

Noah Lapsley

Reykjavík, 5. maí 2023  
UST202304-293/p.V.B.  
09.04.00

**Subject: permit to fly a drone at Arnastapi, Dimmuborgir Gullfoss, Mývatn and Snæfellsjökull national park**

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Noah Lapsley, dated April 28<sup>th</sup> 2023, for a permit to fly a drone within Arnastapi, Dimmuborgir, Gullfoss, Mývatn and Snæfellsjökull national park.

Dimmuborgir is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 1262/2011. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Events and commercial filming is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Gullfoss is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 141/1979. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life is prohibited. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is 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.

Mývatn and Laxá area is protected according to act no. 97/2004. Permission from the Environment Agency of Iceland is needed for construction work and all activity that can affect wildlife, geological formations, vegetation and landscape in the area.

Reykjanes country park is protected cf. regulation 520/1975. Disturbance to geological formations is prohibited.

The beach at Stapi and Hellnar is protected as a nature reserve cf. regulation no. 284/1988. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Snæfellsjökull National park is protected as a national park cf. regulation no. 935/2021. Operating an unmanned aircraft within the national park is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland according to art. 7 in the Regulation during nesting season.

***Description of the project:***

It is requested to have a permit to fly the drone at Arnastapi, Dimmuborgir, Gullfoss, Skútustaðagígar at lake Mývatn and in three areas in Snæfellsjökull national park, the glacier, Lóndrangar and Saxhóll in the period of May 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> 2023. The drone will not fly higher than 100 meters and a map showing the flight areas was included in the application.

***Impact assessment:***

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project likely to have negative effect on bird life in Dyrhólaey, Lóndrangar and Lake Mývatn. Nesting season starts in beginning of May. The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project not likely to have negative effect on nature or conservation value of Dimmuborgir, Gullfoss and Saxhóll. The droneflight might have negative effect on other visitors experience but if conditions of the permit are followed the agency considers that the impact can be reduced.

***Conclusions and conditions:***

After revision of the application, regulations for the sites and management plans it is concluded that no permission is needed to fly the drone over the glacier Snæfellsjökull in the period requested if the flight does not disturb wildlife and other visitors experience.

The Environment Agency declines the applicants request to fly the drone at Lake Mývatn, Arnarstapi and Lóndrangar have to drone take off from the viewpoint at Skógafoss. The drone must take off and land further away from the waterfall where there are fewer people.

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Noah Lapsley permission on its behalf to fly a drone within Dimmuborgir, Gullfoss, and at Saxhól and Snæfellsjökull within Snæfellsjökull national park as described above on May 7<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</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 area and again before leaving it.
- If the project dates or description changes the Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- Applicant should always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads.
- The applicant must follow rules of conduct that apply to the area.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.
- The applicant should be conscious of other guests on the sites and make sure that droneflight 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 droneflight.
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited.
- Off-road driving in Iceland is strictly prohibited.
- The project's staff is required to prevent all disturbance to the environment and make sure that all litter is removed from the sites.
- 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.
- The drone must take off and land where other visitors area not present.
- 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.
- If falcons are seen at Dimmuborgir it is not allowed to fly the drone there.
- It is forbidden to fly drones next to bird cliffs in a closer proximity than 200 meters..

If the developer 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/>).

Please note that according to the regulation all drones used for commercial flight need to be registered at the Icelandic Transport Authority.

The decision may be appealed to the Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources according to art. 26 of Act no. 37/1993 on Administrative Procedures, based on Art. 91 of Act no. 60/2013 on Nature Conservation within three months from the date of this letter.

***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 is 76.000 ISK according to art. 29. b. in the agency's tariff no. 206/2023.

***Supervision:***

The Environment Agency will supervise the project. The supervisor will be a ranger from the Environment Agency.

Sincerely

Dagbjört Jónsdóttir  
*advisor*

Þórdís Vilhelmína Bragadóttir  
*advisor*