

### New Comments Received as of February 24, 2022:

“Please let the record show that I am in support of expanded access for Class-1 eMTB access in the ACFL. eMTB’s should have the same access as is currently allowed to conventional Mt Bikes.”

~Laura Andrich

“E bikes are not this terrible thing that they are made out too be. I am an avid mountain biker in our community forest lands where I have been riding for nearly 10years. I have lots of older friends that are able to continue to ride solely due to the fact they are riding e bikes. They don’t destroy the trail, they are quiet, and e bikes give a chance for someone who isn’t physical fit enough to ride an opportunity to get our and enjoy our trails. To those that say e bike hurt the trails, I guarantee you wouldn’t be able to determine the difference between a regular bike tire tread mark in the mud and an e bike tire tread mark in the mud. That’s our two cents.”

~Bryan and Shawna Cox

“Hi there- I’m writing my support of allowing Class-1 E-mt bikes in the ACFL. Thanks”

~Josh Gates

“I would like to voice my support of the Anacortes Parks Dept changing the current ACFL regulations to allow *Class-1 E-Mt Bikes* the same, equal access to the ACFL trails as currently allowed for Mt Bikes.”

~Ken Schimke

“I am Kim Erickson a resident of Anacortes. I have done some research on the impacts of type 1 mountain bikes on trails systems and cannot find that they have any different impact than regular mountain bikes. This is also matches my own personal experience.

I would like to state that I am in favor of expanding access to Type 1 E Mountain Bikes in the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. Thanks”

~Kim Erickson

“I am a resident of Anacortes who walks, paddle boards and mountain bikes in the ACFL. My interest in e bikes comes from my aging and failing knees.

I love the forest lands and would not want to damage them.

I love the easygoing mix of users of the forest lands and have never had an unpleasant encounter with a fellow user.

The trails are designed in such tight twists and turns that they limit all bike speeds, ebike or regular. Downhill is the same on any bike as gravity is the power. The limits downhill on any bike are skill and consideration for other users. But the trails are hilly and take a toll on my

knees. I have researched other trail systems and can't find any data that shows type 1 ebikes affect the trails any differently than regular bikes. Please allow Type 1 ebikes to use the same trails as mountain bikes."

~Kim Erickson

"I am an avid user of the Anacortes Forest Lands and I'm writing to support the use of Class 1 Ebikes in the Anacortes Forest Lands.

Allowing the use of Class 1 Ebikes in our forest lands encourages riders who may not be able to use them because of age or health reasons. It encourages healthy outdoor physical activity which is essential for everyone's mental and physical health.

Some of those commenting against Ebikes are dispensing misinformation. Below is what is true:

Class 1 Ebikes DO NOT damage the trails any more than mountain bikes or horses.

Class 1 Ebikes DO NOT go any faster than a mountain bike. The trail dictates the speed whether it is an Class 1 Ebike or a mountain bike.

Class 1 Ebikes DO NOT make more noise. They are virtually silent and make no more noise than a mountain bike.

A Class 1 Ebike is NOT a motorize vehicle. A Class 1 Ebike is a pedal assist bike which only moves when the rider pedals. Motorcycles are powered by gas engines. Class 1 Ebikes are powered by manually pedaling.

Class 1 Ebikes DO NOT emit gas fumes like a motorcycle because they are electric.

Class 1 Ebikes DO NOT leave piles of manure on the trails like horses do, or dog owners who do not pick up after their dogs.

I strongly support the use of Class 1 Ebikes in the Anacortes Forest Land trails that allow mountain bikes."

~Marilyn Pinquoch

"I am writing to support eMTB access in the Anacortes Community Forest. Thanks"

~Jeff Ried

"I am writing to express my support for granting Class-1, pedal assisted eMTB's the same access to the ACFL trails as is currently afforded to conventional mountain bikes. I have been an avid mountain biker in the ACFL for over 30 years. I have seen the impact that the increase in usage from all user groups has caused in recent years. I share the concerns of many regarding trail damage and conflicts between user groups. I believe that some form of enforcement of the current rules would go a long way to help mitigate those issues. That said, it has been my experience while sharing trails with Class-1, pedal assisted eMTB riders here in the ACFL and in many other trail systems in the USA and Europe, that they have no more impact than conventional MTB's. These bikes are in no way equivalent to motorcycles. The small electric motor simply assists the riders efforts, primarily while climbing. The demographic of eMTB riders is made up, by and large, by older, wiser and less physically capable individuals who are

simply trying to stay active. I do not believe it is fair or equitable to exclude them from our Anacortes Community Forest Lands.”

~Malcom McPhee

“We support the Evergreen Islands position on e-bikes, stated in their comment letter to the Forest Advisory Board”

~Gene & Marilyn Derig

“I support e-bikes on our trails!”

~Joe Eelkema

“I am a regular visitor to the ACFL, hiking several miles there once a week on average all year long. I am particularly familiar with the Cranberry Lake trails, to which I can walk from my house.

I also conduct a monthly survey of birds in the Cranberry Lake/Mitten Pond section for Transitions Fidalgo.

I am opposed to permitting any additional access for e-bikes beyond those trails already accessible to motorized vehicles. E-bikes are always much heavier than regular pedal bikes and would cause significant incremental wear on the trails, especially during the wet season when the ground is soft.

E-bikes would also increase traffic on steeper trails where the gradient alone now deters many regular bikers. For those willing to climb steep trails on foot, the relative absence of bicycle traffic provides a peaceful environment and reduces stress: Hikers have less to fear from badly-behaved cyclists careening down a trail out of control. Although the vast majority of cyclists respect the rules and give way to hikers, rogue behavior does occur--and the risk of serious injury in a collision is greatly increased by the extra weight of e-bikes.

I urge the Forest Advisory Board to continue to treat e-bikes as motorized vehicles subject to all the restrictions that now apply to such vehicles in the ACFL, including limited trail access and speed limits.”

~Neil O’Hara

“Please let the record show that I am in support of expanded access for Class-1 eMTC access in the ACFL. eMTB's should have the same access as is currently allowed to conventional Mt Bikes. Thank you for allowing my comment”

~Simon LeClair

“I am very concerned and feel that e-bikes should be treated as motorbikes and be limited to a small number of trails. I ride my horse in the forest lands frequently. I also do many hours of trail trimming from my horse, being able to reach higher than the ground crews. I do have a

very proprietary feeling about preserving this wonderful resource. My concerns about e-bikes relate to the speed that they can go (and realizing that some people will modify them to go even faster), and that they are so quiet. An e-bike rushing up on a horse could cause a disastrous wreck, frightening the horse and not giving the rider a chance to control the horse or find a safe place to evade the bike, and the bike would not have time to stop and pull off, as the guidelines require of bicycles. There are old roads in the forest lands would be an acceptable place for them. Thank you”

~Carla Tiberghien

“Most of the comments contributed so far seem to be about concern for trail conditions and conflicts between bikers and walkers in the forestlands. I’m with Bob Jepperson, in that this issue also feeds into the seeming endless debate about whether the ACFL should be considered as parkland, or as a natural environment -- as natural as we can hope for in this place and time – in which we humans are mere visitors in an otherwise self-contained ecosystem inhabited by other creatures (beavers, owls, deer, coyotes and myriad other species) who depend for their very existence on the ACFL remaining as little disturbed as possible. In even considering whether eBikes should be permitted on some ACFL trails, the City is promulgating the hope that the ACFL can be everything to all potential users. But the more we ask of these few remaining ‘unparkified’ areas, the more we contribute, bit by bit, to their despoilation. In settling the question of eBikes in the ACFL, we should be bearing in mind the bigger question: What sort of place do we want Fidalgo Island to be?”

~Arlene Cook

#### [Attachment 1](#)

~Ed Clauson

“We the undersigned\* are in support of the Anacortes Parks Dept changing the current ACFL regulations to allow **Class-1 E-Mt Bikes** the same, equal access to the ACFL trails as currently allowed for Mt Bikes.

Greetings Mr. Voux,

I added my name to the signature list regarding e-bikes in the ACFL. As a 26-year veteran of the Anacortes Police Department, who retired with a line of duty disability/neck & spinal injury, a class 1 e-bike has been the only way I can still enjoy trail riding, and keep up with my son and friends when riding together. Whatcom county has at least provided me an exemption for their parks, it would be great to have another option to ride closer to home.”

~Mike Hanson

“Please let the record show that I am in support of expanded access for Class-1 eMTB access in the ACFL. eMTB’s should have the same access as is currently allowed to conventional Mt Bikes.”

~Matt Hixson

“This email is to record that I am in support of expanded access for Class-1 eMTB (e mountain bikes) in the ACFL. Class-1 eMTB’s should have the same access as is currently permitted for conventional mountain bikes. I have lived in Mount Vernon, WA for the past 22 years, and regularly use the trails in the ACFL and other regions of northwestern WA. As an avid trail user for hiking, running, and mountain biking, I recognize the value of class 1 eBikes for assisting cyclists with disabilities and older people. eBikes are no more damaging to trails than regular mountain bikes. It’s the rider that determines if a mountain bike or eMTB is damaging to the trails, just as is the case for hikers and runners. I’ve seen many hikers damage trails by taking short cuts, pulling plants, kicking mushrooms, littering, etc. I volunteer regularly with Skagit Trial Builders and have participated in several ACFL work parties (including the most recent work party on 19 Feb. 2022, to which I invited 5 friends to volunteer as well). I am very grateful for access to the wonderful ACFL trail system and believe eMTB riders also should have this privilege.”

~Lindsey du Toit

“My name is Bret Andrich from Anacortes and I am a proponent for increasing access for eMTB’s in the ACFL.

I have continued researching into the Class-1 eMTB issue and what is being done in other areas. Management districts throughout the country are working on eMTB access. Earlier this month I spent a couple of hours observing a Zoom meeting from the Durango, CO Parks Dept. where they discussed the results of their Pilot Programs. Colorado is notably ahead of the national curve on this issue and consequently they have the most current data to review. Jefferson and Larimer counties, also in Colorado, ran Pilot Programs and recently crafted new regulations expanding eMTB usage in their districts as well. The reason that I am compiling data is that I feel that concrete evidence and facts are what we need for decision making on this issue. This compiled data and the scientific research are unquestionably favorable toward allowing more Class-1 eMTB access on natural surface trails.

I have read all the letters of opposition to allowing eMTB’s equal access to the ACFL. By a notable margin, the single most expressed concern is about trail damage.

- The previously provided data from the IMBA study concludes that trail damage is NOT an issue and that Class-1 eMTB’s are no different from non-e MTB’s
- On the Federal level the USFS from Tahoe National Forest conducted extensive research which culminated with their release of a (attached) FONSI “Finding of No Significant Impact”. This also concludes that Class-1 eMTB’s are simply not any different than a regular MTB with regard to trail impact.
- At the State level the WA St Parks presenter at the last FAB meeting stated that they have seen “no significant impacts” since they have opened up eMTB access within the St Parks.
- At the local City level, the Bellingham presenter shared a nearly identical observation.

The opposition has not supplied a single piece of factual evidence to support their anecdotal claims of trail damage.

“Powerful” was a word that I came across numerous times in the letters of opposition when describing eMTB’s. Again, please allow me to provide facts:

The industry standard for Class-1 eMTB’s is a 250watt motor. 250watts = 1/3 of one HP. Let me show you some equivalents for reference:

- The kitchen blender at my house = 1.3HP
- Our home garbage disposal = 0.8HP
- The Food processor in our Kitchen = 0.8HP
- A very fit cyclist on a non-e bicycle produces 0.53HP
- Industry Standard 250watt eMTB motor = 0.33HP

This is another fact which is critical to understand. Class-1 Pedal-assisted bikes are simply providing assistance to the pedaling effort that the rider generates.

Speed and safety were the next most common expressed concern in the letters. These are valid concerns of those who are not on bikes, however data that I previously provided shows that a Class-1 Emtb rider is not appreciably faster than non-assisted bicycle rider.

This makes their expressed and valid concerns not one about Class-1 Emtb’s specifically but rather one about trail etiquette. This is an issue I fully support and believe that we as a community can work on. It is NOT however an issue specific to Class-1 Emtb’s. I have had hundreds of pleasant encounters with other trail users on my rides and I know that my contemporaries share similar experiences.

The next most expressed point was that if it has a motor, it is a motor vehicle. The State of Washington disagrees along with the USFS and they have both ruled that Class-1 e-bikes are bicycles. To say that a pedal-assisted bicycle is the same as a motorcycle is a gross misrepresentation and an injustice to those users.

I am asking that you please use hard facts and scientific data in arriving at your recommendation to Parks Staff.”

[Attachment 1](#)

~Bret Andrich

“The fact that our community forestlands even exist is because so many individuals and groups value the treasure of wild places. We have the treasure of a small ecosystem to encourage and preserve nature. Motorized vehicles (and every e-bike has a motor as we all know) are simply not congruent with the values and qualities of an ecosystem that supports wild things. I love my e-bike, but it has no place in our forestlands.”

~Jan Weedman

“I’m submitting this email in support of the use of class-1 ebikes on trails that currently allow other bikes in the ACFL. I enjoyed hiking the ACFL this weekend, but due to a broken ankle in 2019 I now can only hike a few miles and can spend only limited time on the trail. I have used/rented a class-1 ebike on other similar trails and am in the process of purchasing an ebike

for myself. I would like to be able to use more of the local trails instead of taking my e-bike to other locations where they are allowed. This class of e-bike would not leave more of an imprint on the trail than the mountain bike tracks I saw this weekend and would enable me to continue to enjoy more time on the trails. Thank you for your consideration AND for the valuable ACFL!"  
~Anna Nelson

"I am opposed to allowing ebikes (really any bikes) in the forest lands. There are small children, others of all ages and pets on the trails. I think you're inviting injury by putting humans and bikes in close proximity. We've all experienced fast-moving bikes threatening one's safety. Additionally, bikes will negatively impact the forest floor and the health of the forest. Please do not permit ebikes/bikes on the trails in the forest lands"  
~Sharon Stringer

"eBikes are motorized vehicles and should be considered like motorcycles. There are too many bicycles now in the ACFL, more wheeled vehicles with people who must watch the trails and don't even see the forest around them is not necessary. I ride bicycles but not in the ACFL. On special trails and paved roads one has more time to enjoy the surroundings. In the forest a person on a bike cannot also enjoy the scenery unless they purposely stop. I have not seen any bicyclist stop to admire the beaver ponds or other sites, they are there for adventure, not scenery. Bicycles flying down hills are a danger to hikers, we don't need more of them!"  
~Eugene Kiver

"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. Evergreen Islands supports the Forest Advisory Board draft ACFL Ebike policy that "**Ebikes are regarded as motorized recreation~ and are required to follow all motorcycle guidelines.**" "  
~Kathryn Alexandra

"NO wheels on hiking trails, especially motorised ones. More speed and miles can not be the goal in a walking environment. Observing a natural forest environment is not ideal at a speed at which one has to focus on staying on course and avoiding other people and creatures. Our community forest lands are already well used by people, mixing in more wheels, motorised or not, is not the best policy."  
~Konrad Kurp

"I am 75 years old, live in Mount Vernon and have only used the ACFL for hiking, though I own an e-bike.

I have read many of the comments here and feel that quite a few writers are commenting on e-bikes but are actually conflating all their frustrations with trail bikes in general, electric and non-electric. I think people are venting their frustration about bikes on these trails, period. E-bikes are simply the latest iteration of mechanical nuisances on the trails and the only one folks are currently being asked to comment on in this forum. So they do, proving to me at least, that there is a great deal of pent-up hostility. But if you look at the comments, most are about common issues of bike vs hiker in general and not really specific to e-bikes. And about preserving the sanctity of the forest lands. If you give folks an option to keep one more type of nuisance off the trails they will vigorously support it. But that is not the basic issue, in my opinion. I think hikers often feel they are left to walk a trail at their own risk when it comes to sharing the trails with bikes of all kinds. There is little to protect them and no recourse. I myself have nearly fallen off a trail from being startled, not by an e-bike, just a bike. Then the bike is gone.

I doubt that there is a great deal of difference between an e-bike rider and a regular mountain bike rider. Both can noiselessly come up behind someone walking a trail and startle them. Both can cause undue damage and disruption of trails and frighten wildlife. Both can interrupt an otherwise peaceful moment in the woods. It is unlikely that an e-bike will be traveling faster than a standard bike when coming downhill. I will agree that e-bikes can make it uphill more quickly and potentially cause more trail damage if their tires spin. Safety concerns govern downhill speed and those are the same for both. Ebikes are quiet. Noise is not a factor that places them in some distinct category, unlike gas-powered motorcycles which are indeed noisy. I also agree that most trail bike riders are courteous and polite. We tend to remember the one(s) who are not.

I suggest that there be no rule distinction between e-bike access and standard trail bike access. Instead, I think the overall issue of bike access and hikers needs to be re-addressed. Standards for courtesy and right-of-way need to be created and posted. Bikers must use a bell device and ring it at a safe distance when approaching hikers, especially from behind. Perhaps registration or a permit at the time of riding should have to be displayed, so an individual can be held to account for violations. Bikers might be encouraged to contribute to trail repair.

Certainly, hikers need to feel a sense of safety when walking. They are not there for adrenaline rushes. There is a difference between what the trail riders and hikers seek. There will ultimately have to be accommodation to both. That, I believe, is the real issue. Targeting e-bikes is not solving the problem."

~Jerry Eisner

"I am opposed to the inclusion of eBikes in Anacortes Forest Lands. In fact I believe ALL motorized vehicles should be disallowed in the Forest Lands. I realize they have a long "history" on these trails, and some trails may have even been started by the use of motorized bikes. However, circumstances have changed and, has been pointed out by others, they are inappropriate now in terms of habitat protection, erosion, trail safety, and noise. I have

personally witnessed all of these degradations from motorized vehicle use. Please take the appropriate action and disallow the use of motorized vehicles in Anacortes Forest lands. Thank you!"

~Barry Brower

"Class 1 ebikes should be allowed in the AFCL."

~Doug Shepherd

"I Adam McCoy resident of Anacortes since 1985 and avid user of ACFL trails as hiker, biker, and motorcycle rider approve the usage of pedal assistance E-bikes on all bicycle authorized trails. As an expert mountain biker of 30 years and a experienced trail builder the past 17 years. I have seen no actual proof that E-bikes cause anymore wear or abuse to trails than any other normal bicycle. They also make no more noise than any analog bike. As our user group gets older, these bikes make sense to allow everyone the opportunity to stay active and enjoy our amazing forest lands."

~Adam McCoy

"Please let the record show that I am in support of expanded access for Class-1 eMTB access in the ACFL. eMTB's should have the same access as is currently allowed to conventional Mt Bikes. Please contact me if you would like to further discuss my support for this access."

~Kim Betz

" Please let the record show that I am in support of expanded access for Class-1 eMTB access in the ACFL. eMTB's should have the same access as is currently allowed to conventional Mt Bikes."

~Ron Betz

"No e-bikes in the forest lands other than on those trails open to motorized bikes"

~Herta Kurp

"I'm not in favor of adding E-bikes use in our Forestlands.

Over the last 20+ years I have enjoyed many a peaceful hike through this amazing resource we have in town. As our area continues to grows so will the trail usage, as to be expected. With more usage, comes added erosion to the trails. This became very clear during the pandemic. The trails took a big hit. The very sad part was not the trail usage but the total

disrespect that was shown to the forest itself, new trails were forged and delicate habitat destroyed. Habitat that will take years to recover, if it is allowed to do so.

It has been proven that non resident, visitors, are incline to be less respectful of what they are not vested in then our resident.

I'm also concern about the wildlife that call the forest their home. When their gone, the forest will loose a big part of what we call nature.

So I urge extreme caution, look at the bigger picture before making your decision. It is a lot easier to make the wise decisions from the start then to try to rectify it after the fact. Is added stress and noise really the best thing for forest lovers, hikers and wildlife?

"Long, frequent walks in the woods bring peace and serenity to a human life" Thoreau

"Look deep into nature and then you will understand everything better" Albert Einstine"

~Pattie Hutchins

"My husband and I hike every day in the ACFL. My suggestion is that this single class of e-bikes be allowed to operate in the ACFL year round, but restricted to motorcycle approved trails. So a compromise."

~Annah Perry

"I support increased access for eMTBs in the ACFL."

~Julie Slater