

From: [Alan Cascio](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: Class I E-Bikes in MMWD Watershed
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 7:06:18 PM

Dear Board Members,

I am 66 years old and have been riding mountain bikes in the watershed for 35 years. During that time many of my friends have had health issues that have forced them to turn to e-bikes in order to continue riding. My experience is this: By far the vast majority of e-bike riders are courteous, follow the rules, and don't ride any faster than someone on a conventional bike.

I am a rule follower. I don't poach off limit trails, I don't speed, and I am courteous to fellow hikers and horse riders. I can say the same about nearly everyone else I have encountered in the watershed over the years.

Your proposal is to continue studying the issue. We all know e-bikes have been used in the MMWD watershed for a decade or more, and e-bikes have been legal elsewhere in California since 2015. There's nothing left to study. Sometime in the future I may be forced to switch to an e-bike due to health reasons. I would like to know that if I do that I am doing it legally and not breaking the rules.

Please pass a rule allowing Class I e-bike use in the watershed.

Sincerely,

Alan Cascio

53 Grove Lane
San Anselmo

From: [Rod Eshelman](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: class one ebikes
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 3:14:06 PM

I would like to add my voice in support of immediately allowing class one e bikes throughout MMWD property for the following reasons:

- 1- No further delay or study is needed. These bikes have been in use for years in many locations and the Board should not avoid its responsibility to decide the issue.
- 2- I ride an ebike regularly in Marin and I have not seen any unsafe riding any more on ebikes than any other type of bicycle. Riding dangerously fast downhill is not made any more likely by the type of bike. If anything the cost and age of the average rider make the ebike more likely to be safely ridden.
- 3- So many of the trails have uphill sections that without an ebike I would be very limited in where I can ride as I am 78 years old. Expanding outdoor use for older and impaired individuals should be a goal for MMWD

Sincerely

Rodney Eshelman

80 Millay Place

Mill Valley, Ca., 94941

From: [Karlsons, Justs](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: E bikes on mt tam
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 6:25:33 PM

They are a must and must be allowed. Especially the older generations have no good good alternatives to enjoy Mt Tam riding.

Justs Karlsons
60'Centuy Drive
Mill Valley

Over 40 Offices across 4 Continents

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#US

From: [Cecilia Quezada](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: EBike comment letter for Wednesday Hearing
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:31:36 PM

Dear MMWD Board,

I'm writing today in strong support of keeping pedal-assist e-bike access to Mt Tam and MMWD land. I was an avid mountain bike for years until I developed severe rheumatoid arthritis. I didn't bike for many years as I couldn't do the steep slopes of Marin without a lot of pain. With the advent of the e-mountain bike, I am once again able to enjoy the sport I loved so much. I can now go riding with my 20 year old son and keep up with him on his non-e mountain bike. I can go out riding with groups of friends and not be left behind.

Allowing pedal-assist ebikes on MMWD land levels the playing field for those of us with disabilities and banning them would not only be a travesty, but would discriminate against us less mobile. The beauty of Marin should be accessible to ALL and this is only possible by allowing ebikes on the mountain.

Thank you for your consideration,

Cecilia

Cecilia Quezada, AIA NCARB NOMA
President
(She/Her/Ella)

O: 415 331 5133 ext 101
M: 415 706 6767

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From: [Mike Van Allen](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: eBikes on Mount Tam - Yes please!
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 8:20:58 PM

I have been a coach for the Tam High Mountain bike team for 8 years now. During those 8 years I have had the opportunity to expose almost a decade's worth of youth to the joys of the outdoors on Mt. Tam and teach them to respect and "Slow and say Hello!" to other Mt. Tam users. This reinforcement of respect of other Tam users has a long-lasting effect.

If it weren't for my new MINIMAL-assist class-1 e-bike I would have to stop riding and helping coach the team - the kids are too fast, and the bike allows me to cope enough with an injury to ride. It also allows me to enjoy the North side of Tam with my wife who had stopped riding with me until she got her ebike.

This idea of a pilot program for class-1 e-bikes feels like an ingenuous delay tactic. It makes no sense when there's plenty of data to make a decision, and other areas have already figured it out, and, most-importantly, the law is clear. In 2015 California determined that e-bikes were bicycles, not motor vehicles, and entitled to the same access as other bicycles unless a local agency enacts an ordinance to the contrary - that didn't happen.

Re: environmental impact - the National Parks service has submitted an EIR that concluded that e-bikes have no greater environmental impact than other bicycles.

Re: high speed - there is little difference between uphill speeds on a manual and electric bike. Those relying on class-1 ebikes to assist their climbs are not going any faster downhill than other riders on non e-bikes - if anything they're going slower

As global warming worsens we need more adults and use being exposed to nature, and e-bikes help make this possible and opens the eyes of new riders to the possibility of alternate forms of transportation. There is a big beneficial crossover effect that's easily forgotten.

At the end of the day, we're respectful and we can easily coexist with other watershed users, whether they choose to sit down at the table to talk or not.

-Mike Van Allen
New e-bike user, high school mountain bike coach, and environmentalist.

From: [Mike Ghaffary](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: E-bikes on Mt Tam
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:26:12 PM

Class 1 e bikes should always be allowed on Mt Tam. They help senior citizens and anyone who needs a boost or isn't as abled to ride up themselves.

Class 2 and Class 3 are less obvious but some people need cargo bikes for their kids, and it's a slippery slope once you start restricting.

From: [Lisa Williams](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: E-bikes on Mt. Tam
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:13:13 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Lisa Williams, and I am a 59 year old Marin native and have hiked and biked on Mt Tam since I was about five. I was around during the birth of mountain biking and have watched the sport grow. I think access to Mt. Tam is critical to peoples' connection to nature. E-Biking is a way for those of us who are older to be able to enjoy the mountain. I know that Marin Water doesn't have the financial resources to enforce proper biking behavior (safe speeds, etc.) but I think with a bike tax for purchasing or renting e-bikes could go towards enforcement.

Everything evolves, and I appreciate Marin Water's focus on maintaining our water supply, but with organizations such as One Tam (in which I am involved) there are solutions. I am also a graduate of the Environmental Forum of Marin, class of 45, and many of these individuals could be helpful as well.

And remember, horseback riders were against mountain biking in the beginning, and we worked through it. We can work through the transition to e-bikes on the mountain as well.

People need a relationship to nature now more than ever. Nature needs our relationship as much as we need nature, so please do the right thing and allow safe e-bike riding on Mt. Tam. Us older folks would greatly appreciate it.

Best,
Lisa Blackaller Williams
61 Glenwood Avenue, Ross

From: [Chuck Becker](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: E-Bikes on Tam
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:46:30 PM

As a Marin resident and ebiker, I ask that you please continue to allow ebikes on Mt Tam and not create or extend another pilot program. I often ride with my 4 year old on the bike with me, and I couldn't do it without a pedal assist bike. We love riding singletrack together. Ebikes allow us to do this.

Sincerely,

Chuck Becker
San Rafael

From: [Joe Fazio](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: E-biking
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 3:42:22 PM

Greetings:

I would like to take a moment to express my support for e-biking in the Watershed. I am a retired Peace Officer, having spent 40 years in various capacities, including with agencies here in Marin County. When I retired nearly 8 years ago, I took up bicycle riding. Unfortunately, my bones and muscles aren't what they were back in the day so I sold the bike. A couple years later I discovered e-bikes. I am now on my second one. These bikes have allowed me to get back on and ride recreationally and for my continued health. A big portion of my time is spent on the bike-accessible trails and fire roads in the water district and my physical health has improved markedly. In fact, I am now able to ride from my home in Terra Linda all the way out to watershed lands thus reducing vehicle emissions and any need to take up a parking space of another user. Should it become illegal to use e-bikes on district lands would be a huge disservice and disappointment to many senior citizens such as myself. I do not speed and I follow all rules and regs just like every responsible rider does, be they on an e-bike or a regular bike.

The time is now to allow e-bikes a permanent spot on the mountain. No further "study" is needed.

Thank you,
Joe Fazio
San Rafael

From: [Jana Zanetto](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: Please allow class 1 e-bikes on Mount Tam
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 5:33:18 PM

Dear MMWD board of directors,

I'm a lifelong bicyclist, a community college instructor who always biked to work, to shop and do errands, and to enjoy the beauty of Marin, both on trails and on roads. Now at age 73, I can no longer access some of my favorite places if I have to pedal there unassisted, such as Stinson Beach, from my home in San Rafael.

While I now bicycle on a class 3 e-bike, which won't be allowed at this point (and which I purchased specifically because at 32 pounds, I could lift it into my car for rides not from home), I know that e-bikes offer a great benefit for other older bikers like myself. I hope that you will permit such users to continue to enjoy access to Mount Tam.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Jana Zanetto
San Rafael

From: [Michael Rosenbaum](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: Please open my Watershed E-Bikes should be allowed on all MMWD bike trails
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 3:34:51 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I have lived in Ross since 1987 and have enjoyed access to MMWD's wonderful resources. My wife and I have raised three daughters who also benefited from proximity and access to Natalie Coffin Greene Park.

I am now 65 and had purchased an e-bike during COVID. I have ridden over 3,200 miles so far using bike paths, SMART trains and I am seeing and enjoying more of our County then I had been able to do previously.

I am frustrated that I am not able to access MMWD trails so close to my house. I think the MMWD Board has taken too much time to come to a decision regarding e-bikes. I do not remember any such delay or controversy when mountain bikes came into fashion. I feel that my e-bike, which is a Class 3, provides me with the same access to the watershed that I had three decades ago in my youth/early adulthood.

To discriminate by Class of e-bikes is futile since no one rides at 28 mph going uphill and no one uses the motor going down. Gravity is a constant as my high school physics teach would remind me. In addition the design/distinction of a Class 1 vs 3 is very nuanced and would require a lot of inspection time by your Rangers who have better things to do with their time.

Please I beseech the MMWD Board just make a decision and forgo any additional pilot program, otherwise the e-bike issue is nothing more the paralysis by analysis.

Thank you for reading my email.

--
Michael F. Rosenbaum
14 Madrona #1035
Ross, CA 94957

mfrosenbaum@gmail.com

From: [Mark & Mackenzie](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: public comment for Watershed Committee Meeting 2/29
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 3:36:21 PM

I'd like to make a comment of support for strategic opportunity #3, specifically in regard to policies and plans that make trail access safer and more equitable for bikers, hikers, and equestrians.

1) The pilot study for multi-use and bike access should be a high priority, as our current trail use strategy is outdated, and has led to unnecessary conflicts between hikers and bikers. Modern trail sharing policies in high traffic areas such as alternating day use and mandatory bike bells are highly effective in other trail systems (e.g. Mill Creek, UT and Santa Barbara, CA).

2) The RTMP should be updated based on the results of the pilot study and should include modern standards for bike trail and multi-use trail designation, signage, design, and enforcement. This will improve the safety of all visitors, as well as the environment.

Prioritization and investment in these strategies will help alleviate the tremendous tension that has built up among watershed users -- hikers and bikers in particular -- over decades.

Thank you for your work.

--

Mark Sena and Mackenzie Cane

From: [paul daro](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: Writing in support of allowing Class 1 e-bikes
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 3:40:02 PM

Hello,

I am writing in support of allowing Class 1 e-bikes on Watershed lands where bikes are already allowed. E-biking gives us older riders the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the watershed. A lot of us with age and/or disability in our lives need pedal assistance to enjoy the mountain — especially heading up hill. E-bikes simply allow us to be "a younger version of ourselves", and have no more trail impact than regular mountain bikes.

Thank you for your consideration,
Paul Daro
8 Vasco Drive, Mill Valley

From: [Sarah Feeley](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: Please allow Class 1 E-Bikes in MMWD Open Space
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 6:29:14 PM

Dear Members of the MMWD Board,

I am writing to express my support for the use of Class 1 electric mountain bikes (E-MTBs) on the trails under your supervision. As you review public comments regarding this matter, I urge you to consider the significant, positive impact that allowing access to Class 1 E-MTBs will have on accessibility and inclusivity within our community.

I write to you from two perspectives. One is as an avid hiker who, for the last 20 years, has spent every available moment I am not working out somewhere on a trail in my beloved Marin. I so deeply appreciate the work that you all do to protect our precious open space. As a hiker, I recognize that there are only a few trails that allow mountain bikes, and when I choose to go on those trails I know I am going to interact with mountain bikers. Most of the mountain bikers I encounter are courteous, respectful and ride responsibly. If I want to be away from mountain bikers, I can pick almost any trail in Marin, since biking is prohibited on most trails.

The second perspective is as a 1-year old, responsible e-mountain biking enthusiast. Here are the reasons why I am a passionate advocate for Class 1 E-MTB access. Last year, I bought an e-bike. Now, I ride 9.5 miles and climb nearly 2000 vertical feet of challenging terrain every single day. It is THE BEST! My love for E-MTBs stems from their ability to assist me in accessing uphill trails that would otherwise be beyond my reach. Despite the assistance, the climb remains a significant workout, as I pedal continuously to inch up the mountain. Even with max effort, my average uphill speed is around 2 mph. I'm a small woman, who is pushing 50 and has a medical condition that limits my lung capacity. Without the pedal assist, I wouldn't be able to ride in Marin. And, I absolutely love it— it makes me feel so happy and alive.

It's important to address the misconceptions surrounding Class 1 E-MTBs. Contrary to some beliefs, these bikes are not inherently more dangerous or damaging than regular analog mountain bikes. Class 1 E-MTBs, which operate solely through pedal assistance and do not have a throttle, are comparable in safety and trail wear to traditional mountain bikes.

One common misconception is the concern that Class 1 E-MTBs can reach speeds of 20 mph both uphill and downhill. However, the reality is quite different, especially on the steep terrain found in areas like the Tam Watershed. As I mentioned above, my average uphill speed rarely exceeds 2 miles per hour due to the challenging nature of the terrain. Most of the time, when riding downhill, the e-mtb is not providing assistance because the rider is not pedaling. Furthermore, it's crucial to recognize that downhill speed regulations, such as the existing 15 mph limit for all mountain bikes, already apply to Class 1 E-MTBs.

I acknowledge that regulations are likely necessary for Class-2 throttle-based E-Bikes, which could be appropriately regulated based on age or other criteria. However, it's crucial to recognize that Class 1 E-MTBs, like the one I ride responsibly, are indistinguishable from traditional mountain bikes in terms of safety and trail impact.

By prohibiting Class 1 E-MTBs, we risk unfairly discriminating against a significant portion

of the population, including older adults, women, and individuals with disabilities, who rely on these bikes to access and enjoy outdoor recreational activities. Denying access to Class 1 E-MTBs limits the ability of these individuals to experience the natural beauty of our trails and participate in outdoor recreation equitably.

By embracing Class 1 E-MTBs, we can enhance accessibility and encourage more people to enjoy our natural spaces responsibly. Increased participation in outdoor recreation fosters better stewardship of our environment, promotes physical and mental well-being, and strengthens community bonds. Restricting access based on misinformation about the method of travel would only hinder our collective efforts to create a more inclusive outdoor environment.

I urge the MMWD Board to consider the benefits of allowing access to Class 1 E-MTBs on our trails. Doing so promotes inclusivity, expands accessibility, and ensures that all members of our community can enjoy the benefits of outdoor recreation equitably.

Let's not go backwards into a pilot program, let's move forward into allowing equitable access to more outdoor enthusiasts once and for all.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Sarah Feeley

—

Sarah Feeley

Avid hiker, Class 1 e-mtb enthusiast, and Novato, CA resident

From: [Patricia Duffy](#)
To: [Board Comment](#)
Subject: Reject another "test period" for e-bikes
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 9:46:31 PM

To the MMWD Board:

I have been hiking and biking in the MMWD sometimes alone, but usually with my kids, husband and/or friends for over 30 years. I used to ride a "regular" mountain bike, but a few years ago, my knees decided that the uphill weren't happening any more. So, I got an e-bike and it changed my life, seriously. My typical e-bike rides starts in in the Natalie Coffin Greene parking lot and I head up and around Phoenix Lake, up Fish, head towards Bon Tempe and over to Lake Lagunitas. I loop around Lake Lagunitas and then up Rock Springs to Rocky Ridge (take a break to admire the view, and take a selfie, of course), continue across, down and across the dam and head to Bull Frog and the Meadow Club. From there its downhill on Bolinas Rd. until I head back into MMWD and take Concrete Pipe to 5 Corners and back to Phoenix Lake. I do this ride, or a similar ride often - typically once or twice a week in decent weather. This ride was my salvation during Covid. I am 58 years old and there is no way I could do this on a non e-bike.

When I head up Fish, I usually see no one else, or one or two other riders or hikers maximum. The same is true when I am on Rock Springs, Rocky Ridge, Bull Frog and Concrete Pipe. There is no evidence, or reason to believe, that the trails are being over biked or damaged by e-bikes. Any claims that the wight of e-bikes causes too much damage is nonsensical. My e-bike and I combined weigh less than 185 pounds. If weight is the concern, should folks who weigh more than a certain amount not be allowed to ride any bikes, or not be allowed to hike the trails? And what about horses? This argument is, of course, nonsensical and should be rejected.

There is also no evidence, or reason to believe, that e-bikes on MMWD trails pose any greater danger than non e-bikes. Even using the full power of my e-bike going up Fish, I am going well below 5 miles an hour. As for the down hills and flats, it is not unusual for folks on regular bikes to whiz pass me and other e-bikers.

E-bikes have co-existed with bikers and hikers on MMWD trails for many years with no evidence of excessive damage or danger. This issue has been discussed and analyzed enough. Any additional time or money spent studying this non-issue is a waste of your time and tax payers' money. E bikes give me and others the assistance we need to be able to access MMWD on equal terms with other bikers and hikers. MMWD must adopt the California Vehicle Code's definition of bicycles to include pedal-assist e-bikes and put this issue to rest.

Thank you.

Patricia Duffy, Belvedere