

**MINUTES OF 9th MEETING OF REGIONAL EMPOWERED COMMITTEE OF
INTEGRATED REGIONAL OFFICE, SHIMLA
HELD ON 18th July, 2022**

The 9th meeting of the Regional Empowered Committee (REC) of the Integrated Regional Office Shimla was held on 18th July, 2022 under the Chairmanship of Shri Satya Prakash Negi, IFS, Regional Officer, Integrated Regional Office, Shimla to discuss FCA proposals pertaining to Himachal Pradesh State.

Following official/non-official members and Special Invitee were present in the meeting either in person or through video conferencing.

S. no.	Name	Designation
1.	Shri Satya Prakash Negi, IFS, Regional Officer, Integrated Regional Office, Shimla.	Chairman
2.	Dr. R. S. Bisht, Retd. IFS	Non-official Member
3.	Prof. S. D. Bhardwaj	Non-official Member
4.	Shri R. K. Gupta, IFS HPSFD	Nodal Officer-cum-APCCF(FCA)
5.	Dr. Anoop Kumar Dass	Scientist 'B'
6.	Dr. Yogesh Gairola, Integrated Regional Office, Dehradun.	Technical Officer (Special Invitee)
7.	Sh. Joginder Kumar, Integrated Regional Office, Shimla	Technical Officer (i/c)
8.	Sh. Ajay Kumar, Integrated Regional Office, Shimla	Technical Officer (i/c)
9.	Sh. Aman Kumar, Integrated Regional Office, Shimla	Technical Officer (on contract)
10.	Representatives of the User Agencies and State Forest Department Officials	---

At the outset, the Chairman of the Committee welcomed all the members present in the meeting or connected through Video-Conference. Following proposals seeking diversion of forest land for non-forestry purpose pertaining to the state of Himachal Pradesh were discussed in detail and the case wise decision taken by REC is as under:

Agenda item no. 1:- Diversion of 12.04 ha of forest land in favour of Rail Vikas Nigam Limited Chandigarh, 1st Floor, Railway Recruitment Board Building, Railway colony near

Chandigarh station for the construction of Bhanupali-Bilaspur-Beri New Rail Line Phase-IV i.e. from Kms 52.015 to Km 62.900, within the jurisdiction of Bilaspur Forest Division Distt. Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh (Online Proposal No. FP/HP/RAIL/146861/2021)

Regional Empowered Committee discussed the proposal seeking diversion of 12.04 ha of forest land in favour of Rail Vikas Nigam Limited Chandigarh, 1st Floor, Railway Recruitment Board Building, Railway colony near Chandigarh station. The Committee noted that 2143 trees (1021 trees, 1082 saplings and 40 bamboo clumps) to be felled in the project. It is noted that the forest land proposed for diversion is not a part of any Protected Area and no rare and endangered species of flora and fauna have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. The aerial distance from the Shree Naina Devi Ji Conservation Reserve is 23 Km approx. Further, no violation of FCA has been reported by the State Government. Concerned User Agency CCF, Bilaspur Forest Circle, and DFO Bilaspur Forest Division were present in the meeting. The following points were discussed in meeting:-

1. Committee noted that all the components are not marked in the KML file. User Agency has submitted that same will be marked in the KML file and will be uploaded in portal. The component wise break up is also need to be updated in online portal as per the layout.
2. Committee apprised by the User Agency that CA is proposed in lieu of above ground area i.e.-6.91 ha. User Agency submitted that earlier proposals of Railway (Phase I, II and III), approved by MoEF&CC without proposing CA area for notional/underground area. The REC agreed on the above in view of the guideline dated 30th July, 2015.
3. Regarding legal status of CA land in UPF/DPF area, CCF Bilaspur submitted to the committee members that the land proposed for CA is having status of both demarcated and Undemarcated Protected Forest and are under possession of State Forest Department. The CCF ensured that the supporting documents mentioning the status of CA area will be provided to the IRO Shimla.
4. Committee noted that in few locations proposed Rail line is crossing through National Highway for which no NoC/consents from NHAI authorities has been obtained by User Agency. User Agency in this regard submitted that both the agencies are belonging to the Govt. of India, therefore the work will only be started after getting necessary consents and mutual understanding of the NHAI and RVNL on later stage.
5. Committee noted that 2143 trees are proposed for felling. Therefore, Committee is of the view that DFO concerned and User Agency will explore the possibility to reduce the felling during execution of work.

6. Committee apprised that as per MoEF&CC recent directions vide letter dated 13.07.2022, suitability of land offered for CA in lieu of forest land proposed for diversion in terms of its vicinity to the area being proposed for diversion and/or contiguity with the existing forest area is required to be ascertained. CCF, Bilaspur in this regard submitted that area selected for CA is in contiguity within existing forest area.
7. The issue regarding temporary dumping of muck before final utilization of the same was also discussed. In this regard, User Agency submitted that they have sufficient area available at proposed Beri station where temporary muck will be dumped before finally utilizing the muck for filling purpose.

After detailed discussion on various aspects of the proposal, the Committee decided to accord In-Principle (Stage-I) approval subject to submission of documents/clarification/information on following points:

- i. The State Government shall ensure to mark all the components and beneficiary villages in KML file and upload the same in web-portal before Stage-II final approval.
- ii. As ensured by the CCF Bilaspur the supporting documents mentioning the status of CA area will be provided to the IRO Shimla. Further, this may also certify that the area is under possession of the State Forest Department.
- iii. A written consent is required from the NHAI being a primary user for the areas where the proposed alignment of the railway is passing through. If the concerned common area falls in the non-forest/private land then the requisite document can be submitted prior issuing final approval.
- iv. The State Forest Department shall constitute a Committee comprising Range Officer and site Engineer In-charge and headed by the DFO concerned. The Committee shall examine the alignment at the time of execution of work and will recommend the removal of trees on case to case basis along the RoW after looking into the possibility of reducing the total number of trees to be affected. The DFO shall verify the enumeration and accordingly grant felling permission based on the actual requirement. He will submit the list of trees to IRO Shimla, granted felling permission by him and trees to be retained.
- v. Updated component wise breakup showing both forest area and non-forest is required to be submitted.
- vi. The DFO concerned shall submit a document mentioning that area selected for CA is in contiguity with the existing forest area.

- vii. The DFO concerned shall submit an Undertaking that no plantation work has been carried out in the past under any scheme in the area selected for CA.

Agenda item no.2:-Diversion of 0.7903 ha of forest land in favour of M/s Shiv Shakti Enterprises, Anurag Kutir, Lower Doharu, Mohilla Ghuggar Tehsil Palampur&Distt. Kangra, H.P. for the construction of Lower Bhagair Small Hydro Project (1.00 MW) HEP within the jurisdiction of Chamba Forest Division, District Chamba, Himachal Pradesh. (Online Proposal No. FP/HP/HYD/49792/2020).

Regional Empowered Committee discussed the proposal seeking diversion of 0.7903 ha of forest land in favour of M/s Shiv Shakti Enterprises, Anura gKutir, Lower Doharu, Mohilla Ghuggar Tehsil Palampur & Distt. Kangra, H.P. The Committee noted that no trees are to be felled in the project. It is noted that the forest land proposed for diversion is a part of Protected Area and no rare and endangered species of flora and fauna have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. The aerial distance from Eco-Sensitive Zone of Tundah WLS is 10.92 Km approx. and from Eco-Sensitive Zone of Kugti WLS is 21.88 Km. Further, no violation of FCA has been reported by the State Government. Power of the extant project shall be evacuated from Power House of Lower Bagair HEP to Kunr HEP (5MW) through 11 KV overhead line. From Kunr HEP power will be transmitted in joint mode upto Lahal sub-station. Concerned User agency was present in the meeting.

The extant proposal was also discussed in REC meeting of March 2022 and June 2022 and deferred to next REC and directed to submit some documents. All the desired documents were submitted by State Government. The following points were discussed in meeting:-

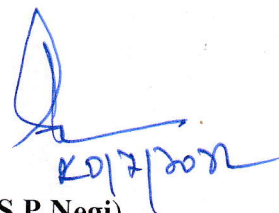
1. Committee noted that RoW of Transmission line has been now revised to 7.0 meters and the same is as per FCA Guidelines.
2. Committee apprised that the regarding River Basin Study of Ravi River, DFO Chamba has submitted that no information in this regard is available in his office. However, study on carrying capacity of Ravi River pertains to Department of Energy, Government of Himachal Pradesh (GoHP). Committee is of the view that copy of study on carrying capacity of Ravi River can be obtained by Nodal Officer from Department of Energy, GoHP
3. Committee noted that 3.28 ha area is proposed for CA in which 3553 plants are proposed for planting (1581 in extant proposal and 1972 in another project-Braguna HEP). Out of 3.28 ha area, 03 ha area falls under Moderately Dense Forest (MDF) category. Committee is of the view that same can be verified by DFO concerned.

After detailed discussion on various aspects of the proposal, the Committee decided to recommend the proposal to MoEF&CC for approval subject to submission of documents/ clarification/ information on following points:

- i. The State Government shall submit a document mentioning the basis of approving Small Hydel Project (SHEP) by the Directorate of the Energy, Himachal Pradesh in Ravi river basin in the State. The State Govt. may also clarify that what process being adopted by the State Govt. to ensure that recommended capacity, size of the project and location of the project is commensurate with a carrying capacity conforming to the accepted cumulative impacts for the area.
- ii. The Land Bank of 3.28 ha provided by the State Govt. to accommodate 1581 trees by way of CA in this project is not found suitable for planting trees @ 1000 trees per hectare. Accordingly, the DFO concerned shall review the CA site and if required the revised area having density less than 0.4 may be submitted for planting 1581 trees by way of CA.

-----***-----

The meeting ended with thanks to the members and other participants by the Chair.



(S.P.Negi)

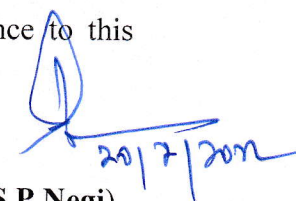
Chairman, REC

File. No.: 14-4/IRO/REC/2021/1/ 403 .

Dated: 20 July, 2022

Distribution:

1. Dr. R. S. Bisht, Retd. IFS (Member, REC), Green Street, Uttaranchal colony, Gas Godam Road, KusumKheda, Haldwani-263139, Uttarakhand (Email:rbisht@hotmail.co.uk)
2. Dr. S. D. Bhardwaj, (Member, REC), 33-Sai Niwas, Scientist Colony, Post Office Shanti, Tehsil & Distt. Solan- 173 212, Himachal Pradesh. (Email: shrwande@yahoo.co.in)
3. The Addl. Chief Secretary (Forest), Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, Armsdale Building, Shimla.
(Email:forestsecy-hp@nic.in)
4. The APCCF-cum-Nodal Officer (FCA), Forest Department, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, Talland, Shimla, H.P. for information. He is requested to take action on the decisions taken in the REC meeting (Project wise) & ensure submission of compliance to this office for further necessary action. (Email:nodalcahp@yahoo.com)



(S.P.Negi)

Chairman, REC