

Vero Cycling Club

E-Bike Policy on Club Rides

Background

The Vero Cycling Club (VCC) was formed to promote cycling in Indian River County, Florida; to encourage cyclists of all levels, from beginning to advanced; to advocate for cycling related interests; to promote safe cycling; and to encourage respect among cyclists and non-cyclists.

The Board stands by its mission to include cyclists at all levels while promoting safety. Since significant differences can exist between e-bikes, conventional bikes and their respective riders, the Board believes that it is in the best interest of all club members to establish policies relative to e-bikes and their riders.

Discussion

E-Bikes now represent a material portion of bikes that are available for sale in many bike shops and, as a result, are now being purchased in higher numbers by recreational cyclists. There are three categories of E-Bikes. Class 1 and 2 e-bikes are limited to a maximum speed of 20 miles per hour. Their difference is primarily a function of how they control speed. Class 1 e-bikes regulate their speed via the crankset and through the rider's pedaling intensity. Alternatively, Class 2 e-bikes utilize a hand-activated throttle. Both Classes 1 and 2 e-bikes may travel on dedicated bike paths or established bike lanes along roadways.

Class 3 e-bikes are faster and capable of traveling at 28 miles per hour. Speed is controlled exclusively by active peddling, similar to Class 1 e-bikes. However, due to their higher rate of speed, Class 3 E-Bikes are prohibited from using dedicated bike paths.

Policy

- 1) E-Bike riders will observe and follow ALL VCC rules and policies governing ride safety and etiquette absent the provision of any other rules specific to E-Bikes.

- 2) E-Bikes eligible to participate in group rides must be pedal-assisted (the bike does not move without pedaling). It may not utilize a throttle, meaning that it must be a Class 1 or Class 3 E-Bike. *Class 2 E-Bikes are therefore prohibited from participating in group rides due to the potential inability to clearly and consistently differentiate throttle-controlled cycles (for example, electric motorcycles) from E-Bikes.* This exclusion extends principally from safety considerations consistent with the intent of protecting all riders.
- 3) The role of ride leaders remains unchanged. They are responsible for ensuring that **all** riders obey club ride rules, pace-line etiquette and established traffic laws. **However, ride leaders are not responsible for determining whether a rider is using an E-Bike or what class of E-Bike a rider may be using.**
- 4) Similar to conventional cyclists that participate in group rides, ride leaders have the authority to speak with any rider of an E-Bike if, in their judgment, they feel that rider is compromising the safety of others on the ride. This authority also includes making them aware of what they are doing incorrectly or to request that the E-Bike rider maintain a position at the back of the paceline at least 2 bike lengths to ensure the safety of others.
- 5) E-Bike riders that participate in group rides are responsible for knowing the ride rules and paceline etiquette as well as following those rules, with particular emphasis on ride pace.
- 6) E-Bikes Class 1 and 3, may participate in all group rides regardless of the advertised pace. However, NEW e-bike riders must ride with their previously established ride pace and progress to faster paces only as their demonstrated ride proficiency and bike handling skills become appropriate for faster paces.
- 7) On group rides with a pace of 20 mph or less, established E-Bike riders may ride anywhere within the group and rotate through the pace line along with all other riders. However, when assuming the front position on a pace line, E-bike riders must use caution to not accelerate the pace of the group. They may only maintain the established pace, or safely reduce it in the event a hazard exists that should be prudently observed to protect other riders in the group.
- 8) On rides of 20 mph or higher, e-bike riders must remain at the back of the paceline at all times. E-Bike riders must recognize and respect that there is

a direct and critical correlation of ride speed, rider experience, and rider skill that contributes to, or conversely, can undermine the safety of all riders in the group. Most riders that possess the physical stamina to ride at high speeds also have acquired a high level of riding skill through multiple years of training and other experience. These skills are essential to maintaining the safety of riders at high speed. Consequently, E-Bike riders may only participate in group club rides where the established pace is equal to or slower than rides they have previously demonstrated proficiency and safety on a conventional bike.

- 9) On pacelines that are faster than a rider's established proficiency on a conventional bike, **mountain bike or commuter e-bikes** are required to stay at the rear of the pace line at all times.
- 10) An E-Bike rider is responsible for ensuring they have sufficient battery reserves and tools specific to e-bikes to enable them to complete the ride they have chosen without assistance from other riders. It is not the Ride Leader's responsibility to ensure that the e-bike rider is safely returned to the starting point should they run out of battery. This includes "no drop" rides. While established rider etiquette will most likely result in other riders remaining with them through the remainder of the ride, that should not be an expectation of E-Bike riders.

Approved by the Vero Cycling Club Board of Directors April 3, 2023