

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5452

C 191 L 21
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning electric-assisted bicycles.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Cleveland, Lias and Wilson, J.).

Senate Committee on Transportation
House Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources

Background: Electric-assisted bicycle, or e-bike, means a bicycle with two or three wheels, a saddle, fully operative pedals for human propulsion, and an electric motor. The motor must have a power output of no more than 750 watts and the electric-assisted bicycle must meet the requirements of one of the three following classifications:

- class 1—in which the motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches 20 mph;
- class 2—in which the motor may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle and is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches 20 mph; or
- class 3—in which the motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches 28 mph and is equipped with a speedometer.

Persons under the age of 16 may not operate a class 3 e-bike. There is no age limit for the operation of class 1 and 2 e-bikes.

There are various restrictions on where the different classes of e-bikes may be operated, for example, all classes of e-bikes may be operated on a fully controlled limited access highway and class 1 and 2 e-bikes may be used on a sidewalk. Class 3 e-bikes may not be used on a sidewalk unless there is no alternative to travel over a sidewalk as part of a bicycle or pedestrian path.

Generally, a person may not operate an e-bike on a trail that is designated as non-motorized and that has a natural surface, unless otherwise authorized by the state agency or local

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

authority having jurisdiction over the trail.

State Lands. Currently, the Parks and Recreation Commission is managing the use of e-bikes as a bicycle. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are managing e-bikes as motorized vehicles.

Summary: WDFW and DNR are directed to undergo a public process to collect information related to e-bike use on natural surface trails and roads that are limited to non-motorized use to determine where e-bike operation may occur and which classes of e-bikes are acceptable on such roads and trails under the agencies' management. The public process engaged in by DNR and WDFW related to electric-assisted bicycles and recreational trails include a consideration of opportunities to improve awareness of applicable trail rules and trail etiquette among all classes of trail users.

The public process must at a minimum include input from a list of interested parties and user groups. The agencies must report the findings to the Legislature by September 30, 2022.

Persons who possess a current parking placard for persons with disabilities may use class 1 and class 2 electric assisted bicycles on nonmotorized natural surface trails and closed roads on lands managed by DNR and by WDFW until June 30, 2023, or until legislation is enacted or rules are adopted on this topic, whichever is earlier.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	3	
House	82	16	(House amended)
Senate	45	3	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 25, 2021