

Attachment C

AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORT
ON
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR E-BIKES ON MONTEREY COUNTY PARKS TRAILS

I. SHOULD THE CURRENT MONTEREY COUNTY E-BIKE ORDINANCE BE UPDATED?

Monterey County Code 14.12.060.I, currently states, “Electric bicycles are prohibited from all County park dirt trails, unless authorized by the Director”.

It is clear that e-bikes are increasingly popular with a wide range of cyclists. Having an extra boost can help with riding longer distances and tackling hills and rougher terrain. E-bikes open doors for a variety of individuals who are physically challenged. E-bike riding is especially beneficial for seniors by helping with balance, mobility and cognition while improving their overall quality of life.

Responding to requests from the public to update the County E-bike ordinance, the Parks Commission formed an Ad Hoc Committee to research the potential for modifying the current ordinance for e-bikes on trails within Monterey County Parks.

II. WHAT ARE THE ISSUES AND HOW ARE OTHER AGENCIES AND JURISDICTIONS APPROACHING THEM?

We felt it was important to learn how other agencies and jurisdictions currently approach e-bike ordinances/regulations and to glean information from the community about potential issues/concerns.

With increased sales and use of e-bikes, many agencies/jurisdictions have reconsidered their original position of banning e-bikes on their trails and have updated their ordinances.

Although e-bikes are being more widely accepted, three issues came up time and time again in our research: Which classes of e-bikes should be allowed on trails, on which kind of trail should e-bikes be allowed (single or multi-use) and the importance of preventing/resolving conflict on the trails.

Which Classes Of E-Bikes Should Be Allowed On Trails - With time and the increased popularity of e-bikes, the industry and more than half of US states have coalesced around a common (though broad) system of three classes of e-bikes:

Class 1 E-Bikes are limited to a top speed of 20 miles per hour, and the electric motor works only when the rider is pedaling. Some models have a throttle on the handlebars that offers an extra power boost, but on Class 1 e-bikes the throttle works only if the rider is pedaling. Class 1 e-bikes are usually allowed on bike paths and bike lanes that are shared with traditional, non-assisted or analog bikes. .

Class 2 E-Bikes are also limited to a top speed of 20 miles per hour, but they have throttles that work whether the rider is pedaling or not. Most Class 2 e-bikes offer electrically assisted pedaling alongside throttles. As with Class 1 e-bikes, they are usually allowed on bike paths and bike lanes that are shared with traditional, non-assisted or analog bikes.

Class 3 E-Bikes are where things get confusing. California doesn't allow Class 3 e-bikes to have throttles but pedal-assisted electric power continues up to 28 miles per hour. While many jurisdictions allow Class 3 e-bike riders to ride in road lanes or a bike-only lane in the

shoulder of the road, they are often prevented from riding on bike paths that exist outside of the road or on multiuse trails shared with pedestrians.

In researching regional, state and federal e-bike ordinances on the internet, the Committee found that many jurisdictions, even those that previously prohibited e-bikes, are moving to allow e-bike riders access to the same trails used by mountain bike and analog bike riders.

On which kind of trail should e-bikes be allowed (single or multi-use) - The committee's research revealed that most jurisdictions find that multi-use trails best accommodate the needs of most users:

- They disperse users across the entire system reducing environmental and social impacts.
- They build a trail community by increasing cooperation to preserve and protect a common resource. Separate trails often breed ill will, territoriality and rivalries.
- They are most cost effective for land managers, requiring fewer signs, less staff and simplified monitoring and enforcement.
- They enable responsible, experienced users to educate outlaws and novices.
- Recent studies show that most e-bikes cause no more damage to trails than mountain bikes making multi-user trails all the more appropriate.

The importance of preventing/resolving conflict on the trails - Preventing and resolving conflict on the trails is essential to a successful trail system. The following represent the major components of a successful trail management strategy:

- User Education - information about a trail's location, routing and authorized uses.
- Etiquette - guidelines for behavior on the trails.
- Signage – appropriate and adequate.
- Public support and involvement.

III. COMMUNITY INPUT

Realizing the importance of access information from current trail-users about this potential ordinance change, the Ad Hoc Committee sent two separate surveys to Monterey County Parks trails user groups: hikers, cyclists, mountain bikers, e-bikers and Equestrians (those using either Toro Park or Fort Ord Travel Camp trails).

The first survey asked open-ended questions regarding over-all attitudes regarding e-bikes, single or multi-use trails and trail safety. We received 180 responses to this survey. We subsequently sent a second survey asking which classification of e-bikes should be allowed on Monterey County Parks. 112 trail users responded as follows:

Class 1 e-bikes	98 (87.5%) responded in favor
Class 2 e-bikes	10 (8.9%) responded in favor
Class 3 e-bikes	23 (20.5%) responded in favor
All of the above	8 (7.1%) responded in favor
None of the above	7 (6.3%) responded in favor

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MONTEREY COUNTY PARKS TRAILS ORDINANCE

The Ad Hoc committee was tasked with researching whether the current e-bike ordinance should be updated in order to assure that Monterey County provide high-quality user experiences for hikers, cyclists, mountain bicyclists, e-bike riders and equestrians, protecting

natural resources and maintaining user safety as well. These challenges are interrelated and cannot be effectively addressed in isolation.

Considering the internet information gleaned from groups, agencies and jurisdictions and the survey responses from local users, the Ad Hoc Committee would like to make two recommendations:

- A. The first recommendation is to replace current Monterey County e-bike ordinance, Code 14.12.060.I, with an ordinance allowing Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 e-bikes on Monterey County Park trails, establishing a cycling speed limit of 20 mph and encouraging single file riding for all cycles. Although Monterey County Parks trail users differed widely in their view of which e-bike classifications should be allowed, we believe that it's logistically impossible for Parks personnel to adequately monitor which e-bikes are being ridden on park trails.

An example of such an ordinance might read:

“No person shall operate any analog or e-bicycle in a Monterey County Park other than on a path designated and signed for that purpose or on a paved vehicular road meant for motor vehicles. All bicyclists shall ride in single file, except to pass. No bicyclist shall exceed 20 mph or a safe speed considering the circumstance”.

- B. Our second recommendation is focused on helping to assure a high quality user experience on Parks trails. We recommend that Monterey County Parks Division coordinate with local user groups to implement a Trail Management Strategy for prevention and resolution of conflict on Monterey County Parks trails employing the following components:

- User Education - information about a trail's location, routing and authorized uses.
- Etiquette - guidelines for behavior on the trails.
- Signage – appropriate and adequate.
- Public support and involvement.