



Nature
Conservation
Agency of Iceland

The Open University
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Garðabær, 28th of May 2025
202505-0010/S.V.
10.01.01

Subject: Research permit - Geysir

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland has received an application from The Open University, 2nd of May 2025 for for a research permit within Geysir area.

Geysir is protected as natural monument, cf. regulation no. 660/2020. All disturbance of geological monuments is prohibited, incl. any inscriptions and disturbance of the activity and water level of the hot spring area, disturbance of hot springs, hot springs, soils and rocks, without permission. Helicopters and other manned aircraft may not land within the area without the permission of the Nature Conservation Agency.

Description of the project:

Accoring to the project description it „... aims to sample aerosols (airborne droplets) generated by geysering and bubbling of geothermal springs, in order to understand dispersal mechanisms of microorganisms, inorganic and organic compounds from the springs“ All equipment for the samplings will be carried in by hand and low noise generator has been specifically chosen for the project. The project will take place during the period 5th-13th of July, but sampling will require a maximum of three visits of approx. 5 hours each. Sampling will occur overnight (between approx. 21:00 and 06:00. Number of participands on location will be 5.

Sampling will require access on foot to areas off the roped path by one person and the foodfall minimized. The research project is conducted in collaboration with Matís ohf.

Impact assessment:

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland considers the project is not likely to have negative impact on the geological features in the area and the applicant will reduce negative impact on visitors by working on site overnight when very few visitors are expected. All traces of the project will be erased after the research, in cooperation and consultaion with rangers in the area. The Agency ask to pay attention to the fact that it can be dangerous to enter the restricted area near the geysers.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland hereby grants The Open University permission on its behalf to conduct research within the natural monument Geysir area as described above during the period 5th-13th of July 2025 the following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project. The permit conditions should be introduced to the staff of the project before work begins.
- 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 Nature Conservation Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- When it is necessary to go off-path, extra care must be taken not to cause damage to terrain, including vegetation, soil and geological formation. All traces of activity must be removed afterwards.
- All traces of the work must be removed carefully from the site by the end of the work/project.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 556 6800.
- This permit is only valid for research purposes. It does not include permit to utilize the samples for commercial purposes. The samples cannot be signed over to third party for commercial use.
- Every measure should be taken to avoid damage to the sites and unnecessary disturbance while collecting samples.
- Samples should be collected where any resulting disturbance to soil, vegetation or geological formations is not visible to other visitors.
- All participants in the project must wear high-visibility clothing during field work, labelled with the identity of the researcher or the research institute.

If the licensee causes damage to nature, according to art. 87 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013, the Nature Conservation 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 Nature Conservation 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 Nature Conservation Agency can withdraw the permit if conditions of the permit are not complied to.

A permit from the Icelandic Environment and Energy Agency might be needed for the project in geothermal areas (www.uos.is)

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland requests access to reports and scientific articles of the aforementioned studies, which could be used for educational purposes about the area and/or assist in its management, free of charge.

Supervision:

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

Hákon Ásgeirsson
director

Valdimar Kristjánsson
advisor