



EMB-13 technical team monitor the state of Cabadbaran River in Cabadbaran City, Agusan del Norte in January 2017. The river is found to be destroyed by extraction of sand and gravel of permittees within the area.

EMB-13 orders 73 miners to stop quarrying in Cabadbaran River

BUTUAN CITY, Philippines—Environmental Management Bureau Caraga (EMB-13) Regional Director Wilson L. Trajeco issued Cease and Desist Order (CDO) to seventy-three (73) Commercial Sand and Gravel (CSAG) permittees operating in Cabadbaran River, Cabadbaran City, Agusan del Norte.

The suspension order signed February 28 was in line with Cabadbaran City Mayor Katrina Marie Mortola’s campaign to rehabilitate the river from continued destruction thru an Executive Order No. KM-001, Series of 2017.

Trajeco’s final action was further grounded on the technical monitoring conducted in January this year based on Section 32 (c) of the Procedural Manual for Department Administrative Order (DAO) 2003-30, implementing guidelines of Presidential Decree (PD) 1586.

This was in consonance with the crusade of DENR Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez for sustainable development through safeguarding the country’s natural wealth, which she believed would equate to social justice.

The survey revealed that all identified operators establish no embankment causing severe and irreparable damage of the river. Violations were notable even after they had made their commitment to initiate mitigating measures for the protection and preservation of said river during the technical conference that EMB-13 organized in 2016.

Trajeco, in an interview, stated that permittee could operate for quarrying only after securing necessary permits from concerned LGUs. In the case of Cabadbaran City, all were

required for Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) prior to their issuance of permit to operate as also required by law, rules and regulations.

He further clarified that ECC is not permit but a planning tool of permittee for their mitigating measures to the environment, specific to the area where they are operating. EMB-13 will come in when violations were committed, especially the non-compliance of conditions set under the ECC. He added that it is the Bureau's mandate to monitor and prosecute violators against the environment.

On another significant note, Trajeco said that the Bureau is willing to continue provide technical assistance to them. "Even those who are illegally operating, we are here to assist to legalize their activity", he stressed.

However, it was clearly stipulated in the CDO that concerned permittees shall immediately stop the extraction of sand and gravel within Cabadbaran River until such time that the Provincial Mines and Regulatory Board (PMRB) thru the Mines and Geosciences Bureau Caraga (MGB 13) will issue an area status clearance establishing a new extraction zone.

Finally, he said that making a profit and conserving or preserving the environment must go together.

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