

H.P. Forest Department.
Mandi Forest Circle, Mandi HP.

From: CF(T) Mandi.

To: Nodal Officer-cum-APCCF (FCA)
O/o Pr.CCF H.P. Shimla.

Subject: - Diversion of 10.6019 ha. of forest land in favour of HPPWD for the construction of Dharli to Balag road Km 0/00 to 18/900 within the jurisdiction of Suket Forest Division, Distt. Mandi HP (FP/HP/Road/49449/2020).

Memorandum:

Kindly refer to GoI letterNo. I/99122/2025 dated : 25.02.2025 on the above cited subject.

In this context, DFO Suket has submitted the reply of eds referred above, is as under:-

Sr. No.	EDS/Observations	Reply of Observations by DFO Suket
1.	The proposal involves violation as reported in para 11 of part II but violation report not found uploaded. It is requested to kindly submit the detailed violation report and action taken report.	<p>The user agency has submitted that a narrow pedestrian path under reference was originally constructed unintentionally by the local inhabitants prior to the year 1980 for which the necessary affidavits has already been submitted. The Dharli to Balag route has served as a traditional path for number of people and mules, providing essential access for the residents of Balag to Sundernagar, the primary nearby town offering critical facilities such as healthcare, markets, and educational services. This path was in existence before 1980 and has long been used by villagers for their moment.</p> <p>The path existed prior to 1980 and suffered weather-related damages. Therefore, to keep it accessible, villagers undertook gradual repairs and improvements after 1980 solely to ensure safe passage. These efforts were made without knowledge of FCA requirements or land classifications, serving only to preserve this essential route for the community's needs. To support the historical use, the necessity of this path, and unawareness of the legal status of the land, the affidavits from the locals affirming its long-standing presence and their dependence on it over the years were already conveyed .</p>
2.	It is requested to clarify that whether the proposal is in the list of 2183 violation cases or not.	User agency has submitted that this road has not been reported as a violation under the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 before the Hon'ble High Court in the list of 2183 cases.
3.	State Government shall scrutinize the alternatives in more details and must give complete justification establishing its inescapability for locating the project in forest area. Further, explored alternatives showing details of tree enumeration, area etc. with reason of rejection/acceptance with KML may be provided.	<p>The user agency i.e. HPPWD has duly examined all possible alternatives for the proposed project. After a comprehensive analysis, it has been found that there is no feasible non-forest land and operational available that can meet the technical, environmental, requirements of the project. The selection of the proposed site within forest land is thus inescapable due to the following reasons:</p> <p>Technical Suitability: The forest land identified is the only location that meets the required technical specifications such as gradient, connectivity, alignment, etc.</p>

		<p>Alignment Public Utility Constraints: The project is linear/non-linear in nature (as applicable) and must align with existing infrastructure or settlement, which necessitates passage through forest land.</p> <p>Non-availability of Non-Forest Land: No suitable non-forest land available in the vicinity of the project area as verified by the revenue records and field visits.</p> <p>Minimum Forest Land Required: The proposal has been designed in such a manner so as to minimize forest land requirement to the barest minimum.</p> <p>Alternatives Explored: Alternative alignments/sites were explored and compared based on parameters such as number of trees affected, area involved, accessibility, and impact on environment. User agency has submitted that the details of these alternatives' enumeration, including area tree involved and reasons for rejection/acceptance have been uploaded in PARIVESH portal with the proposal along with the respective KML files for verification</p>
4.	<p>Since proposed diversion area is on steep slope and during excavation and rainy season, may cause landslide/soil erosion to the proposed area or the nearby landscape. Therefore, State Govt. may provide details of the mitigation measures to be adopted to arrest the accelerated soil erosion/land slide during/after execution of project. Additionally, the State Govt. may submit Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan as per para-1.22 (II) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, if applicable.</p>	<p>The User Agency acknowledges the concerns related to slope stability and soil erosion in the proposed diversion area. Suitable mitigation measures are being incorporated to prevent accelerated soil erosion and landslide both during and after project execution. The proposed measures include:</p> <p>1. Structural Measures</p> <p>Construction of retaining walls/breast walls and toe walls at vulnerable stretches to stabilize the slope. Adoption of bench cutting instead of vertical cutting to maintain a safe slope gradient. Provision of gabion structures, check dams, and contour barriers where necessary.</p> <p>2. Drainage and Runoff Management</p> <p>Formation of well-designed catch drains, side drains, and cross drains to channelize runoff safely. Construction of cut-off drains above excavation zones to prevent surface water inflow. Ensuring proper outfall points to avoid water logging and scouring.</p> <p>3. Bio-engineering Measures</p> <p>Grass turfing, brush layering, hydro-seeding, and plantation of deep-rooted native shrubs and trees on exposed slopes. Adoption of vegetative barriers along the slope to minimize sheet erosion. Use of coir matting/jute netting for temporary surface stabilization during construction</p> <p>4. Construction phase Safeguards</p>

		<p>Minimizing open excavation during monsoon periods. Storage of excavated material only at designated safe locations with retaining measures. Regular monitoring of slope behavior by field engineers.</p> <p>5. Post construction Restoration</p> <p>Immediate biological restoration of disturbed areas. Long-term monitoring and maintenance of drainage structures and slope stabilization measures. Further, as required, the Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan (SMC Plan) is being prepared in accordance with Para-1.22 (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, wherever applicable. The SMC Plan will include detailed site-specific measures, maps, cost estimates, and implementation timelines.</p> <p>The User Agency assures full compliance with all guidelines and will adopt all necessary measures to ensure environmental and slope stability throughout the project lifecycle. The Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan (SMC Plan) is attached herewith for ready reference.</p>
5.	CA area is proposed in DFL. As per Rule 13 (4) (a), a certificate on non-availability of suitable non-forest land for raising compensatory afforestation needs to be furnished by the State Government in the format specified under Schedule-III.	Necessary certificate attached.
6.	In view of the observations of the 74th REC dated 31.01.2025, the CA scheme needs to be revised by including soil depth, aspect, area dimensions and description, detailed site-specific soil and moisture Conservation measures, Individual species names, and photographic evidence of DFO site Inspection.	Revised CA Scheme is attached.
7.	Area mentioned in CA site suitability certificate is 10.2038 ha of CA Instead of 21.2038 ha. May request to upload the site suitability of complete CA area. It is requested to kindly submit the site inspection report of concerned DFO along with photograph of proposed CA area as the area appears on steep slope.	CA site suitability certificate is attached.
8	NPV sheet and penal NPV sheet calculated as per old rates 6,57,000/-. It is requested to upload NPV sheet as per new rates.	Revised NPV & penal NPV is attached.
9	0.809 ha area proposed for muck	User agency has submitted that the proposed dumping site cannot

	<p>dumping. It is requested to explore non forest land for the purpose</p>	<p>be shifted to non-forest land because no suitable non-forest land is available in the vicinity of the proposed road alignment. The terrain and land-use pattern of the surrounding area do not provide any feasible alternative dumping location outside the forest land.</p> <p>However, to ensure environmental safety and minimize adverse impacts, the User Agency commits that the dumping site will be properly developed, engineered, and stabilized, adopting the following measures:</p> <p>Construction of protection/retaining walls around the dumping area to prevent spillage, sliding, or run-off of debris.</p> <p>Scientific leveling and compaction of dumped material to avoid erosion and slope failure.</p> <p>Provision of drainage channels to safely divert surface runoff and prevent water logging.</p> <p>Plantation of site-specific tall native plant species on and around the dumping site to enhance slope stability and aid in long term ecological restoration.</p> <p>Regular monitoring of the dumping site during and after construction.</p> <p>The User Agency assures that all dumping activities will be carried out strictly in environmental and accordance with engineering norms, ensuring minimal disturbance to the surrounding forest landscape</p>
10	<p>It is requested to mark the dumping sites in KML file and also submit the list of trees in dumping area.</p>	<p>User agency has submitted that the dumping site have already been marked in the KML file and the same has been uploaded.</p>
11	<p>Muck dumping plan needs to be authenticated by DFO.</p>	<p>The muck dumping plan duly signed by the DFO concerned is attached herewith and the same has been uploaded.</p>
12	<p>In complete cost benefit analysis found uploaded in part I with old NPV rates. It is requested to upload completely filled CB analysis as per new NPV rates.</p>	<p>User agency has submitted that the complete cost benefit analysis has been uploaded in Part-I as per the new NPV rates.</p>
13	<p>No. of trees to be affected are 658 in the proposal. It is requested to submit the list of trees that area actually required to be felled</p>	<p>The number of trees has now been reduced from 658 to 277 which is barest minimum and will be actually felled. Detailed list attached.</p>
14	<p>A large numbers of ecologically important tree species such Quercus leucotrichophora and Rhododendron arboretum are also likely to be affected. State Govt. is required to explore the possibility of saving these trees in the proposed project.</p>	<p>The number of trees has been reduced from 658 to 277 after re-alignment in some pockets. This has resultantly reduced the number of ecological important trees, Ban from 125Nos to 75Nos and Rhododendron from 31Nos to 17Nos which is minimal now.</p>

15	Administrative plan, undertaking to pay addl. NPV and layout plan not found uploaded. It is requested to uploaded the same.	The user agency has submitted plan, the undertaking to pay the additional NPV and the layout plan have been uploaded.
16	Aerial distance certificate of proposed area from nearest protected area not found uploaded. It is requested to submit the same	The aerial distance corticated has already been upload under additional information.
17	No is mentioned in para 8 (iii) of part II. However, as per DSS analysis of proposed area, Wildlife Sanctuary Bandli is approx. 0.19 km away from the proposed site. It is requested to submit the comment of DFO.	The road is reported as the violated road which has now been roughly aligned from end to end. As the case is proceeded by the user agency, the necessary preventive measures in the wildlife management plans could be adopted for scientifically managing the flora and fauna in the region. In light of this case, and taking into account the developmental needs and demands of the local people, as well as the conservation of biodiversity, an appropriate plan for wildlife protection can be formulated and implemented on the ground. Certificate of Divisional Forest Officer, WL Kullu already submitted.
18	As per DSS analysis of proposed area, little shift observed in the provided latitude-longitude. Further, dumping site latitude-longitude are missing from the DGPS map pdf uploaded at the sr. no. C(iv). It is requested to rectify the same.	The User agency has submitted that DGPS map has been rectified. Further the latitude-longitude of the dumping site has now been indicated in the DGPS map PDF uploaded on PARIVESH portal.

Encls. As above.

This is for favour of kind information & further necessary action please.

Conservator of Forests,
Mandi Forests Circle, H.P.