



# POLICY POSITION: STATE NATURAL RESOURCE AGENCY ELECTRIC BICYCLE MANAGEMENT

September 2022

PeopleForBikes is the national association representing more than 300 member companies that manufacture and distribute bicycles, bicycle parts and bicycle accessories (including electric bicycles); as well as the national advocacy group that represents more than 1.4 million Americans who support bicycling.

Our mission is to put more people on bicycles more often and make every bicycle ride better for everyone. Bicycling moves people efficiently and keeps people active and healthy. Electric bicycles are a natural extension of this work. More and more people are using electric bicycles, especially those who wish to continue riding a bicycle but are limited by age, disability, or physical capacity. As a new recreation option, their use can bring the pleasure and freedom of bicycling to many more types of users, and facilitate recreation for many new demographics.

Many state park and natural resource agencies lack updated regulations that govern electric bicycle use on natural surface trails, especially trails open to mountain bikes. This can create confusion for land managers, public safety officials, consumers, and retailers.

**We encourage state natural resource agencies to align electric bicycle regulations with that of analog bicycles and afford local land managers the authority to allow Class 1 electric bicycles on non-motorized natural surface trails in places where traditional mountain bikes are allowed (including single track trails). These changes would harmonize state land management policies with the actual products that people are riding, proactively manage the desired experiences of electric bicycle riders, and provide for their safe operation, consistent regulation, and reasonable use.**

Three classes of electric bicycles have been established to regulate issues around speed, wattage, and motor engagement, and allow for distinct regulation of different types of electric bicycles on trails. Electric bicycles are labeled according to these three classes, and 38 states (and counting) have adopted this system into their traffic statutes. The three classes of electric bicycles allow land managers flexibility to designate various classes depending on local conditions and provide clarity to trail users as to what constitutes as an electric bicycle. These classes are defined on page 3.

Americans will continue to purchase electric bicycles and bring them to state lands for use well into the future. It is critical that the state natural resource agencies have sensible, consistent, fair, and realistic policies to guide this growing use. PeopleForBikes supports land managers creation of modern electric bicycle policies that are created through informed data collection with their local community members. To learn about PeopleForBikes model regulations for the use of electric bicycles on non-motorized and natural surface trails, please refer to page 3.

Electric bicycle policies should be accompanied by educational materials on trail etiquette to alleviate potential trail conflict. PeopleForBikes provides land managers resources to help adopt modern electric bicycle policies at [peopleforbikes.org/topics/electric-bikes](https://peopleforbikes.org/topics/electric-bikes).

We welcome the opportunity to provide further information and appreciate the chance to share our resources and knowledge.

# ELECTRIC BICYCLE REGULATIONS WITHIN STATE NATURAL RESOURCE AGENCIES

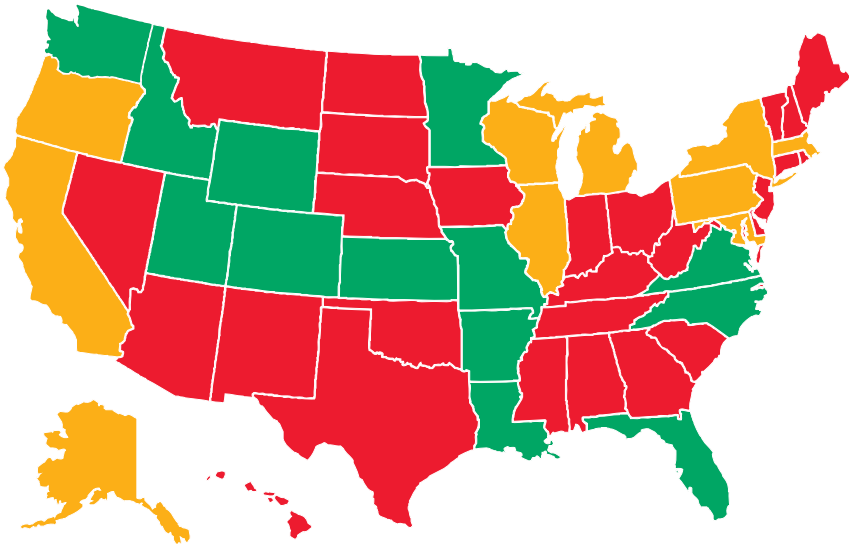
PeopleForBikes encourages land management agencies to authorize the use of Class 1 pedal-assist electric bicycles on non-motorized, natural surface trails, (including singletrack mountain biking trails) where traditional bicycles are allowed.

PeopleForBikes tracks state electric bicycle access nationally. The map below illustrates the status of state natural resource agency regulations for electric bicycle use, updated September 2022.

## ELECTRIC BICYCLE REGULATIONS FOR NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS\*

ALLOWED	At least Class 1 electric bicycles are allowed on non-motorized trails where bicycles are allowed.
SOMEWHAT ALLOWED	Electric bicycles are allowed on a trail by trail basis.
NOT ALLOWED	Electric bicycles are defined as motorized vehicles and are not allowed on non-motorized trails.

\*Local land managers have the most up to date electric bicycle policies. Please consult your local land manager on the latest electric bicycle policy before riding.



The specific state agencies that define all three classes of electric bicycles and allow at least Class 1 electric bicycle access – on non-motorized, natural surface trails where traditional bikes are allowed – are listed below. North Carolina State Parks is not mentioned because they do not define specific classes of electric bicycles with their regulations, even though they allow electric bicycles on non-motorized trails.

STATE AGENCY	DEFINES THREE CLASSES	ALLOWS CLASS 1	ALLOWS CLASS 2	ALLOWS CLASS 3
Arkansas State Parks	YES	YES	NO	NO
Florida Department of Environmental Protection	YES	YES	NO	NO
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks	YES	YES	NO	NO
Louisiana Office of State Parks	YES	YES	NO	NO
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	YES	YES	NO	NO
Wyoming State Parks	YES	YES	NO	NO
Colorado State Parks	YES	YES	YES	NO
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation	YES	YES	YES	NO
Virginia State Parks	YES	YES	YES	NO
Washington State Parks	YES	YES	NO	YES
Missouri Department of Conservation	YES	YES	YES	YES
Utah Division of Parks and Recreation	YES	YES	YES	YES

# MODEL ELECTRIC BICYCLE REGULATION FOR STATE NATURAL RESOURCE AGENCIES

## Section 101 – definitions of electric bicycles:

“Electric bicycle” shall mean a bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals, a saddle or seat for the rider, and an electric motor of less than 750 watts that meets the requirements of one of the following three classes:

- a) “Class 1 electric bicycle” shall mean an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.
- b) “Class 2 electric bicycle” shall mean an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle, and that is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.
- c) “Class 3 electric bicycle” shall mean an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour.

“Natural surface trail” shall mean a trail that is specifically designated as non-motorized, primarily composed of a natural surface tread that is made by clearing and grading the native soil with no added surfacing materials.

\*\*\*Electric bicycles may also need to be excluded from other definitions such as “motor vehicle”, “motorized vehicle,” “off-road vehicle,” “off-highway vehicle,” “dirt bike,” or “all-terrain vehicle.” These determinations should be made on an individual basis, based on the classifications in each state.

## Section 102 – rights and duties of electric bicycles:

Except as otherwise provided in this [insert appropriate designation - article, chapter, etc.], an electric bicycle or an operator of an electric bicycle shall be afforded all the rights and privileges, and be subject to all of the duties, of a bicycle or the operator of a bicycle.

## Section 103 – electric bicycle use:

- a) Class 1, 2 and 3 electric bicycles may be ridden on all streets, roads, bicycle lanes, and improved paths or trails where surfacing materials have been added, that are open to bicycles.
- b) Class 1 electric bicycles are allowed on all trails designated for use by bicycles, unless such trails are specifically designated as closed to Class 1 electric bicycles. This includes mountain bike trails or unimproved trails that lack added surfacing materials that are open to bicycles.