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Reykjavík, 23. júlí 2024
UST202407-275/S.K.V.
09.04.00

Subject: Permit application for using drone in Vestfirðir and Hálendi

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Krzysztof Pylak, dated 16th of July 2024, for using drone to photograph within Hornstrandir, Dynjandi, Central Highlands, Fjallabak and Þjórsárdal.

Hornstrandir is protected as a nature reserve by act no 60/2013 on nature conservation, cf. Regulation no 332/1985. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. According to the management plan for Hornstrandir, filming and photography that can affect wildlife and visitor experience and flying an unmanned aircraft/drone within the boundaries of the protected site is subjected to a permit from the Environment Agency. Please note that between 1st of May until 15th of August the Environmental Agency gives no permits to fly drones close to breeding sites of birds, including the bird cliffs and other vulnerable habitats.

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 from 1st of May until 15th of September .

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.

Hjálparfoss, Gjáin, Háifoss and Granni in Þjórsárdalur are protected as natural monuments, 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.

Kerlingarfjöll is protected as an area of landscape, cf. Regulation no. 822/2020. Disturbance to geological formations, landscape, hot springs, other springs and ecosystems in hot springs in the protected area is prohibited. Permission must be obtained from the Environment Agency of Iceland for organized events and projects that need facilities, labour force or use of equipment within the protected area such as filming, at events and ceremonies.

Description of the project:

The applicant requests to use a drone to photograph at Hornstrandir, Dynjandi, Central Highlands, Fjallabak and Þjórsárdalur between 13th of August until 11th of September 2024. The applicant will stay within marked paths and adhere to standard drone flying rules.

Impact assessment:

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project to be minimal and not likely to have negative impact on the environment provided that the following requirements are met. The droneflight might have negative impact on other visitors experience in the sites but if conditions of the permit are followed the impact can be reduced.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Krzysztof Pylak permission on its behalf to fly a drone within Hornstrandir, Dynjandi, Central Highlands, Fjallabak and Þjórsárdalur between 13th of August until 11th of September 2024 (from the 15th in Hornstrandir) on the following conditions:

Permit for visitors

- 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 48 hours before entering Hornstrandir and again before leaving. 24 hours in advance for other areas.
- If the project dates or description changes the Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- The applicant shall always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads.
- The applicant 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.
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited.
- 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.
- The applicant should be conscious of other guests on the sites and make sure that filming causes as little disturbance as possible to other visitors.
- 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 next to bird cliffs in a closer proximity than 200 meters during nesting season (until 15th of August).
- It is forbidden to fly drones next to bird cliffs in a closer proximity than 50 meters, if birds are in the cliffs.
- If falcons or eagles are seen in the area, it is not allowed to fly the drone there.

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.

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 droneflight for recreational flight in these areas is **83.200 ISK** according to art. 29. b. in the agency's tariff no. 1410/2023.

Sincerely

Edda Kristín Eiríksdóttir
advisor

Sveinn Kári Valdimarsson
advisor