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PART-IV

Diversion of 0.23 ha in compartment no.308, 309 & 312 of Rapur-Yerragonda RF, Rapur Range, SPSR Nellore Division for laying optical fiber cable along the road within the existing Right of Way (RoW) in favour of M/s Jio Digital Fibre Private Limited, Visakhapatnam.

17	Detailed opinion and specific recommendations of the State Forest Department for acceptance or otherwise of the proposal with remarks (while giving opinion, the adverse comments made by concerned Conservator of Forests or Deputy Conservator of Forests should be categorically reviewed and critically commented upon)	Recommended.
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Date:01/01/2023

Signature

Place:

Name:Anand Kumar Jha

Office Seal:

Signed by Anand Kumar Jha

Date: 01-01-2023 22:36:41

Reason: Approved

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**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
FOREST DEPARTMENT**

<p>From Sri Y. Madhusudhana Reddy, IFS., Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force(FAC), Andhra Pradesh, 'AranyaBhavan', Guntur-522004.</p>	<p>To The Spl.Chief Secretary to Government, Environment, Forests, Science & Technology Department, Andhra Pradesh Secretariat, Velagapudi.</p>
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Rc.no.EFS02-15026/2/2021/FCA-SEC/PCCF/FCA-3, Dated:02/01/2023.

Sir,

Sub: APFD – F (C) Act, 1980 – Diversion of 0.23 ha forest land in compartment - no. 308, 309 & 312 of Rapur- Yerragonda RF, Rapur Range in Nellore Division for laying of underground Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) along the existing Right of Way in f/o JIO DIGITAL FIBRE PRIVATE LIMITED- Proposals submitted – Reg.

Ref:- 1. Online proposal no. FP/AP/OFC/120317/2021, Dt.21.01.2021.
2. PCCF (HoFF), A.P., Guntur, Rc.no.EFS02-15026/2/2021/FCA-3, Dt. 24.03.2021.
3. CCF, Guntur, Rc.no.536/2021-TO, dated:1.11.2022 & 20.12.2022.

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It is submitted that, the Authorized Signatory, M/s. Jlo Digital Fibre Private Ltd., Visakhapatnam (User Agency) in the reference 1st cited has submitted proposal for diversion of 0.23 ha forest land in compartment no. 308, 309 & 312, Rapur Range in Nellore Division for laying of underground Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) along the existing Right of Way in f/o JIO DIGITAL FIBRE PRIVATE LIMITED.

The Chief Conservator of Forests, Guntur in the reference 3rd cited has submitted the proposal as per the guidelines issued under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and amendments from time to time for diversion of 0.23 ha forest land in compartment no. 308, 309 & 312, Rapur Range in Nellore Division for laying of underground Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) along the existing Right of Way in f/o JIO DIGITAL FIBRE PRIVATE LIMITED.

The user agency has furnished the following information in Part-I:

- Forest area to an extent of 0.23 ha is required for laying optical fiber cable by M/s. Jlo Digital Fibre Private Ltd., Visakhapatnam.
- Cost of the project is mentioned as Rs.169 lakh.
- The user agency has justified that, the optical fiber cable is generally laid along the admitted RoW of State/National Highway roads. Such roadside area is declared as the protected forest under the Indian Forest Act. The

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area requested for laying of the Optical Fiber Cable is the bare minimum considering the requirements and considering the safety of the cables so laid./ Since the telecommunication cables also carry the communication from the Government officers, Defense & Strategic establishments, and from different industrial organizations apart from the public, for the safety and confidentiality of the conversation so made, it is not advisable to lay such important cables on the private land belonging to different parties.

- The user agency has furnished undertakings for payment of NPV, Addl. NPV, CA, tree extraction charges etc.
- The area proposed for diversion is 0.23 ha. Hence Cost benefit analysis does not arise.
- No human displacement is involved in this project.
- No loss of public facilities involved in this project.
- Employment likely to be generated is 13,000 man days approx will be generated.
- The user agency has stated that, clearance under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 is not required.

The District Forest Officer, SPSR Nellore has submitted the following information in Part-II.

- Forest land to an extent of 0.23 ha is required in compartment no.308, 309 & 312 of Rapur- Yerragonda RF for laying of Optical Fiber Cable along the road within the existing Right of Way (RoW) passing through forest land in Rapur-Yerragonda RF in favour of M/s Jio Digital Fibre Private Limited, Visakhapatnam.
- Legal Status of the forest is RF.
- The alignment of OFC passes through compartment no.309 and 308 of Dacheru to Penubarthi road which is a Right of Way(RoW) as mentioned in Gazette notification vide orders no.604, Revenue dt. 17.08.1894 of Board of Revenue (Land Revenue). Copy enclosed.
- The rest of alignment in compartment no.309 and 312 passes through the newly formed "Adurupalli - Penchalakonda alternate Road" for which the GoI, MoEF, Bangalore in Lr.no. F(C)A/16.1/AP/64/RC/1065, dt. 26.08.2002 and G.O. Ms. no. 94, EFS & T (F.R.I) Dt. 13.09.2002 have accorded Final (Stage-II) approval. Copy enclosed.
- The density of the adjacent RFs is 0.4. As per the field inspection of the DFO, SPSR Nellore, this area falls in Eco-Class IV (Tropical thorn forests and tropical dry ever green forests) open scrub forests..
- No tree felling is required for this project.
- The area is not vulnerable to erosion.
- Approximate distance of the proposed site for diversion from boundary of RFs is 0.3 to 0.5 km.
- The proposed laying of underground Optical Fibre Cable falls in Rapur-Yerragonda RF which is within the Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) of Sri Penusila Narasimha Wildlife Sanctuary.
- No rare/ endangered/unique species of fauna found in the proposed area.

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- No protected archaeological heritage sites / defense establishment or any other important monument is located in the area
- The requirement of forest land is 0.23 ha, as proposed by the user agency is un-avoidable and barest minimum for the project
- The User Agency has not violated the provisions of Forest(Conservation) Act, 1980.

The Location map in (S.I) Sheet in 1:50,000 scale, authenticated DGPS maps are furnished.

The District Forest Officer, SPSR Nellore has inspected the area proposed for diversion of forest land on 03.11.2022 and stated that, the area proposed for diversion is falling in compartment no.308, 309 & 312 of Rapur- Yerragonda RF. The proposed laying underground Optical Fibre Cable falls in Eco-Sensitive Zone of Sri Penusila Narasimha Wildlife Sanctuary. The rare/unique /endangered species of flora and fauna like Red sander species are noticed in adjacent RF areas. Site inspection report of the District Forest Officer, SPSR Nellore is enclosed herewith.

Accordingly, in column no. 13 of Part -II, the District Forest Officer, SPSR Nellore has **Recommended** the proposal, as there are no Rare/unique/endangered species of flora and fauna noticed in adjacent RF areas.

In part -III, the Chief Conservator of Forests, Guntur has agreed with the information furnished by the District Forest Officer, SPSR Nellore and **Recommended** the proposal for diversion of forest land.

In Part -IV, the Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (FCA) & Nodal Officer (FCA), Office of the Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests &Head of Forest Force, A.P, Guntur has agreed with the information furnished by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Guntur and the District Forest Officer, SPSR Nellore and **Recommended** the proposal for diversion of forest land.

The User Agency has furnished an undertaking to submit RoFR Certificate under RoFR Act, 2006, as stipulated by the MoEF, GoI, New Delhi in the Lr.No.11-9/1998-FC (pt), Dt.05.07.2013, stating that, issuance of Form-I (for Linear Projects) under RoFR Act, 2006 from District Collector is under process and may take some time due to the recent District re-organization in the State and informed that they were constantly pursuing the same and would be submitted before Stage-II approval. Copy of undertaking is enclosed herewith.

Further, it is to submit that as per the guidelines issued by the GoI, MoEF, New Delhi this proposal has been uploaded in the Ministry's web portal (www.parivesh.nic.in) & a unique proposal number no. **FP/AP/OFC/120317/2021** has been generated for this proposal. A copy of the Acknowledgment slip generated by the Ministry's web portal is enclosed herewith.

In this regard it is to submit that, as per para 4.2 of Chapter-4 of Comprehensive guidelines issued by the GoI, MoEF&CC, New Delhi vide F.no.5-2/2017-FC, dt. 28.03.2019 in supersession of all guidelines issued in the past, for effective and transparent implementation of the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, the subject project falls under general approval category.

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Further, as per Chapter 2.6 of Comprehensive guidelines issued by the GoI, MoEF&CC, New Delhi vide F.no. 5-2/2017-FC, dt. 28.03.2019 in supersession of all guidelines issued in the past, for effective and transparent implementation of the provisions of Forest(Conservation) Act, 1980, Compensatory Afforestation is not required towards diversion of forest land upto 1.00 ha. However, cost of plantation (including ten years maintenance) of ten times the number of trees likely to be felled or specified number of trees as may be specified in the order for diversion of forest land (subject to a minimum number of 100 plants) shall be levied from the user agency towards compensatory afforestation.

In view of the above, the statutory proposal along with necessary enclosures in (3) sets, for diversion of 0.23 ha in compartment no.308, 309 & 312 of Rapur-Yerragonda RF, Rapur Range, SPSR Nellore Division for laying optical fiber cable along the road within the existing Right of Way (RoW) in favour of M/s Jio Digital Fibre Private Limited, Visakhapatnam duly recommended in Part-IV, subject to the conditions stipulated in GoI, MoEF&CC, New Delhi in F. no.5-2/2017 (FC Division) Dt. 28.03.2019 is submitted herewith for taking further action as deemed fit in the matter.

Encl:- (3) sets of proposals

Yours faithfully,
Y Madhusudhana Reddy I/s
PrI. Chief Conservator of Forests &
Head of Forest Force(FAC)

Copy to the Chief Conservator of Forests, Guntur and the District Forest Officer, SPSR Nellore for information.

Copy to the Authorized Signatory, M/s Jio Digital Fibre Private Limited for information and necessary action.