

POLICY TITLE: The Use of Power-Assisted Bicycles (“E-bikes”) and Other Electric Vehicles in Provincial Parks

BRANCH/DIVISION: Parks Branch

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Policy Objectives

- To manage the use of power-assisted bicycles in provincial parks in a way that allows their use for recreation and transportation, while avoiding impacts to the safety and enjoyment of other park users.
- To limit the use of other types of electric mobility devices in provincial parks due to reasons relating to public safety and appropriateness for the park setting (excluding the use of electric motor vehicles on roadways, the use of electric off-road vehicles in approved areas, and devices classified as a motorized mobility aid. See Directive 5.2.4 for guidance on the use of motorized mobility aids and draft Directive 5.2.6 for guidance on the use of off-road vehicles).

Policy Statements

- In general, power-assisted bicycles are permitted anywhere within provincial parks that mountain bikes are permitted, including trails and other public areas designated for mountain bike use (including winter trails that may be packed for fat biking). However, the use of power-assisted bicycles on individual trails or other specific public areas may be prohibited due to identified safety, operational, environmental or other concerns (see “Exclusions”).
- If a trail or public area is open to mountain bikes but closed to power-assisted bicycles, this prohibition must be communicated by on-site signs and area maps. A specific reason for the prohibition must be identified internally, and available to the public upon request, unless the reason is related to factors that must be kept confidential.
- Within provincial parks, other types of electric vehicles/devices that do not fall under the definition of power-assisted bicycle or motorized mobility aid, such as an e-scooter, are not permitted on trails or on other public areas such

as beaches. They may be permitted on roadways if they are compliant with the requirements of The Highway Traffic Act. Electric off-road vehicles and watercraft are excluded from this provision, as they are permitted wherever gas-powered off-road vehicles and watercraft are permitted.

- Power-assisted bicycle use in provincial parks is subject to the requirements of The Highway Traffic Act, which addresses subjects such as operational and helmet requirements, and the minimum age of operation.
- Power-assisted bicycles may be used for hunting-related purposes in provincial parks, but are subject to all hunting rules and regulations that apply to vehicles.

Definitions

As per The Highway Traffic Act, **a power-assisted bicycle** is a vehicle that

- (a) has a handlebar for steering and pedals,
- (b) is designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground,
- (c) can be propelled by muscle power applied to the pedals,
- (d) has an electric motor but no other type of motor,
 - (i) the motor has a continuous power output rating, measured at its shaft, of 500 W or less,
 - (ii) if engaged by the driver applying muscle power to the pedals, the motor immediately stops providing the vehicle with motive power when the driver stops applying muscle power,
 - (iii) if engaged by a throttle, the motor immediately stops providing the vehicle with motive power when the driver activates a brake, and
 - (iv) the motor cannot provide the vehicle with motive power when it is travelling at more than 32 km/h¹, and
- (f) has either
 - (i) a mechanism to turn the electric motor on and off that can be operated by the driver, and if the vehicle has a throttle, is separate from the throttle, or
 - (ii) a mechanism that prevents the motor from engaging until the vehicle is travelling at 3 km/h or more.

A power-assisted bicycle is not considered a motor vehicle but is considered a vehicle.

¹ Note that if an electric bicycle is travelling at a speed greater than 32 km/h it does not meet the definition of a “power-assisted bicycle” under The Highway Traffic Act, and therefore is not permitted on trails or beaches, as per the terms of this Park Directive.

A **vehicle** is a device, in, upon, or by which a person or thing is or may be transported or drawn upon a highway but does not include

- (a) a device designed to be moved solely by human muscular power or used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks, or
- (b) a motorized mobility aid.

Procedures

- In areas where power-assisted bicycle use will continue to be permitted alongside mountain bike use, no action is required.

Process for Closing Trails/Areas to Power-Assisted Bicycle Use

- Before closing a particular trail or area to power-assisted bicycle use (while mountain bike use is to continue to be allowed), District, Regional and Head Office staff must discuss the issue and confirm there is a valid reason for the decision.
- Any closures should be illustrated on trailhead or other area signs, and on maps for the area if they exist, using the following symbol (or a similar standard) with a cross through it:



- Additional signage, communication materials and/or an enforcement presence may be required if power-assisted bicycle use continues to occur in areas where it has been prohibited.
- Manitoba Parks will prepare communications materials about the use of power-assisted bicycles in provincial parks and make this available online and in any other locations as appropriate. This should include information about the safe operation of power-assisted bicycles as well as trail user etiquette. Where this information is available on the Manitoba Parks website, details provided should include The Highway Traffic Act requirements for power-assisted bicycle use, as well as a list or map of locations in provincial parks where power-assisted bicycle use is and is not permitted.

Exclusions

- In accordance with Section 32(4) of The Park Activities Regulation, power-assisted bicycles may not be operated in the Mantario Wilderness Zone in Whiteshell Provincial Park.
- Additional trails or areas where power-assisted bicycles are not permitted may be added to this directive over time.

Policy and Legislation Cross Reference

- The Highway Traffic Act
- The Provincial Parks Act, Park Activities Regulation:
 - **32(1)** No person shall operate, park, leave unattended or abandon a vehicle or equipment in a provincial park in a manner or in a place that will
 - (a) make unnecessary noise;
 - (b) create a harmful or dangerous condition to park users or park resources;
 - (c) interfere with maintenance or construction being carried out in the park;
 - (d) obstruct the free passage of vehicle traffic; or
 - (e) contravene a notice or sign of restriction or prohibition
 - **32(2)** Except under the authority of a permit issued by the minister, no person shall operate a vehicle in a provincial park unless it is operated
 - (a) on a roadway
 - (i) in accordance with the requirements of The Off-Road Vehicles Act, in the case of an off-road vehicle, or
 - (ii) in accordance with the requirements of The Highway Traffic Act, in the case of any other vehicle;
 - (b) in a place approved for that purpose by the director; or
 - (c) on a designated route prescribed in the Vehicle Use in Hunting Regulation, Manitoba Regulation 212/94.
 - **32(4)** Except under the authority of a permit issued by the minister, no person shall operate a vehicle within the portion of Whiteshell Provincial Park identified as a wilderness zone on Plan No. 18973 filed in the office of the Director of Surveys in Winnipeg.