

Jing Li

Reykjavík, 29. júní 2023  
UST202306-249/S.V.  
09.04.00

**Subject:** Permit to fly a drone within Fjallabak nature reserve and Kerlingarfjöll

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from Jing Li, dated June 19th 2023, for a permit to fly a drone within the nature reserves at Fjallabak and Kerlingarfjöll.

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 15th June – 15th September 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 has requested to fly a drone, for recreational use, at several locations within the nature reserve at Fjallabak and Kerlingarfjöll in the period of July 3rd - July 5th. At Fjallabak the droneflight will take place at several locations, i.e. Lake Ljótípollur, Hnausapollur Crater Lake, , Lake Skyggnisvatn and the braided rivers and Rauðufossar (pl), Rauðaskál and several no-man places at Kerlingarfjöll. He applies also to fly the drone at Austurbjallavatn, which is not within the protected area. As he describes in his application, he has neither intention to go off paths nor to fly the drone near people.

***Impact assessment:***

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the droneflight might have negative effect on other visitors experience at these nature reserves but if conditions of the permit are followed the agency considers that the impact can be reduced.

Within the Fjallabak nature reserve, drone flight can cause disturbance to other guests and wildlife.

To minimize negative effects and not to disturb the areas quietness, it is recommended to fly the drone early in the mornings or late in the evenings.

***Conclusions and conditions:***

After revision of the application and regulations for the sites, it is concluded that no permission is needed to fly the drone at Kerlingafjöll if it does not disturb wildlife and other visitors experience.

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants Jing Li permission on its behalf to fly a drone within Fjallabak nature reserve as described above on July 4th - July 5th on the following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project
- The applicant shall inform rangers in the area about his 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
- The applicant must follow rules of conduct that apply to the area
- The applicant should always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads and not enter closed areas
- Off-road driving in Iceland is strictly prohibited.
- Flying a drone above or in the vicinity of the pool at Landmannalaugar is not allowed
- 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
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited
- 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 areas. 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

***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 for recreational purposes for up to two areas is ISK. 38.000. according to art. 29. c. in the agency's tariff no. 206/2023.

***Supervision:***

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

Sincerely,

Daníel Freyr Jónsson

***advisor***

Sigrún Valgarðsdóttir

***advisor***