

Alistair Mackie
Penwithen, Port Isaac,
Cornwall PL293SS
United Kingdom

mail@alastairmackie.com

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Subject: Application for removal of obsidian in Hrafninnusker and Sléttahraun, Iceland

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Mr. Alistair Mackie, dated 9. May 2018, for collecting 1200 kg of obsidian in Hrafninnusker and Sléttahraun within Fjallabak nature reserve late summer 2018.

Fjallabak nature reserve is a protected area cf. regulation no. 354/1979. According to the regulation removal and disruption of geological features, vegetation and soil within the nature reserve is prohibited. Off road driving is prohibited in Iceland according to act no. 60/2013 on nature conservation.

Project description:

The project applied for involves removing 1200 kg of obsidian in Hrafninnusker and Sléttahraun in Fjallabak nature reserve late summer 2018 to use for a sculpture project. Small blocks of obsidian will be collected from the surface by hand and carried to a trailer. The removal of blocks will be done well away from hiking trails and over a wide area, to avoid any unsightly blank areas. Surface disruption and fill in holes will be recovered with the use of a rake to minimise the visual impact. The collection on site will take two days. Two 4x4 vehicles and trailers will be used for the project and 9 employees will participate in collecting the obsidian.

Project review:

The Environment Agency sent a request to the Icelandic Institute of Natural History for impact assessment on the project in regard of the possible negative effects that the project could have on the area and on the conservation value of the area. The institute's review is that obsidian is a rare mineral in Iceland and it is the characteristic of the protected area. The institute recommends that the application should be declined.

Impact assessment:

Obsidian is a rather rare mineral that can only be found in active volcanic areas and has the same chemical compound as rhyolite. Obsidian has great conservation value and can be found in few places in Iceland, usually in small amount. A research on the amount of obsidian in Hrafninnusker showed that there was considerably less amount of obsidian than thought had been. Removal of obsidian in this quantity has negative effects of the area's conservation and on its conservation value. It is irredeemable and is a disruption

of geological features, vegetation and soil and is therefore against the policy of the nature reserve, that is to protect, among other things, geological features.

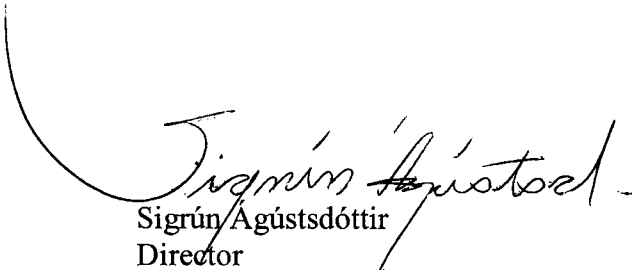
Conclusion:

Based on the above, the Environment Agency of Iceland does not grant a permission for the project.

Permission fee:

The Environment Agency of Iceland charges a fee for processing applications for permits in protected areas on the basis of Art. 92 of Act no. 60/2013 on nature conservation. The fee according to the agency's tariff no. 535/2015 is ISK 39.400.

Sincerely



Sigrún Agútsdóttir
Director



Hákon Ásgeirsson
Team leader