



Electric-Assist Bicycle Position Statement – April 2023

Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC) is an organization dedicated to safeguarding the future of mountain biking in Minnesota through the promotion of responsible riding, establishment and maintenance of mountain biking trails, and preservation of Minnesota's natural resources.

MORC volunteers work in partnership with land managers, who have ultimate authority over the property on which our trails are built. MORC recognizes and respects that it is the responsibility of these land managers to set policies, rules, and ordinances for management of their property in the best interests of the public, and to enforce those policies and rules once they are created.

MORC has been following the development and increasing popularity of electric-assist bicycles (e-bikes). While MORC does not set policy, it is our responsibility to help land managers better understand the effects of the use of e-bikes on MORC-managed trails.

MORC trails are designed for non-motorized bicycles operated under human power and control. We recognize, however, that e-bikes can provide recreational opportunities for individuals unable to operate a human-only powered mountain bike and that land managers may wish to grant their use.

Minnesota state law defines 3 types of e-bikes for use on non-motorized trails. Only Class 1 e-bikes, as defined by Minnesota Statute 169.011, present minimal additional safety risk or concerns for the building and maintenance of MORC trails.

Therefore, we recommend that when e-bike use is allowed on MORC trails, access be limited to Class 1 e-bikes as defined by Minnesota Statute 169.011, Subdivisions 15a.

Subd. 15a. Class 1 electric-assisted bicycle.

"Class 1 electric-assisted bicycle" means an electric-assisted bicycle equipped with an electric motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.

Please note that Minnesota allows local authorities to regulate e-bike use on mountain bike trails as stated in Statute 169.222 (Operation of Bicycle) subdivision 6a, para d:

Subd. 6a. Electric-assisted bicycle; riding rules.

(d) The local authority or state agency having jurisdiction over a trail that is designated as non-motorized and that has a natural surface tread made by clearing and grading the native soil with no added surfacing materials may regulate the operation of an electric-assisted bicycle.