

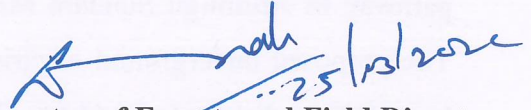
**SITE INSPECTION REPORT OF CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS AND FIELD  
DIRECTOR, SRIVILLIPUTHUR MEGAMALAI TIGER RESERVE (SMTR),  
MADURAI**

Inspected the area proposed for diversion on 19.03.2022 along with Deputy Director, SMTR, Srivilliputhur, Forest Range Officer, Saptur and Forester (Saptur section). The area requested by the user agency for laying 11 KV HT XLPE underground Electric Cable towards Electrification of Arulmigu Sundara Mahalingam Swamy Thirukkivil from Vazhaithoppu pathway to Arulmigu Sundara Mahalingam Thirukkivil area across Saptur R.F is 0.28 ha. The proposed underground electric cable passes through Saptur beat IX and X and Watrap beat IV for a distance of 5.61 km. The following observations were made during the visit.

1. Majority of the proposed area for diversion falls under core area of Srivilliputhur Megamalai Tiger Reserve, Srivilliputhur Division.
2. It is a part of Agasthiyar Biosphere Landscape, Elephant Reserve No. 7 and erstwhile Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary.
3. Topography: The entire area is a hilly region and its altitude varies from 179 to 947 m above MSL. Several streams also run across the proposed area for laying underground cable. In several stretches the slope / gradient of the hill would be around 60-70 degree.
4. Vegetation types: It varies from tropical dry deciduous forest in the lower reaches to tropical semi evergreen forest and montane grassland in the upper reaches.
5. The forest inhabits lesser known mammals in the lower reaches and it is home for large mammals like elephant, gaur, Nilgiri Tahr, Sambhar, common langur in the higher reaches.
6. The forest floor in the lower reaches is formed with disintegrated rocky boulders followed by long stretches of huge rocky outcrops. Grass lands along these rocky outcrops is an ideal habitat for Nilgiri Tahr.
7. Arulmigu Sundara Mahalingam Swamy and Sandana Mahalingam temple complex has very few buildings which can be electrified by off-grid solar power.
8. Currently, no pilgrims are allowed to stay inside the temple premises, free food distribution is permitted before frisking point at the foothills in Thaniparai to prevent pollution in the hills as per Hon'ble Madurai Bench of Madras High Court judgment in WP (MD) No. 6400 of 2019.
9. Laying of the cable underground on the rocky stretches would necessarily involve blasting of rocks.

10. Overlaying the underground cable on the rocks inside galvanized iron pipes and covering it with concrete as proposed by user agency will endanger the entire ecosystem.

The electrification of Arulmigu Sundara Mahalingam Swamy Thirukkovil by laying 11 KV HT XLPE underground Electric Cable will be detrimental to the ecological integrity of the area. Moreover, the Hon'ble Madurai Bench of Madras High Court had been very concerned in maintaining the ecological integrity of the forests and wildlife.



**Conservator of Forests and Field Director,  
Srivilliputhur Megamalai Tiger Reserve,  
Madurai-2**