

F.No. WL-6/87/2023 WL
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(Wildlife Division)

2nd Floor, Vayu Wing,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, New Delhi 110003.

Date: 4th October, 2023

To,

The Special Chief Secretary,
Department of Environment, Science and Technology,
A.P. Secretariat, Velagapudi,
Amaravathi

Sub: Proposal for use of 54 ha of forest land from Buffer Zone of Nagarjuna Sagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR) for rehabilitation and up-gradation of National Highway-565 from Km 133.922 to Km 154.900 (Davupally to Mallapalem Junction) to two lanes with paved shoulders, Andhra Pradesh-FP/AP/ROAD/146577/2021.

Sir,

Reference is invited to the subject mentioned above. The above proposal was discussed in the 74th Meeting of Standing Committee of National Board for Wild Life held on 29th August, 2023 under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change.

2. After discussion, the Standing Committee decided to approve the proposal subject to the following conditions:

- I. The proposed area will be utilized only for the purpose for which the User Agency has sought for, but not for any other commercial purpose.
- II. The User Agency should inform the commencement of the work in the diversion area and execute the works under the supervision of the Forest Department.
- III. The User Agency should invariably demarcate the proposed land for diversion with any suitable permanent stones / pillars. After demarcation only the works should be commenced.
- IV. The User Agency should not resort to the excavation of the surrounding forest land for collection of the earth to be used. If such excavation is found during the work period or later, the User Agency will be charged with suitable Provisions of relevant Acts.



- V. The User Agency shall obey any other conditions stipulated by the Forest Department as per Acts and Rules.
- VI. The User Agency will be solely responsible for any violation which attracts the Provisions of Andhra Pradesh Forest Act, 1967, Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 as amended from time to time.
- VII. The User Agency may be requested to erect Wildlife Signage Boards depicting the importance of Wildlife Conservation in and around the entire project area at their own costs.
- VIII. Work shall be carried out only from dawn to dusk.
- IX. No labour camps to be established in the Protected Area.
- X. The underpasses shall be concrete (RCC) structures so as to enhance their longevity and minimize disturbances caused during annual repair / maintenance of otherwise bitumen structures. The bottom of structures shall, as far as possible, have similar substrates to that which would occur naturally in the absence of the structure. The approach to an animal crossing is a crucial factor in determining its use. Appropriate use of vegetation (trees, shrubs and grasses) can play a significant role in enhancing the naturalness of an engineered structure.
- XI. The underpasses should be concrete (RCC) structures so as to enhance their longevity and minimize disturbances caused during annual repair / maintenance of otherwise bitumen structures. The bottom of structures should, as far as possible, have similar substrates to that which would occur naturally in the absence of the structure. The approach to an animal crossing is a crucial factor in determining its use. Appropriate use of vegetation (trees, shrubs and grasses) can play a significant role in enhancing the naturalness of an engineered structure.
- XII. Divisions between the underpasses should be of pillar (isolated pier) type, instead of wall-type. This would significantly improve the acceptability of passage structure by wild animals.
- XIII. NH Authorities should ensure that all animal underpasses are fortified with integrated options of light and sound barriers (2 m high), camouflaging, and landscaping including restoration of habitat beneath underpasses after construction.
- XIV. Chain link mesh fencing should be done by the user agency for 100 m on either side of the animal passages on both sides of the road for funnelling wildlife through the animal passages.
- XV. As far as possible, the minimum height of the underpasses should not be achieved by ground excavation, but by elevating the road. This would prevent water logging during rains.
- XVI. The User Agency should ensure that the animal passages are not inundated with water during rains. Regular removal of debris and silts at the passage structures should be done by the project proponent.
- XVII. The underpasses must be kept free of all human-related activities and disturbances including foot-trails and roads by Forest Department, as



these have a negative influence on the use of crossing structures by wildlife.

- XVIII. Additional features on crossing structures such as walkways or planks/ ledges/ shelves (50 cm wide) to be installed by NH Authorities on the interior walls of underpasses/crossing and/or drainage structures (Minor Bridges, Box culverts and Slab culverts) to encourage mammals to use culverts built on natural drainage sites. These structures help animals use the structures in seasons when the culverts may be inundated with water. Ledges/shelves along the inner walls of all crossing and drainage structures are to be constructed for use by small mammals. These structures should extend up to the exit of the structures and brought to ground level.
- XIX. A concrete base of 50 cm is to be constructed on which the chain-link mesh fencing should be installed. The height of the fencing should be a minimum of 10 feet height on all sections so that species like leopards and other herbivores cannot cross them to get trapped inside the highway. The bottom 1-1.5 feet of the fences should be fitted with mesh wires so as to prevent small mammals and herpetofauna from crossing the highway. All fences are to be maintained in future by NH Authorities.
- XX. Cattle guards (2 m wide) are to be installed at both ends of the underpasses (including the fenced portions) and other fenced sections of the Highway to prevent wild and domestic animals from getting trapped within the fences/ crossing structures.
- XXI. About 3,421 trees would have to be cut for upgradation work. These trees should be identified in consultation with the Forest Department before the construction starts and should be properly marked on ground. Attempt should be made that tree cutting is minimal. All trees (in a girth class for which there is technology available for transplantation) should be transplanted by the User Agency with adequate care for maximization of survival.
- XXII. Apart from mitigation structures and fenced sections, the remaining portion of the road should be provided with crash barriers on both sides of the Highway and speed breakers/rumble strips at every interval of approximately 500 meters so as to maintain a vehicular speed of 30km/hour within the Tiger Reserve. Speed breakers / rumble strips should be appropriately marked to make them visible to the drivers (both during day and night) so as to avoid vehicular accidents. Sign posts warning about movements of wild animals should also be placed by NH Authorities at regular intervals along the upgraded road. These should be placed where wildlife crossings are maximum and should be determined in consultation with Forest Department.
- XXIII. Disturbance during construction in the wildlife sensitive areas is to be kept minimum by the following mechanisms:

- Use of pre-fabricated materials for construction
- Use of water from sources other than the river



- Prohibition on procurement of construction materials from forest
- Disposal of construction-related debris away from the sensitive sites
- Prohibition on camping of construction personnel near these sites
- Keeping construction period restricted during daytime
- No approach road for transport of construction materials

XXIV. The CWLW, Andhra Pradesh should have appropriate mechanism in place for compliance of the conditions laid in this report during various phases of project implementation.

XXV. An annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions shall be submitted by the User Agency to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India.

3. The minutes of the meeting have been posted online in the "PARIVESH" portal of this Ministry.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. Sudheer Chintalapati)

Scientist 'E'

Email: sudheer.ch@gov.in

Copy to:

1. Chief Wild Life Warden, Aranya Bhavan, P.V.S. Land Mark, Near APIIC Towers, Mangalagiri, Guntur District-522503, Andhra Pradesh.
2. Deputy Director General of Forests, Regional Office, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ist and IInd Floor, Handloom Export Promotion Council, 34, Cathedral Garden Road, Nungambakkam, Chennai – 34
3. Assistant Inspector General of Forests (C), Sub Office, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Vijaywada, Andhra Pradesh.
4. The Inspector General of Forests, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi.
5. The Joint Secretary, IA Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi.



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