

Nearer Photography  
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Reykjavík, 27. apríl 2022  
UST202204-088/P.V.B.  
09.06.01

**Subject: permit to fly a drone in protected area**

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Nearer Photography, dated April 8<sup>th</sup> 2022, for a permit to fly a drone within Dyrhólaey, Geysir, Gullfoss, Hraunfossar, Reynisfjara/Reynisdrangar and Skógafoss.

Dyrhólaey is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no.101/1978. Construction work and disturbance to geological formations and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. A permit from the Environment Agency is needed for camping inside the nature reserve. This includes tents, motorhomes and campers. According to the management plan regulations permission must be obtained from the Environment Agency for operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the area. Access to Dyrhólaey is limited from May 1<sup>st</sup> to June 25<sup>th</sup> 2021 due to nesting season. The area is open from 9:00am -7pm.

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 Environment Agency. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area 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.

Hraunfossar and Barnafoss is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 410/1987. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited.

Skógafoss is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 477/1987. Photography, cinemaphotography and events that can affect visitors experience in the area are subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Reynisfjara and Reynisdrangar is not a protected area. No permission from the Environment Agency is needed to film there. A permission from the landowners might be needed for the project.

***Description of the project:***

Map that shows flight routes was attached to the application. Flight altitude will be 30-120 meters at Dyrhólaey, Gullfoss and Hraunfossar. At Geysir the altitude will be 20-120 meters and 30-120 meters at Skógafoss. Flight route at Skógafoss will follow directions from ranger from the Environment Agency according to a map received April 26<sup>th</sup>. No restrictions on traffic, pedestrian or motorized will be needed and employees will not go off paths and roads. Number of employee would be 3 persons and droneflight would take place in the period of May 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> 2022.

***Impact assessment:***

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project to be minimal and not likely to have negative impact on the areas Geysir, Gullfoss and Skógafoss. It might temporarily disturb other guests. To minimise disturbance, it's important to keep flight time to a minimum, keep the drone away from guests and wildlife and avoid flying during the area's busiest time of day. At Skógafoss it is important to keep a high altitude to avoid disturbing the fulmars nesting in the canyon in front of the waterfall. Nesting season has started in Dyrhólaey and access to the island restricted in may and june. Droneflight near the bird cliffs is considered to have negative impact on birds in the area since the drone would fly over the cliffs.

***Conclusions and conditions:***

After reviewed the application and regulations for Hraunfossar no permission is needed to fly a drone there if it does not disturb wildlife and other visitors experience.

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby declines Nearer Photography request to fly a drone within Dyrhólaey nature reserve.

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby declines Nearer Photography request to fly a drone within Dyrhólaey nature reserve. The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Nearer Photography permission on its behalf to fly a drone at Geysir, Gullfoss and Skógafoss as described above on May 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 on 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 Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- Crew members should always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads.
- The crew 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 crew should be conscious of other guests on the sites and make sure that the drone flight 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.

- 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.
- 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.**
- **Due to security reasons, it is prohibited to fly drone less than 50m above Strokkur and Geysir.**

If the licensee 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.

A permission from the landowners and/or the municipality might be needed for the project.

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 52.600 ISK according to art. 24. b. in the agency's tariff no. 535/2015.

***Supervision:***

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

Sincerely

Magnús Freyr Sigurkarlsson  
*advisor*

Þórdís Vilhelmína Bragadóttir  
*advisor*