

Project Name: Forest proposal for Approach Road with Avalanches Protection Works from Z-morh Tunnel East Portal to Zojilla Tunnel West Portal in Ganderbal district of Jammu & Kashmir.

Justification for locating the project in forest land

The project highway section of National Highway-1 (NH-1) is an existing road connecting Srinagar and Kargil Leh. The condition of NH-1 at Zojila pass is not much safe and road accidents takes place at Zojila pass due to its terrain. Zojila Tunnel under Zojila pass on the Himalayas between Sonamarg and Drass town in Kargil district of the Indian Union territory of Ladakh, currently under construction. The proposed approach road along with Zojila tunnel will ensure year-long road connectivity between Srinagar and Kargil which remains closed for about seven months due to heavy snowfall on the Zojila pass which is situated at an altitude of 3528 m on Srinagar- Leh Highway. Zojila is 15 km from Sonamarg and provides a vital link with Drass and Kargil in Ladakh but remains closed for 6-7 months (from Nov to May) during winter due to heavy snow fall & avalanches. It takes more than 3 hours from Sonamarg to Drass through the Zojila pass but the project road and tunnel will reduce the travel time to only 30 minutes. This project road and Zojila tunnel are a strategic requirement of the Armed forces for security.

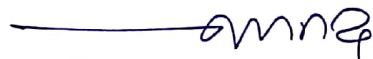
The proposed road section of NH-1 is having following objectives in the view:

- i) To provide all-weather connectivity from Srinagar to Kargil- Leh which is strategically very important for national security and tourist's attraction in the area.
- ii) Better connectivity to locals.
- iii) Boost for the economy of the area by generating more employment through tourism and other allied activities

The construction of approach road owes a strategically significance as it is the main axis that connects the border, it is essential that all weather connectivity is provided for speedier induction of Armed forces to forward areas. In addition, the project will provide better & safe connectivity and increase tourists in flow that will significantly improve the socio-economic conditions of the people in the region. Further, other indirect long term benefits in terms of saving vehicle operating cost, less fuel consumption, less travel time & cost of conveyance will result in economy of resources and time.


The project alignment is located in hilly terrain dominantly by forest along the project, a total of 6 nos. of alignment alternatives were prepared/ studied during alignment stage and the proposed one has been found to be most suitable in view of environment, social and technical aspects by National Highway & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) and Snow Avalanche & Study Establishment (SASE) for the implementation.

The project has been designed carefully keeping importance of the Himalayan region in mind. However, to fulfill requirement of the project specifications it involves a diversion of 49.5904 hacs of forest land for the various components like road, tunnels and muck dumping sites under the project.


Signature of User Agency

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Countersigned


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