

January 16 2019

To the Directors of Marin Municipal Water District.

Dear Directors :

The District has been asked to consider that "disabled bikers" be allowed to ride e-bikes on the watershed's roads and trails. Prior to making a decision on this matter, I ask that you consider the following:

1. E-bikes will result in a different and potentially more significant impact on the fragile watershed than the current users. The type 1 E-bike weighs an average of fifty pounds, twice the weight of an average mountain bike. As a result they take twice as long to stop as a mountain bike. They are silent coming upon hikers and in China, by reason of the large number of people killed by them, are known as the "silent killers"

2. A fifty pound bike might be difficult for a disabled person to handle on mountain roads. For example, fixing a rear flat tire. The assembly would have to be removed and perhaps the rear tire. A look on the computer will show that this is no easy task. What would happen if the biker cannot fix the flat?

3. Enforcing the rules that control bike access to District lands are currently difficult and costly.

Adding access on e-bikes for "disabled" riders will make the process more difficult. Once word got around, the roads could be crowded with e-bikes. The only way to make sure that the person is disabled would be to have MMWD issue a special license plate for disabled riders. This would require a certification from a physician. And what counts as "disabled?" Any doctor's certificate should either be notarized or signed "under penalty of perjury." It would have to state that due to the person's physical disability, that person is unable to walk on steep mountain areas, but despite that disability, the person would have no problem handling a heavy e-bike on these areas, including the fixing of a flat tire. (or something to that effect)

The high cost of setting this up and the enforcement should also be considered. You should consider fact that one out of eight automobile drivers have disabled license plates, so there could be a lot of people from the bay area asking for e-bike use on the watershed lands.

4. I have assumed that you are primarily looking into allowing e-bikes on roads and not trails. They should not be allowed on trails for the many reasons regular mountain bikes are not allowed, including the fact that their handle bars would be wider than most of the trails. And because of their weight and speed and resulting increased erosion, they would be a greater safety hazard and

would do more damage to the trails. They would also keep many hikers off the trails.

5. I have hiked on Tam and surrounding areas for many years. There used to be many more people, including whole families, walking on the roads. You seldom see that any more since mountain bikes were allowed. People don't like to walk where bikes come racing down the road. E-bikes would make it worse

6. A disabled person can still enjoy the higher places on the mountain by being driven, for example, to the top of Tam, riding down Eldridge Grade on a regular mountain bike. and having someone meet them at the bottom. There are several places where this could be done.

Also, I believe e-bikes are allowed at Tamarancho.

There are a lot of conflicts and problems now with regular mountain bikes on the watershed. Lets not increase that problem by adding e-bikes.

Robert Praetzel

405 Crown Road

Kentfield 94904

e-mail: rpp570@comcast.net