

# **Port Gamble Heritage Park: E-Bike Trial 2021**

## **Introduction:**

In early 2018, the Washington State Legislature enacted legislation (SB 6434) pertaining to the category and use of electric assist bicycles (e-bikes) within the state. The law, which went into effect on June 7, 2018, grants access to class 1 and class 2 e-bikes on multi-use trails, and on a designated non-motorized natural surface trails where such use is allowed by local authorities. Until now Kitsap County Parks policy has classified bikes which have a motor of any type as being motorized and has prohibited their use in County Parks. Based on the change in State Law and technological improvements that have increased popularity of this transportation mode, a subcommittee of the PGFHP stewardship group – at the direction of the Kitsap County Parks director – has been tasked with establishing guidelines and evaluative measures for a 1 year e-bike trail within Port Gamble Heritage Park (with a proposed start date of January 2021). The trial will run in accordance with state law as outlined in SB 6434 and follow regional trends in its parameters of sanctioned use. See appendix A for further discussion of evaluative measures and study details.

## **E-bike classifications established by SB 6434:**

- Class 1 An electric-assisted bicycle in which the motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty miles per hour.
- Class 2 An electric-assisted bicycle in which the motor may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle and is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty miles per hour.
- Class 3 An electric-assisted bicycle in which the motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty-eight miles per hour and is equipped with a speedometer.

## **It is the position of the recommending body that the following two provisions outlined within SB 6434 should be followed without exception:**

- (3) Except as otherwise provided, an electric-assisted bicycle or a rider of an electric-assisted bicycle is subject to the same provisions of this title as a bicycle or the rider of a bicycle. (see full bill for definition of bicycle parameters)
- (9) Except as otherwise provided in this section, an individual shall not operate an electric-assisted bicycle on a trail that specifically designated as nonmotorized and that has a natural surface tread that is made by clearing and grading the native soil with no added surfacing materials. A local authority or agency of this state having jurisdiction over a trail described in this subsection may allow the operation of an electric-assisted bicycle on that trail.

**Other specifics outlined within SB 6434: [full bill as passed](#)**

- In alignment with federal regulations e-bikes are limited to a maximum of 750 W. If the wattage is higher than 750 watts they are classified as a motor vehicle, not a bike, and are subject motor vehicle licensure and other regulations.
- Eliminates age minimums for use of slower e-bikes (class 1 and class 2).
- Gives local jurisdictions the authority to supplement the state law.
- Requires consistency for local regulations pertaining to shared-use paths crossing two or more jurisdictional boundaries.

**Policy Statement for E-Bike Trial: *We recommend...***

- A trial in which Class I and Class 2 e-bikes (max 750 watts, with braking capacity, and their systems have not been modified to increase speed or remove restrictions) are permitted on parkways (gravel surface “logging roads” or other hard surface trails) that are already sanctioned for standard bicycle use within Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park.
- A 12 month trial run time that includes conducting user studies periodically throughout.
- Sanctioned e-bike traffic is limited to parkways – as defined in the above bullet point – and that e-bike travel on any non-motorized trail that has a natural surface, made by clearing and grading the native soil with no added surfacing materials is not allowed.
- Class 3 e-bikes be considered motorized vehicles within Kitsap County Parks and as such remain prohibited from trails within Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park.
- A 15 mph speed limit for e-bikes, consistent with regional trends.
- Kitsap County Parks implement this program in compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), Washington Law Against Discrimination, and related implementing regulations. Accordingly, this trail and any subsequent formal policy does not and shall not be interpreted to restrict the use of wheelchairs (electric-assisted or manual), mobility aids, or Other Power Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMDs) or any other assistive device reasonably necessary to enjoy parks and recreation facilities or to access government programs.
- Our current working group, in collaboration with local partners, undertake an evaluation of the impact of e-bikes within Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park during this trial phase, with a focus on multi-user experience and according to the criteria set forth in appendix A.

- Including financial and administrative resources in the plan for implementation of this trial – with a focus on education and outreach. And ask that the County will support this trial by funding the purchase of educational signage. This signage should focus on user safety and multi-use considerations and include:
  - proper trail etiquette: 15 mph max speed, stay right, verbally signal if passing
  - clear delineation and reminders regarding travel limited to parkways
  - parks department contact information, and personnel assigned within the department to log inquiries and concerns to be included within the evaluation process and trial reporting
- Posting official communications relating to this initiative through parks and county channels that can be shared out through affiliated channels (NKTA- EMBA, Port Gamble Trails).
- Empirical results of the trial and parameters outlined throughout this document be used to develop formal park policy relating to e-bikes for consideration by the KC parks advisory board, the parks director, and ultimately the Board of County Commissioners. Target date for submittal of draft policy for consideration system wide: January 2022

## Appendix A

### **E-Bike Survey Questions – Draft**

The Kitsap County Park Department implemented a trial regarding bicycles in Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park **study bicycle speed limit to 15 mph** and the **use of Class 1 and 2 pedal assist E-bikes** on the gravel logging roads. This survey is part of an evaluation of those policies.

#### **Demographic Information:**

1. Age:      13-19 \_\_\_    20-39 \_\_\_    40-59 \_\_\_    60+ \_\_\_
2. Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Park Trail Usage:**

3. About how often have you visited KC Parks in the past 6 months?  
1-6 \_\_\_    7-12 \_\_\_    13-24 \_\_\_    25+ \_\_\_
4. About how often have you visited Port Gamble Forest Heritage Parks in the past 6 months?  
1-6 \_\_\_    7-12 \_\_\_    13-24 \_\_\_    25+ \_\_\_

5. How do you use KC Heritage Parks?

	Alone	With Friends	With Children
Walking	_____	_____	_____
Running	_____	_____	_____
Dog walking	_____	_____	_____
Biking	_____	_____	_____
Horseback Riding	_____	_____	_____
Bird watching	_____	_____	_____
Foraging	_____	_____	_____
Beach walks	_____	_____	_____
Scenic views	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____

6. What type of trails do you use?

Logging Roads	_____
Single Track	_____

**Biking experience:**

7. How many days do you ride a bike during a typical month?

Paved Roads	1-2 _____	3-4 _____	5-8 _____	9 or more _____
Forest Roads	1-2 _____	3-4 _____	5-8 _____	9 or more _____
Developed Shared-use Paths	1-2 _____	3-4 _____	5-8 _____	9 or more _____
Single track Trails	1-2 _____	3-4 _____	5-8 _____	9 or more _____

8. For which of the following reasons do you ride a bike?

Recreation	_____
To spend time with friends/family	_____
Exercise / increased fitness	_____
Transportation	_____

**Biking experience in Kitsap County Parks:**

9. How many days do you ride a bike in Kitsap County Parks during a typical month      1-2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5-8 \_\_\_\_\_ 9 or more \_\_\_\_\_

10. Have you had any safety concerns with bikes in PGFHP?      Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what and where: \_\_\_\_\_

**E-bike Experience:**

11. Do you own an E-bike?      Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

12. Have you ever ridden an E-bike? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

13. Have you ever used an E-bike in a KC Park? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If Yes, what was your experience with that usage? \_\_\_\_\_

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14. Have you talked to others about their experience using an E-bike? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

15. Have you seen someone ride an e-bike on a Park trail? Don't know \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

16. Have you had any conflicts with E-bikes in a County Park? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Describe:

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17. Do you support or oppose E-bikes use in Kitsap County Parks? Oppose Support  
On logging roads \_\_\_\_\_  
On single track trails \_\_\_\_\_

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