

Government of India
Ministry of Environment Forests & Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj
5th Floor, Agni Wing
New Delhi-110003
Dated: 27th July, 2020

To,
The Principal Secretary (Forests)
All States/UTs

Sub: Clarification regarding guidelines for diversion of forest land for non-forest purpose as per the general approval, under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, for laying of underground CNG/PNG and Slurry pipelines-reg.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the representation received from the Government of Punjab through Regional Office Chandigarh vide letter no. 1-2Misc/2019-ROC dated 08.01.2020 on the above mentioned subject and to inform that the matter was considered by the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) in its meeting held on 23.04.2020.

2. FAC observed that as per existing guidelines dated 28.03.2019, condition mentioned in Para 4.1 (f) is also applicable on the proposals mentioned in Para 4.2. It further observed that laying of underground CNG/PNG and Slurry pipelines in RoW of the existing road is an activity being taken up in forest area which is already under non forest use.

3. After thorough deliberation on the issue, FAC recommended that CA may not be levied in case of laying of underground Optical Fiber Cables (OFC), telephone lines, drinking water supply pipelines, electricity cables, CNG/PNG and Slurry pipelines within the RoW of existing roads (trench size not more than two meter in depth and one meter in width) not falling in National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries without felling of trees.

4. In view of the above, Para 4.2 of the Comprehensive Guidelines issued on 28.03.2019 may be read as:

Laying of Underground Optical Fiber Cables (OFC), telephone lines, drinking water supply pipelines, electricity cables, CNG/PNG and Slurry pipelines. General approval is accorded for taking up these projects within RoW of existing roads (trench size not more than two meter in depth and one meter in width) not falling in National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries' without felling of trees. Approval, in addition to general conditions mentioned above under para 4.1 (***except condition "f"***), subject to the following specific conditions:

- a. *No tree felling is involved for the proposed work*
- b. *After completion of the project the area under RoW should be reclaimed suitably.*
- c. *UA agrees to make good of any loss to Forest/Environment.*

- d. *The UA will seek permission from the local FD for carrying out any maintenance.*
- e. *In case, the proposed area falls in the RoW of the road passing through National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries, General Approval is subject to prior permissions from the State Board for Wildlife.*
- f. *In case of project involve tree felling, ten trees for each tree marked for removal shall be planted at the cost of user agency in consultation with the local forest department.*

This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

Your faithfully,

(Sandeep Sharma)
Asst. inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, All States/UTs.
2. The DDGFs(Central), MoEF&CC, All Regional Offices.
3. The Nodal officer (FCA), Department of Forest, All states/UTs.
4. Monitoring cell of FC Division with request to upload on PARIVESH portal