SITE INSPECTION REPORT

Name of Proposal :- Diversion of 628.800 Ha of forest land for renewal of mining lease for collection of boulder, bajri, sand etc from Song & Jakhan rivers (Song-1, Song-2, Song-3, Jakhan-1 and Jakhan-2) in favour of Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation within the jurisdiction of Dehradun Forest Division in Dehradun Dist.

Introduction:- State Government of Uttarakhand Submitted an online proposal number FP/UK/MIN/38285/2019 to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt of India seeking prior approval of Center Government under the Forest (Conservation) 1980 Act for diversion of 628.80 Ha of forest land for renewal of mining lease for collection of boulder, bajri, sand etc. Since, the forest land involved in the proposal is more than 100.00 Ha, the MoEF & CC, asked the Regional Office, Dehradun to carryout side inspection of the area in terms of pera-4.10 (ii) of the guidelines. The hard copy of the proposal was submitted to the MoEF & CC, Govt of India by the State Government vide letter dated 23 Sep. 2019. Addl. PCCF, Regional Office, Dehradun carried out site inspection on 14.11.2019.

The site inspection report is given below.

1. **Legal status of the forest land proposed for diversion**:- Reserve Forest land measuring 628.80 Ha in Souda Block, Kachhar Block, Song-2, Banbaha 2,3, Nahi Block-1, Vidhalana Block-1 and Jakhan-2.

2. **Item-wise break-up details of the forest land proposed for diversion**:- The State Government and the User Agency have not given the component vise breakup of the forest land proposed for diversion. However, the representative of User Agency informed that the mining activity will be restricted to middle half of the forest land proposed for diversion and no mining is proposed in the 25% area towards each bank of river. Thus, it may be concluded that 314.40 ha area in the middle portion will be used for collection of minor minerals and no mining activity will be done in balance 314.40 ha towords both the river banks. The representative of the User Agency also informed that other activities are not proposed in the forest area proposed for diversion.

3. **Whether proposal involves any construction of buildings (including residential) or not. If yes, details thereof**:- Although, the component- wise breakup of the forest land proposed for diversion has not being submitted by State Government/User Agency, the representative of the User Agency informed that except temporary huts for gate office, the construction of building is not proposed.

4. **Total cost of the project at present rates** :- **Rs. 96,72,11,120/-** as informed by the representative of User Agency.

5. **Wildlife :-**

Whether forest area proposed for diversion is important from wildlife point of view or not:- The forest land proposed for diversion in the riverbed which is devoid of any tree growth. Hence, the land proposed for diversion does not appear to be important from wild life point of view. In para-II of the proposal, DFO has mentioned that the project deals with hand picking of river bed material hence it will not cause much significant impact on wildlife. Further the wildlife habitat improvement works will be carried out through extensive afforestation and soil moisture conservation activities in the buffer areas. Some times langoors, wild pigs, leopards etc come in sights passing in surrounding forest areas.

6. **Vegetation** :-

(I) Total Number of trees to be felled - NIL

(II) Effect of removal of trees on the general ecosystem in the area- NA

Important Species :-

(I) Total Number of trees to be felled of the girth below 60cm - NIL

(II) Total Number of trees to be felled of the girth above 60cm - NIL

7. **Background note on proposal** :- State Government of Uttarakhand submitted an online proposal number FP/UK/MIN/38285/2019 to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt of India seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) 1980 Act for diversion of 628.80 Ha of forest land for renewal of mining lease for collection of boulder, bajri, sand etc form Song and Jakhan rivers in favour of Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation within the jurisdiction of Dehradun Forest Division in Dehradun Dist. of Uttarakhand in Souda Block, Kachhar Block, Song-2, Banbaha 2,3, Nahi Block-1, Vidhalana Block-1 and Jakhan-2. Since, the forest land involved in the proposal is more than 100.00 Ha, the MoEF & CC, asked the Regional Office, Dehradun to carryout side inspection of the area in terms of pera-4.10 (ii) of the guidelines. The hard copy of the proposal was submitted to the MoEF & CC, Govt of India by the State Government vide letter dated 23 Sep. 2019. In this connection, this is to be mentioned that the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India had accorded approval for diversion of 1325 ha of forest land for collection of boulder, bajri, sand etc. vide letter no-8-62/199-FC dated 26 May 2009 for a period of 10 (Ten) years. Accordingly, the approval accorded in the past has expired on 25.10.2019. Therefore, the State Government/User Agency has submitted the proposal seeking renewal of approval.

8. **Compensatory Afforestation:-**

(i) **Whether land for compensatory afforestation is suitable from plantation and management point of view or not:-** It is mentioned in online Parts-II that the proposal in submitted for renewal of lease, hence is not applicable as per Forest (Conservation) Act 1980. In this connection, this is to be mentioned that approval for diversion of 1325 ha of forest land for collection of boulder, bajri, sand etc. was accorded by Ministry vide letter no- 8-62/199-FC dated 26 May 2009 for a period of 10 (Ten) years in the past. As the condition mentioned at Sl. No-3 of said approval, CA was to be done over an area of 1325 ha @ 132.50 ha per year from the funds

collected/Released from sale of the materials. DFO Dehradun has informed that CA work has been done over 1113 ha against this approval so far. Therefore, CA is not required in this case because the proposal is for renewal of earlier approval accorded in the instant case.

(II) **Whether land for compensatory afforestation is free from encroachments/other encumbrances:** - In view of (I), above is not applicable

(III) **Whether land for compensatory Afforestation is important from religious/ archaeological point of view:-** In view of (I), above is not applicable

(IV) **Land identified for compensatory Afforestation is in how many patches, whether patches are compact or not** :- In view of (I), above is not applicable

(V) **Map with details** :- NA

(VI) **Total Financial outlay** :- **NA**

9. **Whether proposal involves violation of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 or not. if yes, a detailed report on violation including action taken against the concerned officials:-** No violation seen during site inspection.

10. (I) **Whether proposal involves rehabilitation of displaced persons. if yes, whether rehabilitation plan has been prepared by the State Government or not** :- Displacement of people is not involved in the project.

(II) **Details of furnished specifically if rehabilitation plan would affect any other forest area by translocation outside in and around the said forest** :- NA

11. **Reclamation plan:-** Specific reclamation plan for mined out pits has not been submitted by the State Government/User Agency. Howerver, it is mentioned in the mining plan that the mining pits are replenished during rainy session every year and mineral will be filled back over the mined out pits. Further, it is also mentioned that excavated sandy soil (Silty sand) will be used for back filling of mined out pits. However, the financial involvement has not been worked out for the purpose.

12. **Details on catchment and command area under the project. Catchment area treatment plan to prevent siltation of reservoir** :- The Catchment Area Treatment Plan (CAT Plan) has not been submitted by the State Government/User Agency. Since, the proposal is meant for collection of boulders, bajri, sand etc. form the riverbed where reservoir will not be formed. Hence, the CAT Plan may not be required in the instant case.

13. **Cost benefit ratio:-** It is seen from the cost benefit analysis submitted with the proposal that the parameters have not been quantified and expressed in monetary terms in prescribed

formats i.e. Annexure-VI (b): Parameters for evaluation of loss of forests and Annexure VI (c): Parameters for evaluation of benefits notwithstanding, loss of forests. Hence, cost benefit ratio cannot be worked out.

14. **Recommendations of principal Chief Conservator of Forests/State Government:-** Recommendations of Nodal Officer and State Government is uploaded at para -16 of part–II online.

15. **Recommendations of Regional Chief Conservator of Forests along with detailed reasons** :- NA.

16. **Regional Chief Conservator of Forests shall give detailed comments on whether there area any alternative routes/alignment for locating the project on the non-forest land** :- NA.

17. **Utility of the project** :-

Number of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes to be benefited by the project :- No such information is available in the project proposal. However, this is to be mentioned that the project is meant for collection of boulders, bajri, sand etc. which is likely to benefit the local population but the population to be benefited cannot be segregated on community/caste basis as on date.

18. **(I) Whether land being diverted has any socio/cultural religious value :-** No.

(II) Whether any scared grove or very old growth trees/forests exist in area proposed for diversion:- No.

(III) Whether the land under diversion forms part of any unique eco-system:- No.

19. **Situation w.r.t. any P.A.-** Song-1 project area is situated 8.5 km distant from Rajaji National Park , Song-2 project area is 5.00 km distant from Rajaji National Park, Song-3 project area is 0.20 km distant from Rajaji National Park, Jakhan-1 project area is 11.50 km distant from Rajaji National Park and Jakhan- project area is 5.40 km distant from Rajaji National Park.

20. **Any other information relating to the project:- Status of Compliance of past approval**

Conditions stipulated by the MoEF	Details of the compliance
I. The legal status of forest land shall remain unchanged.	**I.** Condition stipulated in FC are being strictly followed.
II. ii. 25% of revenue realized from disposal of material from river beds shall be spent on river training and treatment of catchment area.	**II.** Since 2011-12, Rs. 130111007.00has been transferred to DFO Dehradun in river training head.
III. iii. Compensatory Afforestation will be raised over 1325.00 ha of degraded forest land over approved period of 10 years @ 132.50 ha of plantation/treatment each year, from the funds so collected/realized from sale of the materials.	**III.** Since 2011-12, Rs. 108022685.00has been transferred to DFO Dehradun in Compensatory Afforestation head
IV. The User Agency will undertaken to pay NPV as per the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in 1A No. 566 in WP (C) No. 202/1995.	**IV.** NPV is exempted for UKFDC.
V. Adequate number of temporary check posts will be established at entry and exit points before start of work, and proper record of material collected and removed will be maintained.	**V.** Conditions stipulated in FC are being strictly followed.
VI. Extraction of material should be from the middle of the river bed after leaving one-fourth of the river bed on each bank untouched.	**VI.** Conditions stipulated in FC are being strictly followed.
VII. There shall be no labour camp in the forest area for the labour involved in the extraction work.	**VII.** Conditions stipulated in FC are being strictly followed.
VIII. No explosive shall be used while extracting the material and only hand-tools will be used for the collection of boulders, bajri, etc.	**VIII.** Conditions stipulated in FC are being strictly followed.
IX. Collection time shall be from sun-rise to sun-set.	**IX.** Conditions stipulated in FC are being strictly followed.
X. Breaking of boulders will be done outside the forest boundaries.	**X.** Conditions stipulated in FC are being strictly followed.
XI. The labourers engaged in collection work will be provided free fuel wood/alternate source of energy to avoid any pressure on adjoining forest areas.	**XI.** Since 2015-16, 2224.000 Cu. Mt. Fuel wood has been distributed among laborers engaged in collection of sub minerals.
XII. There shall be no extraction of material from the river beds during monsoon period, i.e., from June to October each year.	**XII.** Extraction of minerals in monsoon season i.e. from 15th of June to 30th of September is strictly prohibited.
XIII. The forest area shall not be used for any other purpose other than that specified in the proposal.	**XIII.** The conditions stipulated in FC are being strictly followed.
XIV. Any other conditions that the CCF(C), Regional Office, Lucknow may impose from time to time in the interest of Afforestation and protection of flora and fauna in that area shall also be valid.	**XIV.** The conditions / instructions imposed by CCF(C)/Regional Office are being strictly followed.

Suggestions :

1. Serious efforts should be made by the User Agency to give Trapezoidal shape to the riverbed to centralize the flow at the centre of the riverbed to ensure stability of river banks after following the maximum permissible depth of mining at the centre of the area and gradually reducing the depth towards the banks which will come to nil depth at the boundary of the middle half.
2. State Govt./ Forest Department should ensure that the no. of seedlings to be planted per hectare of CA is as per approved norms and in no case, less no. of seedlings should be allowed to be planted. In case of any deviation, the matter should be enquired into and action may be taken against those found responsible for deviation/lapses.
3. As per recommendation of the ICAR-IISWC, Dehradun, the quantity of RBM extraction may be estimated by surveying the river after monsoon is over every year by a committee of experts. A copy of the assessment report of the expert committee indicating the RBM reserve replenished during rainy season should also be sent to the Regional Office for record before starting the work.
4. The User Agency should submit an annual self compliance report of the conditions stipulated in the final approval.

Remarks:- It has been noted while inspection of CA area that plantation has been done for 500 saplings per hectare instead of 1000 and rest by sowing seeds. Forest Corporation was requested to provide approved CA scheme to enquire the same but they expressed their inability to provide the same as it was not available with them.

29/11/19

(Pankaj Agrawal)
APCCF