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कार्यालय वन संरक्षक, शिवालिक वृत्त, उत्तराखण्ड, देहरादून।

पत्रांक- 1519 /12-1(1)

दिनांक : 14 दिसम्बर, 2021

सेवा में,

अपर प्रमुख वन संरक्षक/नोडल अधिकारी
वन संरक्षण, इन्दिरा नगर, फॉरेस्ट कॉलोनी,
उत्तराखण्ड, देहरादून।

विषय : Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for non-forestry use of 87.0815 ha. of forest land for "Expansion of the Jolly Grant Airport" under Forest Division and District Dehradun of the State of Uttarakhand (online Proposal No. FP/UK/others/44884/2020)

संदर्भ : भारत सरकार की पत्र सं०-8-19/2020-एफ०सी० दिनांक 30-01-2021.

महोदय,

उपरोक्त विषयक प्रस्ताव संख्या-FP/UK/Others/44884/2020 पर संदर्भित पत्र द्वारा लगाई गई बिन्दुवार आपत्तियों का निराकरण प्रभागीय वनाधिकारी, देहरादून वन प्रभाग के पत्रांक 1214/12-1 दिनांक 25.09.2021 से प्राप्त सूचना के आधार पर निम्न प्रकार प्रेषित किया जा रहा है -

S.N.	Detail of queries	Answer/Compliance
i.	<p>Reply of the State Government is silent on fragmentation of the riverside forests. Comments provided the State Government on 47 ha. of MDF land involved in the project does not seem convincing for want of detail of alternatives sites studied/discarded thereby establishing inescapability of 47 ha. of MDF land for the intended purpose. Moreover, reply of the State is largely limited to the proposed forest area only, holistic ecological value of the area vis-à-vis impact of the proposed project has not been commented upon by the State as envisaged in point no. (i) Of the letter dated 9.10.2020.</p>	<p>The proposal is for expansion of existing facility and capacity of the Jolly Grant Airport (including extension in length of existing runway strip), which is necessary in the light of strategic importance of the area, its nearness to the Indo-China LAC, swift response in case of disaster management, etc.</p> <p>The present layout of the Airport is bounded by thick human habitation immediately in junction with the North, North-Western, Western, South-Western, and almost half way through the Southern boundary. The South-Eastern and Eastern boundaries are adjacent to forest and Jakhan river (which is a seasonal river). Given this geographical disposition of the existing Jolly Grant Airport, it becomes clear that there is only one alternative towards extending the existing airstrip- which happens to be forested area. This patch of Forest contains various stages of Riverine succession primarily represented by <i>Delbergia sissoo</i>; <i>Acacia katechu</i>; and other intermittent sparsely distributed species like <i>Bombax ceiba</i>; <i>Holoptelia integrifolia</i>; <i>Geruga pinnata</i>; <i>Aegle mermelos</i>; <i>Tectona grandis</i>, etc. Further, most of the tree species (~79%) are of pole stage. It is noteworthy that this area is also heavily infested with <i>Lantana camera</i>. Hence, the foraging functions of this forest patch are relatively insignificant. Therefore, the factor of forest fragmentation has an insignificant impact on the forest wrt succession or vegetative prospects of this forest patch.</p> <p>The minimum width of the land between the existing Airport boundary and Western Bank of the Jakhan River is approximately 750 mts, and is an isthmus connecting Badkot Reserved Forests and Thano Reserved Forests. This isthmus is used by wildlife occasionally for movement- which is one of this forest's major ecological functions. After considering the proposed land transfer, the minimum available width of land between the proposed airports boundary and the western bank of the Jakhan River come to minimum 150 mts. This width is in addition to the River bed width (approximately 150 mts at the narrowest site). Therefore, the ecological function of the area wrt movement of wildlife will not be impacted. The other ecological functions (enrichment of air, sequestering of Carbon and the like) will be compensated by means of Compensatory Afforestation and various dedicated forestry works done by money received under NPV. Therefore, in a holistic consideration, the impacts of land transfer of this forest area for extension of the Airport are minimal and adequately compensated by means of CAMPA CA and ancillary forestry works.</p>

ii.	<p>On the examination of the old proposal KML file and newly proposed area it has been found the there is some area/ gap in-between the boundaries of already diverted forest land and currently proposed forest land for expansion of the airport. The area has been analysed with the help of high-resolution time series satellite images of Google Earth and it is observed that non-forestry activities has been done in - between gap area of the two boundaries and along the periphery of already diverted forest land. As per the Recorded Forest Area (RFA) boundary for the State of Uttarakhand available on DSS application, it is found that the gap available between the two boundaries is also part of notified forest land. The State Government is silent on the violation of FC, Act, 1980. The State Government may provided the full details of Violation Report and action taken on the willful violation.</p>	<p>The construction of the existing Jolly Grant Airport had been done on land from various land owners. Some part of Forest Land had also been incorporated for the same. On matching of the kml files of the old land transfer and the new proposal, it was noted that some gap had erroneously crept in between them along the Southern boundary. This has been rectified, and the correct kml files have been attached along. There is no gap between the southern boundary of the previous land transfer and the new proposal, and there is no non forestry activity on this boundary. The map of the earlier Forest Land transferred for the existing Jolly Grant Airport is being annexed as additional information in part-II of parivesh portal.</p>																																																																																																									
iii.	<p>Examination of the compliance of approval dated 17.02.2003 revealed that in respect of condition no 12 of the approval regarding rehabilitation of the File No.8-19/2020-FC project affected families, it is reported that it will be complied with imply that condition is yet to be complied with. It is therefore, desirable that the State Government may intimate the status of rehabilitation of PAPs, if any, to the Ministry along with the justification for non-compliance of the same.</p>	<p>In respect of the query regarding rehablitation of project affected people (PAPS), it is submitted that since there was no displacement of people from the aforesaid forest land. Hence rehablitation is not applicable. A copy of the letter no.-225/12y-54 (2020-23) DLRC dated 10 April, 2021 wherein details are provided by Disrict Magistrate, Dehradun is attached.</p>																																																																																																									
iv.	<p>In compliance to condition no 2 of the approval dated 17.02.2003, the State Government has reported that CA has been raised over 140 ha of degraded forest land. However, present status of the plantation viz. its survival percentage, expenditure incurred as per CA scheme, etc. have not been intimated. The same needs to be intimated along with KML/Shape files of the CA land.</p>	<p>140 ha. CA done in degraded forest land in lieu of diversion of 70 ha forest land for construction of Jollygrant Airport in 2003, the details are follows hereunder :</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="718 1265 1500 2004"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sl. No.</th> <th>Name of Range</th> <th>Name of Area</th> <th>Area</th> <th>Number of sampling</th> <th>Survival percentage</th> <th>Expenditure Incurred</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Malhan</td> <td>Sahasra-1b</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>27</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td rowspan="2">Asharodi</td> <td>Arcadia-2</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>65</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Arcadia-3</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>35</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Jhajra</td> <td>Doonga-2</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>35</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td rowspan="2">Rishikesh</td> <td>Lalpani-2</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>23</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>Veerbhadra-2d</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>24</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td rowspan="2">Barkot</td> <td>Jakhan-1</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>27.60</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>Bhaniyawala-2b</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>26.30</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td rowspan="2">Lachiwala</td> <td>Vanvah-1 (1)</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>35</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>Vanvah-1(2)</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>24</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td rowspan="4">Thano</td> <td>Song-4</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>21</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>Song-3</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>22</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>Lambirau-39b</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>24</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td> <td>Vidhalana-1</td> <td>10</td> <td>20000</td> <td>23.35</td> <td>349300</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Total-</td> <td>140</td> <td>280000</td> <td></td> <td>4890200</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Sl. No.	Name of Range	Name of Area	Area	Number of sampling	Survival percentage	Expenditure Incurred	1	Malhan	Sahasra-1b	10	20000	27	349300	2	Asharodi	Arcadia-2	10	20000	65	349300	3	Arcadia-3	10	20000	35	349300	4	Jhajra	Doonga-2	10	20000	35	349300	5	Rishikesh	Lalpani-2	10	20000	23	349300	6	Veerbhadra-2d	10	20000	24	349300	7	Barkot	Jakhan-1	10	20000	27.60	349300	8	Bhaniyawala-2b	10	20000	26.30	349300	9	Lachiwala	Vanvah-1 (1)	10	20000	35	349300	10	Vanvah-1(2)	10	20000	24	349300	11	Thano	Song-4	10	20000	21	349300	12	Song-3	10	20000	22	349300	13	Lambirau-39b	10	20000	24	349300	14	Vidhalana-1	10	20000	23.35	349300	Total-			140	280000		4890200
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v	<p>Results of DSS analysis revealed that CA site namely Nahi-0, involving 10 ha of degraded forest land for CA, has forest falling in VDF category which may not be</p>	<p>The site initially identifield for CA in the case was 10 ha degraded forest land in Nahi Compartment-01 of Thano Range under Dehradun Forest Division. The site has been revisited, and now 10 ha. Of suitable land has been identified in Nahi compartment-03. DSS done by FSI of the said area</p>																																																																																																									

	suitable for CA. Therefore, the State Government may re-confirm the suitability of the sites and if needed alternate CA site may be identified for raising CA along with site suitability certificate.	mentions 70% as MDF, but on visit to site for its suitability for afforestation it has been found that the area is covered by Lantana and other weeds/bushes that render a high vegetation signature. The site has been found to be suitable for Compensatory plantation. The relevant certificate has attached on Part-II of Parivesh Portal as additional information.
vi	Certificate issued by the Chief Secretary with regard to the non-availability of non-forest land is in contravention to the provisions provided in the relevant guidelines issued under the FC Act as the certificate is issued in respect of Dehradun District only while as per guidelines, the Chief Secretary is suppose of issue such certificate only after getting the revenue records assessed for the entire state for the non availability of non-forest land. Certificate as per the format prescribed may be submitted failing which proposal of CA may accordingly be changed, in case non-forest land/ revenue forest land is available in the State.	The certificate regarding non availability of non forest land issued by Chief Secretary, Uttarakhand is attached in Part-I of Parivesh Portal as additional information.
2	Recently, Hon'ble High Court of Uttarakhand has made crucial observation in respect of wildlife values of the area. The State Government may, therefore, re-visit the proposal in light of observations contained in the Hon'ble High Court of Uttarakhand at Nainital order dated 11.01.2021, specially with reference to issues pertaining to the conservation and protection of wildlife and fragmentation of the forest area serving as connecting link for intermittent or stray movement for charismatic wildlife species of the State.	The directions issued by Hon'ble Uttarakhand High Court in WPPIL No 05/2021 till date have been followed in toto by the Uttarakhand Forest Department and State Government. The final judgement in the case is awaited, and Uttarakhand Government and Uttarakhand Forest Department will follow all directions issued by the Hon'ble Uttarakhand High Court.

अतः कृपया प्रस्ताव की स्वीकृति के सम्बन्ध में अग्रेतर कार्यवाही करने की कृपा करें।

संलग्नक :- उपरोक्तानुसार।

भवदीय

(डी०के० सिंह)

वन संरक्षक,
शिवालिक वन, देहरादून।

पत्रांक :- 1519 / 12411 तददिनांकित।

प्रतिलिपि :- प्रभागीय वनाधिकारी, देहरादून वन प्रभाग को उनके उपरोक्त उल्लिखित पत्र के क्रम में सूचनार्थ प्रेषित।

(डी०के० सिंह)

वन संरक्षक,
शिवालिक वन, देहरादून।