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MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST &
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File No.:— FP/UK/MIN/46859/2020/2104

Dated: 08/01/2021

To,

The Addl. Director General of Forests,
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change,
Government of India,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, New Delhi-110003.

Sub.: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for non-forestry use of 190.00 ha of forest land for collection of minor mineral from Chandrabhaga River, Narendranagar Forest Division and District Dehradun, Uttarakhand State (Online Proposal No. FP/UK/MIN/46859/2020).

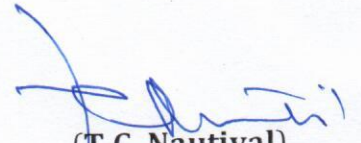
Ref.: Letter No. 8-18/2020-FC dt. 27-09-2020 of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi.

Sir,

With reference to your letter mentioned above on the subject cited above, please find enclosed herewith the Site Inspection Report for your information and further necessary action please.

Yours faithfully,

Encl: As above


(T.C. Nautiyal)
DIGF (C)

Copy to: - Office order pad.

INTEGRATED REGIONAL OFFICE DEHRADUN
SITE INSPECTION REPORT
PROPOSAL NO. FP/UK/MIN/46859/2020

PROPOSAL SEEKING PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT UNDER SECTION 2 OF FOREST (CONSERVATION) ACT, 1980 FOR NON-FORESTRY USE OF 190.00 HA OF FOREST LAND FOR COLLECTION OF MINOR MINERAL FROM CHANDRABHAGA RIVER, NARENDRANAGAR FOREST DIVISION AND DISTRICT DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND STATE (ONLINE PROPOSAL NO. FP/UK/MIN/46859/2020).

Name of the Inspecting Officer – Shri. T. C. Nautiyal, IFS, DIG(F), Integrated Regional Office, Dehradun, MoEF&CC, Dehradun.

Site inspection of the above mentioned proposal was carried out on 05/01/2021 with the officials of State Forest Department and representatives of the User Agency. The following Officers were present during the inspection:

Officers/Staff from the State Forest Department

1. Shri Dheeraj Pandey, IFS, CF Shiwalik.
2. Shri D S Meena, IFS, DFO Narendranagar, Muni-ki-Reti
3. Field staff of forest Department.

Officer staff from the User Agency

1. Shri Nishant Verma, IFS, General Manager, Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation.
2. Shri Inder Singh Negi, RM, Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation.
3. Shri Sher Singh, DLM, Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation.
4. Field Staff from UKFDC.

1. Legal Status of the Forest Land Proposed for Diversion

Legal status of the land proposed for Diversion is Reserve Forest land.

Item-wise break-up details of the forest land proposed for diversion.

The forest area proposed for diversion propose the construction of various components in the project as mentioned below:

S.no	Component	Forest Land (ha.)	Non-Forest Land (ha.)
1	Safety Zone	12.3	0
2	Mining Area	177.7	0
Total		190	0

Since, the proposal is related to river bed material extraction, the safety zone is to be kept far higher than the 7.5 mtrs. As per the study conducted by Indian Institute of Soil and Water Conservation, the peripheral 25% width of the river bed is to be kept as safety zone and RBM mining is to be carried out only in the middle 50% of the area. The User Agency will suitably demarcate the peripheral boundary with concrete pillars at the interval of 500 mtrs. The middle 50% of the area will be demarcated with

smaller concrete pillars at 50 mtrs interval as per the mining policy of the state. The pillars needs to be geo-referenced for future monitoring.

2. Whether proposal involves any construction of buildings (including residential) or not. If yes, details thereof.

No.

3. Total cost of the project at present rates.

Total project cost is Rs. 3653 lakhs.

4. Wildlife

Whether forest area proposed for diversion is important from wildlife point of view or not?

The Divisional Forest Officer present on site has informed that the area is visited by elephants and other wildlife. It is around 3 KM aerial distance from the boundary of the Rajaji National Park and therefore is a part of the deemed eco-sensitive zone as the eco sensitive zone has not been notified. It was informed that the proposal has been submitted for NBWL clearance by the User Agency separately. It is recommended that the User Agency will comply with the directions of NBWL for wildlife mitigation measures.

5. Vegetation:-

The density of the area proposed for diversion has been reported as 0.3 by the DFO, Narendranagar, Muni-ki-Reti Forest Division but it is seen that there are no trees on the river bed. On certain patches shrubs like Adatoda, etc. have come up which are not significant.

Effect of removal of trees on the general ecosystem in the area.

Nil.

6. Background note on the proposal.

The proposal is for removal of River Bed Material (RBM i.e. sand, gravel and silt) from the river bed of River Chandrabhaga, a tributary of river Ganga, by Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation. During the rainy season, huge quantity of clay, silt, sand and boulders are brought down by overflowing streams in the nearby hills. The coarse and fine particles of sand, silt and clay are settle down once the river/ stream comes to the level surfaces and get deposited. Thus, every rainy season brings in a fresh layer of RBM. This material is economically valuable for construction purposes and is in great demand. In absence of regulated removal, the river bed gets elevated and leads to overflow of streams resulting into floods in the nearby villages. Therefore, consistent removal of RBM helps in training of the river bed and is an effective means of flood control in the adjoining villages. However, the removal of RBM needs to be properly regulated so that it serves the economic as well as ecological purposes.

Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation had executed a study through Indian Institute of Soil and Water Conservation, Kaulagarh Road, Dehradun, on assessment of extractable RBM from river Chandrabhaga in Tehri distt. for the year 2019-20. The study made following recommendations: -

- (i) The extraction duration is to be kept from January-May.
- (ii) The extraction is to be carried out as per the methodology given in the report.
- (iii) Permanent bench posts are to be erected on both sides of the river at every 01 Km length.
- (iv) The pillars also demarcate the width of extraction leaving 25% of river width from the bank as safety zone.
- (v) The middle 50% of the width of the river can be used of extraction of RBM. This is to ensure the stability of the river bank and also to rehabilitate the reclaimed area by suitable plantation.

- (vi) The above recommendation would help in channelization and centralization of the river which is relevant from river training point of view to avoid the tendency of periodical flooding in the adjoining areas.
- (vii) The extraction and removal of RBM should be executed in the scientific manner. The maximum depth of cut should be from the middle of the river coarse and should be nil at the boundary of the middle half of the river.

It has been stated by the User Agency that the mineral extraction will be done manually from 1.5 m upper surface only and the total proposed quantity for extraction is 31,35,000 tonnes.

7. Compensatory afforestation:

Compensatory afforestation land has been proposed over an area of 380 ha of degraded forest land in Maniknath Range, Saklana Range and Shivpuri Range, Narendranagara, Muni Ki Reti Forest Division, Tehri Garhwal District in the State of Uttarakhand. The area is in 16 patches with smallest area of 10 ha and the largest patch of 70 ha.

i. Whether land for compensatory afforestation is suitable from plantation and management point of view or not.

As reported by the DFO in the field, the proposed CA land is suitable for compensatory afforestation and appropriate local species will be selected for plantation depending on the altitude aspect, slope etc.

ii. Whether land for compensatory afforestation is free from encroachments/ other encumbrances.

As reported by the DFO in the field, the CA patches are free from any encroachment.

iii. Whether land for compensatory afforestation is important from Religious/ Archaeological point of view.

No.

iv. Land identified for raising compensatory afforestation is in how many patches, whether patches are compact or not.

An area of 380 ha of degraded forest land identified in Tehri Garhwal District involves 16 patches in Maniknath Range, Saklana Range and Shivpuri Range, Narendranagara, Muni Ki Reti Forest Division.

v. Map with details

Differential GPS map submitted by User Agency on *Parivesh* portal.

vi. Total financial outlay

Rs. 12,81,29,920 /- has been submitted for Compensatory afforestation.

8. Whether proposal involves violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 or not. If yes, a detailed report on violation including action taken against the concerned officials.

No violation of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been reported. No violation has been observed during inspection.

9. Cost Benefit Ratio Analysis

Detailed Cost Benefit Ratio Analysis have been provided by the User Agency.

10. Recommendations of the Principal Conservator of Forests/State Government.

The PCCF, Government of Uttarakhand recommended the proposal with general, standard conditions.

11. Utility of the project.


The proposed area lies close to Rishikesh-Chamba National Highway and starts from confluence point of Chndrabhaga river and Dayagad Rao and downstream up to 7,660 meter. At certain places the river stream also affects Dehradun-Rishikesh National Highway and at times overflow threatens the highway also. The proposed manual mining of RBM will give required depth in the central portion of the river and will reduce chances of breach on the river bank and subsequent flooding in the adjoining areas. The extraction of RBM will also provide construction material to the industry and will generate employment in the nearby areas. The removal of RBM will also be helpful in checking soil erosion.

12. Whether land being diverted has any socio-cultural /religious value. Whether any sacred grove or very old grown trees/forests exists in the areas proposed for diversion.

No. As per information provided by the User Agency and the representative of the State Forest Department, the area is not important from the socio cultural/religious view point. No sacred grooves/ old grown trees/ forests are existing in the area.

13. Any other information relating to the project.

- i. There is railway bridge coming up in the downstream of the mining area at around 650 mtr. Due care should be taken to avoid any damage to the railway bridge.
- ii. To avoid accidental injury to wildlife due to excavation of RBM suitable preventive measures may be taken in consultation with the local DFO/ Wildlife Warden.
- iii. Suitable river training measures in the form of spurs, gabion structures may be required at certain places to keep the river flow towards center.
- iv. The RBM will be transported from the northern as well as the southern side of the proposed area and therefore technology must be used for monitoring the transportation of RBM. Similarly, the extraction and collection of RBM on site can also be monitored using GIS techniques/drone survey so that there is uniformity in extraction and no specific area is over exploited.
- v. The safety zone, as given in the proposal should not be fenced keeping in mind the movement of wildlife from one part of the forest to other. Instead, the area should be suitably planted or seed sowing of riverine trees species viz. Sheesham, Khair, Jamun, etc be carried out to regenerate the vegetation along the safety zone.


(T. C. Nautiyal) 8.1.2021
DIG(F)

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADDITIONAL PRINCIPAL CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS (CENTRAL), INTEGRATED REGIONAL OFFICE DEHRADUN, MoEF&CC, DEHRADUN.

Extent proposal, involving diversion of 190 ha of forest land for extraction of RBM under the project. The detailed observations on the proposal submitted by State Govt. of Uttarakhand have been recorded above in the field inspection report of DIG (F). As per observations made in the inspection report, the project involves collection/removal of RBM from the middle 50% of the proposed area. The removal of RBM is beneficial for the local eco-system as well as economy. It is helpful in controlling floods and soil erosion on one hand and on the other hand gives impetus to construction industry and consequent generation of employment. As no trees are involved in the proposed area, there is no loss of vegetation. The diversion of forest land for removal of RBM from Chandrabhaga river in Narendranagar, Muni Ki Reti Forest Division accordingly recommended with following conditions:-

- (i) The peripheral 25% of the area being diverted on either side of the river bed should be demarcated as safety zone and suitably planted by the User Agency/Forest Department under the supervision of the local Divisional Forest Officer.
- (ii) There should not be any fencing for protection of safety zone as it will hamper free movement of wildlife during night time.
- (iii) Extraction, removal and transportation of RBM should be allowed only during day-time ~~only~~. No movement of vehicles/ workers should take place in the night. Appropriate technology v.i.z. GIS techniques/drone survey should be used for monitoring of entire process of collection and transportation of RBM.
- (iv) The User Agency will construct suitable river training structures wherever required to avoid soil erosion and destruction of forest vegetation due to floods.
- (v) The User Agency will comply with the recommendations of standing committee of NBWL for wildlife mitigation measures.

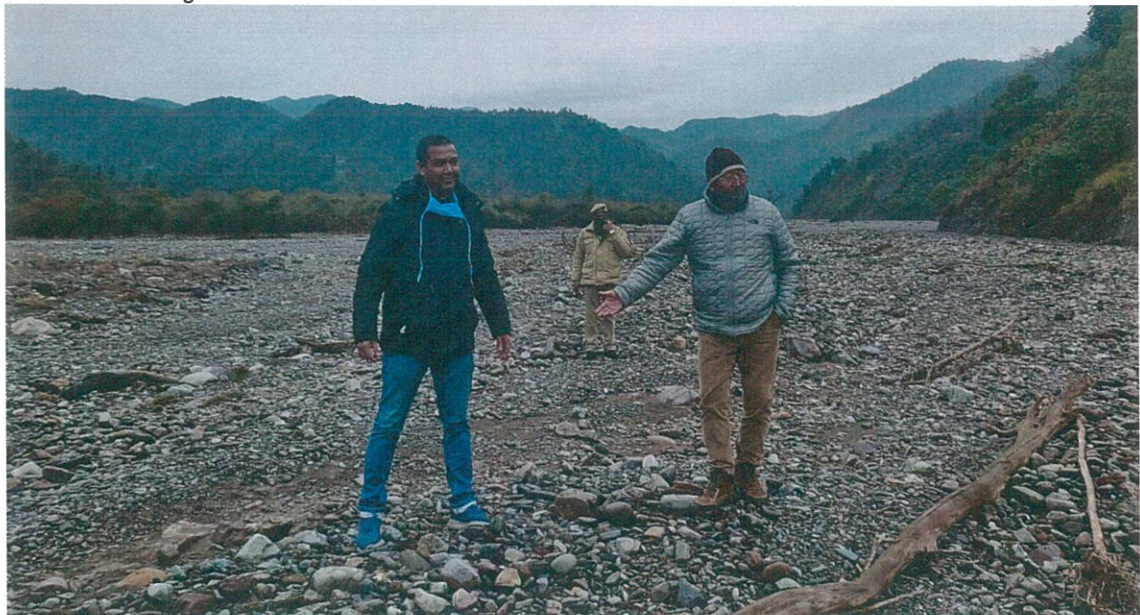

08/01/2021
(Pankaj Agrawal)
Addl. PCCF

ANNEXURE I

Photograph 1: Visit to proposed area to be diverted at Chandrabhaga River, Narendranagar, Muni Ki Reti Forest Division.



Photograph 2: The backdrop of the photograph shows the northern part of the area to be diverted on the Chandrabhaga river bed.



Photograph 3: The riverbed of Chandrabhaga which is proposed for diversion.



Photograph 3: Southern end of the Chandrabhaga river bed proposed area to be diverted. The nearest bridge is around 600 mtrs. downstream.

