

Greg Watchmaker  
10602 North Wood Crest Court  
5309 United States

Reykjavík, Monday June 5<sup>th</sup> 2023  
UST202305-076/G.G.  
09.04.00

**Subject: Permit to fly a drone - Landmannalaugar - Skógafoss**

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Greg P. Watchmarker, dated May 8<sup>th</sup> 2023, for a permit to fly a drone (family cinematography) within Landmannalaugar, which is a part of the nature reserve Fjallabak, and Skógafoss.

Fjallabak is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 354/1979. Construction work, extraction of minerals, disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. The use of unmanned aircraft (drones) within the nature reserve from 15<sup>th</sup> June – 15<sup>th</sup> September is subject to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Skógafoss waterfall is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 477/1987. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Photography, cinematography and events that can affect visitors experience in the area are subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

***Description of the project:***

The applicant requests to fly a drone at the protected areas Landmannalaugar and Skógafoss from July 25<sup>th</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup>, below 120 meters elevation, following a family as they hike.

***Impact assessment:***

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project likely to have negative effect at birdlife of Skógafoss but the impact can be reduced if conditions of the permit are followed and no drone flies inside the no fly zone seen on a map attached to this letter.

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project not likely to have negative impact on nature and conservation value of Fjallabak if conditions of the permit are followed.

The project might have negative effect on other visitors experience at both of these sites but if conditions of the permit are followed the agency considers that the impact can be reduced.

***Conclusions and conditions:***

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Greg Watchmaker permission on its behalf to fly a drone within Fjallabak and Skógafoss as described above in the period of July 25<sup>th</sup> – August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2023 on the following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project.
- The applicant shall inform rangers in the area about their arrival and departure. This is to be done 24 hours before entering the areas and again before leaving them.
- If the project dates or description changes the Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.
- The applicant should always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads.
- The applicant must follow rules of conduct that apply to these areas.
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited.
- Flying a drone above or in the vicinity of the pool at Landmannalaugar is not allowed.
- The applicant should always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads and not enter closed areas.
- The applicant should be conscious of other guests on the sites and make sure that filming causes as little disturbance as possible to other visitors. If the material is meant for public viewing it must be noted in the video/subtext that permission from the Environment Agency was obtained for the filming/photography.
- An unmanned aircraft should never be flown in close proximity to people. Please take precaution not to disturb people's experience, their safety or personal privacy nor the general peace of the protected areas being filmed.
- According to Icelandic law it is forbidden to fly close to cliffs where birds nest. An unmanned aircraft should never be flown near animals or birds, neither in nesting areas nor during nesting season or any other seasonal time when animals or bird habitats are considered vulnerable.
- Flight time should be kept to a minimum and flight should be avoided during the area's busiest times of the day.
- If the use of unmanned aircraft causes disturbance to wildlife in the area, its use should be ceased at once.
- The conductor of the unmanned aircraft is responsible for the aircraft within the protected area. This includes taking responsibility of any possible risk of harm to people, fauna and nature and leaving no permanent marks on the site in question. Should the aircraft crash, all components from it must be collected and removed from the area.

- For safety reasons, the pilot of an unmanned aerial vehicle must wear marked clothing so that the person can be identified.
- It is forbidden to fly drones in the canyon in front of the waterfall at Skógafoss. Map showing the no drone zone around the waterfall can be found in attachment.

If the applicant causes damage to nature, according to art. 87 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013, the Environment Agency of Iceland can, according to the Nature Conservation Act, f.e. order the licensee to fix damage to nature and vegetation and/or stop the project.

The Environment Agency of Iceland can according to art. 89 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013 change conditions of the permit, add new conditions or withdraw the permit in order to prevent damage to nature if environmental conditions change.

According to art 89. in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013 the Environment Agency can withdraw the permit if conditions of the permit are not complied to.

Unmanned aircraft should take off and land in a safe distance from other visitors according to regulation 990/2017 on unmanned aircrafts.

The usage of a drone shall be according to regulation no. 990/2017 on the operation of remotely piloted aircraft (<https://www.icetra.is/aviation/drones/>).

### ***Permission fee***

Environment Agency of Iceland charges a fee for processing applications for permits in protected areas based on Article 92 of Act no. 61/2013 on Nature Conservation. The fee for cinematography and/or photography for recreational purposes for up to two areas is ISK. 38.000. according to art. 29. c. in the agency's tariff no. 206/2023.

Sincerely,

Ragnheiður Björk Sigurðardóttir  
advisor

Guðbjörg Gunnarsdóttir  
advisor