

April 9, 2019

TO: Thomas Davidson  
Summit County Commissioner

RE: E-bikes on Summit County Recreational Pathways

FROM: Jay and Priscilla Engeln  
2030 Curreant Way  
Silverthorne, CO 80498

We have been property owners in Summit County since 1993 and are now in our sixth year as full-time residents. We love Summit County and moved here so that we could enjoy the beauty of our wonderful mountain environment.

As outdoor enthusiasts one our favorite activities for exercise is cycling. Unfortunately, as we have gotten up in years the traditional bicycles that we have ridden for decades are not quite as user friendly as when we were younger. The many hilly inclines that we once looked at as fun challenges are now obstacles. Pedal assist e-bikes (Class 1 e-bikes) have allowed us to continue to participate in cycling as a way to enhance our health through exercise as well as to enjoy the outdoors.

There are many unfounded myths about e-bikes. Articles that you can easily reference about these myths include: *Busting 10 Myths About E-bikes*, *Why Do People Use E- Bikes* (Portland State Transportation and Research and Education Center), and an e-bike safety research study from the University of Tennessee. The University of Tennessee research study summary is particularly interesting as it summarizes e-bike use in North America in the following ways:

- \* Travel speeds are not detrimental to e-bikes (average and top speed rates are actually less for e-bikes than traditional bikes on shared use pathways),
- \* E-bike riders act almost exactly like traditional bicycle riders,
- \* E-bike riders and traditional bicyclists violate traffic control devices or wrong-way ride at about the same rate (both groups could improve in this area).

For us, the biggest concern is bike speed for both tradition bikes and e-bikes on the Summit County Recreational Pathways. With a Class 1 pedal assist e-bike this is not a major issue as the pedal assist feature cuts out at 20 mph. On many occasions, we have witnessed people going much, much faster, especially if they are riding tandem bicycles, doing hardcore bicycle training, or using a long board going downhill. If safety is truly a concern maybe a speed limit (like on the Boulder shared use pathways) is the answer, not restricting Class 1 e-bikes.

As property owners over a period of 26 years in Summit County, we have supported the Recreational Pathway System through our taxes as well as personal donations. Banning the use of Class 1 Pedal Assist E-bikes from our recreational paths would be very disappointing to us personally and sends the wrong message to our growing senior population. We do support only Class 1 pedal assist bicycles for use on the Recreational Pathways in Summit County. The Recreational Pathways are intended for the use and enjoyment of all residents and visitors to our community. I sincerely hope that is your focus in making a decision on this issue. Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Jay Engeln

  
Priscilla Engeln