

Andrea's Photography and Travel

Reykjavík, 29. apríl 2024
UST202403-057/P.V.B.
09.04.00

Subject: permit to fly a drone in protected areas

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Andrea's Photography and Travel, dated March 5th 2024, for a permit to fly a drone within Dynjandi, Fjallabak, Goðafoss, Gullfoss, Háifoss, Hjalparfoss and Hverfell.

Dynjandi is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 348/1971. Construction work, disturbance to geological formations and other changes to landscape is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland. According to the rules of conduct operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Fjallabak is protected as a nature reserve, cf. regulation no. 354/1979. Construction work, extraction of minerals, disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. The use of unmanned aircraft (drones) within the nature reserve from June 15th - September 15th is subject to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Goðafoss is protected as natural monument, cf. regulation no. 647/2020. Disturbance to vegetation, wildlife and geological formation is prohibited. 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.

Hjalparfoss, Gjáin, Háifoss and Granni are protected as natural monument, cf. regulation no. 110/2020. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Permission must be obtained from the Environment Agency for organized events and projects that pose a risk of disturbance to geological formations, wildlife or guests in the area. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland.

Hverfjall is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 1261/2011. Disturbance to vegetation and wildlife is prohibited. The guest should follow marked paths at any given time.

Description of the project:

It is requested to film and fly a drone at the protected areas Dynjandi, Fjallabak, Goðafoss, Gullfoss, Háifoss, Hjalparfoss and Hverfell. At Fjallabak the droneflight would take place at Hnauapolla and Landmannalaugar. Droneflight would take place early in the morning or late in the evening when there are not a lot of tourists in the areas. Maximum altitude would be 120 meters. Information where the applicant plans to be in each area was included in the application.

Impact assessment:

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project not likely to have negative effect on nature and conservation value of Fjallabak, Goðafoss, Háifoss and Hjalparfoss. The droneflight might have negative effect on birdlife at Dynjandi but if conditions of the permit are followed the impact will be reduced. The droneflight might have negative impact on other visitors experience in all sites but if conditions of the permit are followed the impact will 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 a drone in at Hverfell in the period requested if the flight does not disturb wildlife and other visitors experience.

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Andrea's Photography and Travel permission on its behalf to fly a drone within Dynjandi, Fjallabak, Goðafoss, Gullfoss, Háifoss and Hjalparfoss as described above on August 8th -29th 2024 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.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.
- Off-road driving in Iceland is strictly prohibited.
- The applicant is required to prevent all disturbance to the environment and make sure that all litter is removed from the sites.
- 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.
- 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.
- If falcons or eagles are seen in the areas, it is not allowed to fly the drone there.

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.

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 constructions, droneflights, cinematography and/or photography is 83.200 ISK according to art. 29. b. in the agency's tariff no. 1410/2023.

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