. I have been riding my ebike at Chuckanut Mountain and Little Mountain in Mt. Vernon. I am aware that studies have been done to see if ebike damage the trails more than traditional pedal bikes and have found that no more damage occurs than that of use of a regular non-ebike. Please note that the amount of return from the motor simply gives me back my 30 year old leg's!”

~Cole Coleman

“I see you guys are working on the E-bike policy for the ACFL and I wanted to give you my input as a long time ACFL mountain biker. I primarily ride a non E-bike but have spent more time recently riding E-bikes. I've come to the conclusion that Class 1 E-bikes are basically the equivalent of regular mountain bikes in terms of trail impact. Many people who are opposed to E-bikes have never even ridden one and have the misconception that they cause more trail damage than regular bikes. That is simply not the case. They are not like motorcycles with a throttle, as they only **assist** a rider who **must** pedal to access the power. As for speeds, it's true they can go faster uphill on smooth straight trails and roads, but they are less agile and slower

on downhill and technical singletrack trails. Terrain dictates E-bike speeds more than the bike itself and riding speeds are ultimately quite similar to standard mountain bikes. I advocate for allowing E-bikes on all trails already open to mountain bikes. E-bikes owners tend to be older and more responsible trail users and promote good stewardship among all types of off road cyclists and trail users. Thanks for considering my input.”

~Eric Tollefson

“I was alarmed to hear that the forest lands might consider e-bikes on trails. They are motorized and the trails are for non motorized. Many of my friends and neighbors enjoy hiking the trails along with our leashed dogs and would like to see the trails use remain as they are- a quiet peaceful place to enjoy nature. E-bikes have plenty of places to ride on the streets and Tommy Thompson trail. Thank you for registering my opposition.”

~Vicki Stasch

“I just read the article in the Skagit Valley Herald regarding the restriction of e-bikes in the forest lands and wish to share my opinion. In case you are not aware, e-bikes are classified by three levels. Class 1 is pedal assist. These can only be activated by the action of pedaling. Class 1 bikes are governed to a maximum allowable speed of 20 mph. Class 2 is a throttle type. They operate like a motorcycle or scooter and can be pedaled and/or propelled simply by operating a thumb or twist grip throttle. Class 2 bikes are also limited to 20 mph. Class 3 is the fastest pedal assist bike and has a top speed of 28 mph.

Many cities and counties allow Class 1 bikes on trails but not Class 2 or Class 3. I favor the city allowing Class 1 bikes on all forest land trails. I am 67 years old and had a conventional mountain bike. I found myself having a great deal of difficulty going up many grades in the forests so I began riding less and less. I do not feel safe riding on the streets any more than I need to due to distracted and inconsiderate drivers. I purchased a Class 1 mountain e-bike two years ago and love it. I have been able to ride from Whistle Lake to Washington Park mostly via the forest trails and absolutely love doing so. I still get a great workout because the amount of assist can be regulated to still require significant effort but be able to climb grades as needed. I infrequently encounter hikers but when I do I slow to be considerate. If coming from behind I have a bell to ring to avoid startling anyone. I think we all need to be able to share the wonderful trail system. I can see limiting Class 2 and Class 3 e-bikes to the motorcycle designated trails but please allow Class 1 bikes to be used on all bicycle allowed trails.”

~Bob Brooks

“As a long term resident of the outer Anacortes city and user of most of the trails, and former of the the AFCL board member, bikes were banned from a lot of trails because in wet conditions, there was major damage to some of the mountain trails. Because e-bikes are much heavier than normal mountain bikes, they should be limited to the same trails as mountain bikes. The Anacortes Comprehensive Plan would have to be modified and approved by the city council and the public in the review process. I believe that this is a bad idea. This is the first that I have heard of this plan. There needs to be wide spread news of this change to the forest lands.”

~Ed Gastellum

“As a frequent user of the forest land trails as a hiker, I am not in favor of allowing e-bikes more access than they currently have. They should remain in the motorcycle category since many of them use the motor as the only source of power, and would clog the trails for walkers/hikers.”

~John Buchanan

“Ebikes are bicycles and should be classified as such. They are actually bikes. They are quiet. They are non polluting. They should not be classified with motorcycles, which are none of the above. Actually, they are bicycles.”

~Terry McNeil

“Regarding e-bikes in the Forest Lands, I think that it would be ok to allow Class 1 bikes access to the trails. As you are aware, Class 1 bikes are pedal assist only, no throttle, and are electric-assisted to a maximum of 20 mph. In my opinion, Class 2 and Class 3 e-bikes should not be allowed in the Forest Lands. Class 2 bikes have a power throttle and do not have to be pedaled; Class 3 bikes are electric-assisted up to 28 mph maximum. A Class 2 bike is an electric motorcycle, and, if allowed in the ACFL, should be under the same restrictions as gas-powered motorcycles. I would prefer that the Class 2 e-bike not be allowed. My concerns are trail damage and potential conflicts between hikers/horse riders and inexperienced bikers that are traveling at high speed and/or out-of-control. Class 3 e-bikes should not be allowed because of their top end electric-assist speed of 28 mph. That speed maximum, in most settings in the ACFL, is too fast. Thank you for allowing me to express my opinions.”

~Charlie Schultz

“I understand our Parks Dept & FAB will be re-evaluating policy with regard to EMTB's over the next several meetings. I wish to be part of that discussion. As an introduction I have lived in Anacortes since 1987. I began riding mountain bikes in 1989 when I bought a bike from Tom's bike shop. It was a rigid frame Specialized Rockhopper. We lived over by Little Cranberry and I became hooked on the sport. Since then, I have owned a front suspension bike, a couple full suspension bikes, and for the last year and a half a Class 1 E-MTB. I will be 64 tomorrow. I have had a knee replaced a few years ago, a left arm rebuilt from an auto accident a few years before that. These injuries and the relative inactivity they caused made my mountain biking much less enjoyable, and very limited, to the point where I had basically given it up. My son Calin suggested I get a Class 1 E-MTB so that we could ride together again. I bought one from Skagit Cycle and feel like I did 20 years ago! I am no where near as fast as most of the guys that I ride with, and indeed with many of the very capable riders we have on the island, but I can basically keep up and have a great time doing it. Now I not only ride with my son and son-in-law, but their kids also. Three generations! It's awesome, and only possible because of the E-MTB. I read a study by BYU where they tested the energy output (measured in heart rate) of experienced mountain bikers to see what the energy output difference was. They were surprised to learn that on average when on an E-MTB their average heart rate on an E-MTB was 93% of their heart rate on a non-assisted bike. I think that incremental assistance is much less than you may be aware of, it certainly was a surprise to me! I would like to focus a little more

on the word “incremental”. All Class 1 bikes work basically the same. The amount of power the motor puts out is only incremental! That means that if I put out 100 watts of power from my legs, the bike will put out a percentage of that based on the bikes settings. If I put out 200 watts of power, again the bike will add to it incrementally. The harder I press (for example going up hill) the more assistance I get. On flatter terrain the assistance is much lower, as I am not pressing on the peddles as hard. The vast majority of E-MTB riders have chosen this mode of mountain biking because as we get older we lose power, and lets face it we start breaking. We all know this is not a flat island! This means that the forest land trails available to us as we age gets smaller and smaller. As I mentioned, I have owned various different types of MTB, and I can honestly say that I believe my Class 1 E-MTB does not impact the trails any more than my full suspension analog bike. It may actually have less impact because I am not “at the end of my rope” the entire time I am on the bike and can ride smoother and with greater efficiency. I guess if I didn’t have an E-MTB I probably would not be out there at all, and so have no impact on the trails whatsoever, but I don’t believe it is anyone’s intent to unnecessarily limit ones access to our amazing Forest Lands. With regards to discussions about the ACFL, I want to make clear that I am ONLY speaking in support of Class-1 EMTB’s. Thank you for taking the time to read this in your process of evaluating this issue. I would like to echo Jim Taylor’s comment that trail etiquette and user behavior has much more to do with trail impact than whether you are on an analog bike or E-MTB.”

~Dave Crumbo

“I have been a dedicated bicyclist for 35 years. I have approximately 60,000 miles of road riding experience. I have been primary riding mountain bikes for the last 7 years. Almost all of my mountain bike riding has been on multi use trails in the ACFL, Eastern WA and Arizona. I have hiked and biked the ACFL for the last 9 years and lived in Anacortes for the last 3 years. The ACFL is one of the most beautiful and amazing community resources I have ever seen. I immediately felt a deep respect for the lands and for the incredible community commitment to them. My experience in the ACFL with all the different users of the trails is that everyone has been friendly and respectful. As I have aged I have gotten less capable of accessing the outdoors. My knees have both caused problems. My left knee is a total replacement, my right knee is soon to be replaced as well. This limits my ability to walk and bicycling is still possible to some extent. I purchased a class 1 (pedal assist) e mountain bike to allow me more access to the outdoors. The places I ride are twisty and technical enough that the maximum speed is simply not useable. As a result my speed averages are only slightly higher than on my non assist mountain bike and only because I’m a little faster up the hills. The pedal assist helps me up the steeper hills and allows a longer ride than my knees allow otherwise. I am reassured I am not damaging the ACFL because all the studies show class 1 pedal assist mountain bikes do no more damage to trails than analog mountain bikes. Also because the speeds are so little different from analog bikes I am reassured that class 1 pedal assist e mountain bikes will not change the friendly relations between trail users
In short I believe allowing class 1 pedal assist mountain bikes will allow some of us to continue our valuable connection to the ACFL and do no harm.”

~Kim Erickson

“My wife and I are strongly against allowing e-bikes in our ACFL. Some of our comments on this issue are listed below.

- a) We believe the ACFL should be a “wild” place where walkers and regular bicyclers experience peace, quiet, and tranquility in the forested landscape. Yes, not quite a true wilderness area by definition but possessing similar qualities and accessible only through human power.
- b) It is important to maintain a friendly, safe-haven ACFL for our critters (deer, rabbits, coyotes, raccoons, beavers, birds, and my favorite, our resident owls) as we continue to lose habitat to development.
- c) Like motorcycles, E-bikes are not quiet. E-bikes will ruin the quiet of the forest since they possess an annoying high pitched whine.
- d) Trail wear and tear is a physics issue ($F=ma$) with heavier and faster objects causing the most damage. A walker would cause the least amount of trail damage followed by a bicycle, then an E-bike, then a motorcycle.
- e) Sadly, motorcycles are already allowed in some areas at certain times of the year. Yes, a noisy, polluting desecration of the ACFL. From our observations, some individuals do not follow the rules by riding during closed periods. Also, motorcycles (and a few bicycles too) are riding on trails that are closed to that mode of transportation.
- f) We see E-bikes on the Tommy Thompson and on the Washington Park loop road; we assume they are permitted there. Our observations are that people on e-bikes tend to go faster and are more discourteous than regular bicyclists. We would hate to see that unsafe behavior introduced to the ACFL trails since this cannot be policed. We believe motorized transportation, including e-bikes, should stay on the roads.
- g) Since rule breaking seems to be so common, we believe allowing e-bikes in the ACFL for so called ADA reasons will only invite abuse and again cannot be enforced.
- h) Some will say there are e-bikes that are so quiet, you can't tell they are e-bikes and they only offer a power assist to a peddling cyclist. The problem is approving any e-bike, puts you on a slippery slope of categorizing equipment that will be impossible to enforce.
- i) There will also be those who say this allows people access who wouldn't typically be able to enjoy the trails. If you are riding an e-bike, you can probably walk and what would those folks do if they run out of battery while on the trail. Also, like true wilderness areas, there should be some park areas that are hard to get to.

Thanks for listening to our opinions on the subject.”

~Mark Barbay & Phyllis Enright

“I have been riding a mountain bike in the forest lands for 45 years, been maintaining forest land trails for 40 years. The reason started working on the trails was a lot of the trail were not maintained and over ground. Me and other volunteers put in about 10 miles of new trails because the Forest Board wanted perimeter trails on the forest land boundary. Trails we added 118, 128, some of 100, 126, 220, 218, 247, 249, 250 and more. We rerouted some trails around wet areas also. I drawing the map that is being used for the forest lands now. I am 77 years old with one artificial knee and bad back, so I bought a Class 1 Ebike which one has to paddle to make it go. It is just like a regular mountain bike but it has a electric motor to assist the peddling. I have been riding my ebike in the forest lands for 2 years along with riding it at Little

Mountain in Mt. Vernon and Galbraith Mountain in Bellingham which have not said no to ebikes. Studies have been done to see if ebike damage the trails more than any other peddle bikes and studies find no more damage than regular peddle bikes. Because of the last wind storm a lot of trees came down the forest land, with my ebike and battery chain saw I have been able to cut out 30 trees out of the trails will doing my usual rides in the forest. One last thought, I have snow skiing for 70 years and when snow boards started coming to the ski resorts no one wanted them there. But look now people love them because they changed the skiing industry with wider skis which make skiing easier to do. Class 1 ebikes are the up and coming thing for the older generation that what to keep riding and do work in the forest lands.”
~Bruce Rustad

“We cannot attend the Jan 6 discussion, so here is our feedback:

-Supportive of EBikes on ACFL designated trails with guidelines:

-Class 1 rated EBikes only (NO throttle / Pedal assist ONLY)/ Max Pedal Assist is 250 watt motor.

-All cyclists must exhibit regard for shared trail use and provide notice (ring bell/ voice) when approaching/passing walkers/hikers, other cyclists and pass courteously with care.

-Rider groups in excess of 3 riders must distance between themselves to not overwhelm other trail users.

-Cyclists encouraged to belong to organizations that support the use and maintenance of ACFL trails.

The Skagit Bike Club has integrated EBikes successfully in road riding. However, trail riding has other considerations. I hope this will provide some guidance.”

~Steve Jahn

“Ebikes are motorized vehicles. They have definite advantages over gas vehicles but they are still motor vehicles and getting more powerful as time goes on. There is no place in a protected environment such as the ACFL for motorized entertainment. The ACFL is getting much greater activity as the population density increases. There is less and less room for more powerful and faster equipment. These things belong to the paved world. I strongly urge that the ACFL be kept as natural as possible. Machinery should be kept for necessary maintenance only. The capacity to travel more miles at faster speeds is not conducive to the health of the forest. Nor to the health of its patrons.”

~Dan Senour