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Reykjavík 26. July 2018
UST201807-111/G.G.
09.06.01

Application for filming with a drone in protected areas in Iceland

The Environment Agency of Iceland received an application from Holland America Group (Princess Cruises LTD), dated on the 16th July 2018, for filming in the Lake Mývatn area on the 30th of July.

Skútustaðagígar and Dimmuborgir are protected by Act no. 60/2013 on nature conservation, cf. regulations 1262/2011 Dimmuborgir and 399/1973 Skútustaðagígar. Lake Mývatn and the river Laxá are protected by Act. no. 97/2004, regulation no. 665/2012.

Description of the project:

The project applied for includes filming at 3 places within the Lake Mývatn area with a drone, Skútustaðagígar, Dimmuborgir and Vogar. The Environment Agency has received the drone flying paths within the areas. In Vogar area the timing for the filming is 9.00-11.00am, in Skútustaðagígar 11.00am-1.00pm and in Dimmuborgir 2.00pm-4.00am.

No props, sets nor chemical use is needed for the project. The drone used is Inspire 2, weight 3,5 kg. Number of employees on location is 4.

Reviews

The Environment Agency of Iceland requested reviews from landowners or rightsholders, the Icelandic Institute of Natural History and Mývatn Research Center according to art. 17, regulation 665/2012. Landowners/rightsholders did not have any comments on the project given that crew members will always stay on authorised paths and disturbance to other guests of the area would be minimized. The Mývatn research center did not have any comments on the project. The Icelandic Institute of Natural History does not have comments on filming at Vogar and Skútustaðagígar, but regarding filming with a drone in Dimmuborgir the Institute can not recommend that permit for filming with a drone will be granted due to gyrfalcon nesting site protection.

Impact assessment:

Based on information provided by the applicant the Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project not to be likely to create a negative impact on conservation value of Skútustaðagígar or by Vogar, as birds has left their nesting sites.

In Dimmuborgir Natural Monument the project might create negative impact on wildlife. Dimmuborgir are a nesting site of gyrfalcon which is protected according to Act. no. 64/1994. Gyrfalcon migrates within in its nesting site and biologists have no opportunity to check the status of the nesting site - due to short notice.

Due to the high number of visitors in the areas, especially in Dimmuborgir and Skútustaðagígar, flying a drone can have negative impact on the visitor's experience, but not for long term or serious impact.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Environment Agency hereby grants a permission for filming with a drone at Skútustaðagígar and Vogar on 30th of July as described by the applicant on following conditions. A permission for filming with a drone in Dimmuborgir is rejected.

- Keep the signed permit letter with you at location.
- If the dates of the project or the project description change the Environment Agency shall be notified when the project starts, with at least 5 days notice, if possible. Otherwise as soon as possible.
- If the video is to be published on television or on the internet it shall be stated in the video that a special permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland was acquired for filming within the protected area.
- Crew members should always stay on authorized paths.
- Fauna, geological formations and landscape should not be disturbed in any way.
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited.
- The crew should be conscious of other guests on the sites and make sure that filming causes as little disturbance as possible to other visitors.
- The permit conditions should be introduced to the staff before the work begins.
- All traces of the work must be removed carefully off the site by the end of the project.
- An unmanned aircraft should never be flown near people. Please take precaution not to disturb people's experience, their safety or personal privacy nor the general peace of the area filmed.
- The drone should not be flown above residential.
- 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.
- The conductor of the unmanned aircraft is responsible for the aircraft within the protected area. This includes responsibility so that people, fauna and nature is unharmed because of the aircraft's use and that no permanent mark be left on the site in question. Should the aircraft crash, all components from it must be collected and removed from the area.
- 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/>).

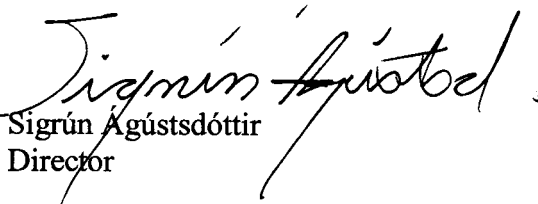
- If any complications occur during the project please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000

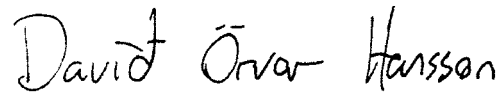
Please contact the landowner at Vogar, Ólöf Hallgrímsdóttir, before you fly the drone there.

Supervision:

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

Sincerely,


Sigrún Agústs dóttir
Director


Davíð Örvar Hansson
Advisor