

Site inspection report for diversion of 158.85 hectare of forest land for widening of Muzaffarnagar-Saharanpur (SH-59) from Km 5.900 to 58.850

Proposal no:

FP/UP/ROAD/13654/2015

USER AGENCY:

**UPSHA
(Uttar Pradesh State
Highway Authority)**

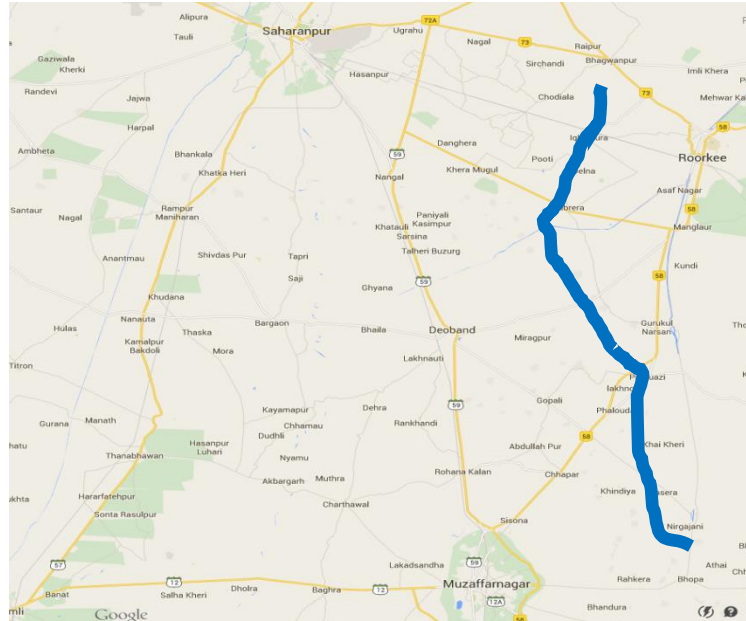
The site inspection of the proposal was carried out by the undersigned {Brijendra Swaroop, CF (Central), Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Lucknow} on 24th of November 2015. The list of officials present during site inspection is provided below:

Table 1

Date	Officials Present	Districts Visited
24/11/2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mr. Vijay Singh, DFO, Saharanpur2. Mr. Ram Raj Gautam, DFO, Shivalik3. Mr. Sanjeev Kumar, DFO, Muzaffarnagar4. Mr. Mahesh Chandra, SDO, Deoband5. Mr. AK Bansal, Project GM, Muzaffarnagar, UPSHA6. Mr. RK Rava, PD, UPSHA, Gaziabad7. Mr Ajai Bhaskar, Manager (CC), UPSHA8. Mr SK Bansal, RFO, Jansath	Saharanpur and Muzaffarnagar

*All the data as produced hereinafter is the convergence of perusal of available documents and other pertinent discussion during the course of site inspection and relevant data from Government sources.

**The report of the site inspection is on prescribed Performa as per FCA guidelines.



Project location of Muzaffarnagar Saharanpur State Highway 59



Project Location Map and Few Photographs

1. Short Narrative of the Project Proposal with brief time line of important events:

Proposed widening of Saharanpur Muzaffarnagar state highway 59 starts from chainage 5.900 km in Muzaffarnagar and ends at 58.850 km in Saharanpur, the state highway passes through major town of Deoband. Few additional benefits of the widening of State Highway 59 are:-

- This road links two important National Highway of western U.P. (NH-58 & NH-73).
- This widening will help in socio economics of Uttar Pradesh as well as three other states i.e. Uttrakhand, Haryana and NCT of Delhi.
- The state highway links industrial areas of Western UP known for steel, paper, wood based, sugar and other industries.
- By development of four lane highway, growth of industries will further be boosted.

Proposed Right of Way has been taken as 45m as it was in original state highway and new cross section has been accommodated in the same right of way. The basic features of the project are provided in a table below.

Table 2

Sl. No.	Item	Unit	Quantity
1	Highway (4 Lane with Paved Shoulder)	KM	52.95
2	Service Road	KM	14.65 (B/S)
3	Grade Separated Structure	KM	4.00
4	Major Bridge/Minor Bridge	Each	1/3
5	Road Junctions	Each	58
6	Culverts	Each	60
7	Truck Lay Bye	Each	1

Estimated cost of the Project is INR 82,832 Lakhs.

- ✓ Area of Total Forest Land proposed for diversion- 158.85 ha
- ✓ Protected Forest land proposed for diversion- 158.85 ha
- ✓ Non-forest land required for this project- NIL in two forest divisions.

Timeline of various important events associated with this proposal:

Table 3

S. No.	Events	Date
1	Project Inauguration	No details available
2	Approval of ToR for Environment Clearance	29/05/2015
3	Contract awarding for construction	29/05/2015
4	Environment Clearance	29/05/2015
5	Forest Application	2/07/2015
6	Part II Approval from DFOs	4/08/2015
7	Part III approval from CCF / CF	2/09/2015
8	Part IV Approval from Nodal	3/9/2015
9	Part V Approval from State Government	21/9/2015
10	Submission in regional office	9/10/2015
11	Proposed for consideration of REC	10/12/2015

2. Legal status of the forest land proposed for diversion.

Details of proposed forest area for diversion due to development of Agra to Lucknow Access Controlled Expressway (Green Field) Project:

Table 4

S. No.	Name of Division	No. of patches	No. of segments	Eco class	Crown density	Legal status	Area in Ha.
1	Social Forestry Division Saharanpur	Singular continuous patch of PF divided into	One from chainage 16.000 to 58.850	III	0.5	PF	128.55
2	Social Forestry Division Muzaffarnagar	two divisions as per district boundaries.	One from chainage 5.900 to 16.000	III	0.7	PF	30.30
Total							158.85

* PF-Protected Forest

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

The details are provided below:

Table 5

Sr.No	Component	Forest Land (ha)	Other Govt Land (except forest) (ha)	Private Land (ha)	Total Land (ha)	% forest land
1	Carriageway and Toll Plaza	158.85	NIL	NIL	158.85	100
	Total	158.85	NIL	NIL	158.85	100

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

The proposal involves construction of one Toll Plaza along the entire length of SH-59 within the proposed right of way.

4. Total cost of project at present rates.

Estimated cost of the Project is INR 82, 832 Lakhs.

5. Wild- Life:

- As per the part II submitted from both the divisions the proposed forest land diversion is not significant as per wild life point of view.
- The alignment of the expressway falls near to Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary and Rajaji National Park of Uttarakhand but it does not fall within eco sensitive zone of the protected areas.

6. Vegetation:

The details of vegetation density forest division wise is provided in table at serial no. 2. The average vegetation density of forest land of two divisions can be taken as 0.54 (falling into open forest type). All the forest falls into Eco Class III.

Diameter class distribution of trees division wise which are proposed to be removed-

Table 6

S. No.	Division	Diameter Size Distribution (cm)								Total
		0-10	10-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	>70	
1	Saharanpur	1337	5124	5424	3673	2329	1220	580	572	20,259
2	Muzaffarnagar	3926	643	1188	1105	1028	731	280	215	9,116
Total		5263	5767	6612	4778	3357	1951	860	787	29,375

Number of trees to be felled of girth <60 cm =11,030 nos (up to 20 cm diameter class)

Number of trees to be felled of girth above 60 cm= 18,345 nos (above 20 cm diameter class)

Important species:-

Mangifera indica, Emblica officilansis, Acacia arabica, Tamarindus incica, Pongamia pinnata, Sygium cumini, Delonix regia, Ficus bengalensis, Aegle marmelos, Melia azadiracata, Zizyphus xylopyrus, Anthocephalus cadamba, Bombax ceiba, Dalbergia sisso, Azadirachta indica, Aegel marmelos, Eucalyptus hybrids, Cedrela tooni, Albizia lebbeck etc.

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

The forest area falling in alignment of the state highway 59 is basically balance land after accounting for carriageway from right of way acquired during creation of state highway 59. The forest patch in most of the stretch is plantations created in earlier years mainly of fast growing species like Eucalyptus, Terminalia etc. The plantation has matured and support good second storey with ground flora. The removal of trees will have adverse impact on ecosystem but to a lesser extent due to the fact that linear patch of forest is required or proposed for diversion rather a compact block. A significant part of trees to be removed is pole crop approximately 37%.

In order to mitigate the adverse impact of felling a provision of dense planting of fast growing species on the edge of ROW is proposed to the approving authority i.e. Regional Empowered Committee.

7. Compensatory afforestation:

There are 23 patches of compensatory afforestation in four divisions of the UP Forest Department having an extent of 153.933 ha. A total of 123.933 ha non forest land is part of compensatory afforestation patches. The detail of land proposed for compensatory of afforestation is provided below:

Table 7

S. No.	District / Division	Village / Location	Legal Status	Area in ha.	Remarks
1	Social Forestry Division Muzaffarnagar	Kheda Ahatmal	Gram Sabha land now part of Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary	60.60	* Two patches ** Land acquired after eviction of encroachment as reported by the concerned RFO. *** This compensatory afforestation will be incorporated in the prescriptions of management plan of the WLS which is under preparation.
2	Shivalik Forest Division Saharanpur	Mohand Range	RF	80.00	*Total 12 patches having extent varying from 10 to 50 ha has been chosen for compensatory afforestation.
		Badkalan Range	RF	80.00	
		Shakumbhari Range	RF	100.00	
Total				320.60	

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

Site suitability certificate has been submitted by the concerned Divisional Forest Officers along with the forest land diversion proposal. During inspection proposed compensatory afforestation sites were not visited.

(ii) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is free from encroachment/ other encumbrances.

As per the DFOs report compensatory afforestation sites are free from encroachment and other encumbrances.

(iii) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is important from religious/ archaeological point of view.

Not reported.

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

Fourteen compact patches.

(v) Map with detail.

Enclosed with the proposal.

(vi) Total financial outlay.

The compensatory afforestation cost will be INR 9, 06, 48,500.

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

The proposal does not involve violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

*Few photographs of field visit are provided in annexure 'A' of the site inspection report.

9. Whether proposal involves rehabilitation of displaced persons. If yes, whether rehabilitation plan has been prepared by the State Government or not.

Not applicable in this proposal.

10. Reclamation Plan

Not applicable in this proposal.

11. Details on catchment and command area under the project.

Not applicable in this proposal.

12. Cost benefit ratio:

- As per the guidelines and parameters fixed by MoEF&CC the benefit cost ratio of the proposal is 2.42.

13. Recommendations of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest/ State Government.

The forest land diversion proposal has been recommended by the State Government.

14. Utility of the project.

The perceived benefits of the project can be summarized in following points:

- ✓ The widening will benefit three nearby states i.e. Uttarakhand, Haryana and Delhi apart from providing benefits to the Uttar Pradesh.
- ✓ This state highway acts as a feeder highway for NH 58 and NH 73 and improvement in this SH will lead to better traffic conditions on both National Highways.
- ✓ This will add to movement of industrial products of the well established industrial belt of Western Uttar Pradesh which is known for steel, sugar, wood based industries and others.
- ✓ This will provide access to perishable agricultural produce of the area in potential market areas and even enhance their export potential.
- ✓ Other benefits like lessening of wear and tear, less travel time etc are also perceived and provide over all boost to the economy of the area.
- ✓ Benefits to trade especially in movement of perishable goods.
- ✓ Access to new Industrial Areas which are proposed in the Master Plans of the State.
- ✓ Overall enhancement of socio-economic condition of the area along the project corridor.

15. Numbers of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes to be benefited by the project.

It can be safely presumed that whole state of Uttar Pradesh will be benefitted by implementation of this project. The population of Uttar Pradesh as per census 2011 data is 19, 95, 81,477 and out of which 3, 51, 48,377 is the population belonging to Schedule Caste and 11, 34,273 is the population belonging to Scheduled Tribe.

16. (i) Whether land being diverted have any socio-cultural/religious value.

Not reported as well as not observed during the site inspection.

(ii) Whether any sacred grove or very old growth trees/forests exist in the areas proposed for diversion.

Not reported as well as not observed during site inspection.

(iii) Whether the land under diversion forms part of any unique eco-system.

Not applicable.

17. Situation with respect to any protected area.

A map showing alignment with respect to protected area on Survey of India topo sheet is asked for submission from the user agency before final approval.

18. (i) Any other information relating to the project:

NIL

(ii) Muck Disposal Scheme:

The details are enclosed with the proposal and reply of the EDS filed.

19. Recommendations of the site inspecting officer:

The user agency is utilizing all the right of way which is protected forest without acquiring a single piece of private land which is not good for catering future requirements, if there is a need to further widen this State Highway. In fact, as a policy matter user agency should have gone for acquisition of private land at least on one side of the State Highway 59.

The recommendations regarding forest land diversion proposal for Saharanpur Muzaffarnagar Expressway is summarized in following points:

- (i) The user agency is utilizing entire right of way acquired earlier leaving no green space except planting of ornamental bushy plants on the median. In this scenario; it proposed that a single row of fast growing species should be planted on the edge (i.e. the berm of drain) which will act as natural demarcating feature. The spacing between two plants may be 1mts and species like Eucalyptus, Terminal etc. The dense planting of fast growing species will provide good aesthetics and intermediate returns to the Government through periodic yield through thinning.
- (ii) The greening of expressway shall be in conformity with the Indian Road Congress (IRC) guidelines and this shall be planned and executed in consultation and supervision of the field officials of the Department of Forests, Uttar Pradesh.

- (iii) The works of other planting like ornamental bushy species on median should be delegated to various forest divisions having jurisdiction over land.
- (iv) A modern root trainer nursery of appropriate extent in Saharanpur Social Forestry Division should be created to cater the needs of various planting required in this project like planting on median, planting on the edge of the ROW.
- (v) The compensatory afforestation scheme proposed in land reserved for Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary should keep perspective of wildlife in planning and execution like issues pertinent selection of species, spacing etc.
- (vi) It would be pertinent to recommend on the onset that good patches existing should be demarcated and counted with markings in the initial phase of the project so that leakage can be plugged during execution.

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Conservator of Forests (Central)
Regional Office, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change
Government of India, Lucknow

Date: 4th December 2015

Place: Lucknow

ANNEXURE 'A'



**Photographs of SH 59
in Social Forestry Division Saharanpur jurisdiction**





Site Inspection on 24th November 2015





Established road side avenue plantations on SH 59

