

John Seager

Friday, 18. July 2025  
202507-0079/H.Á.  
10.02.01

**Subject: Permit for the use of drone in Fjallabak Nature Reserve**

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland has received an application from John Seager, dated 15.7.2025, for the use of drone within the Fjallabak Nature Reserve.

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 15<sup>th</sup> – September 15<sup>th</sup> is subject to a permit from the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland.

***Description of the project:***

The applicant requests a permit to fly his drone at some points in the Fjallabak Nature Reserve Area. The main sites of interest are Sigöldugljúfur, Hnausapollur and Ljótípollur, Frostastaðavatn and Stútur, Rauðibotn and Mælifell. In addition, the applicant is interested in finding interesting shapes and textures in the glacial rivers. The use of the drone is during the period September 4-11, 2025. The applicant will be looking for the best possible light, so the timings of the flight will be around sunrise (06.00 – 07.00) and sunset (20.00-21.00). A very small, light drone with limited battery life will be used, so flight time will 30 minutes maximum. Take off and landing will be at the same spot. The drone flights are for recreational film and photography capture only.

***Impact assessment:***

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland considers the project not likely to have negative impact on conservation value of the sites and nature. The flights might have negative effect on other visitors' experience of the site due to number of drones flying at the same time. The Nature Conservation Agency considers that the impact can be reduced if conditions of the permit are followed.

***Conclusions and conditions:***

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland hereby grants John Seager permission on its behalf to fly a drone within the Fjallabak Nature Reserve, as described above, on September 4-11, 2025, 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 at Fjallabak. 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.
- If any complications occur during the drone flight, please contact the ranger or the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 556 6800.
- All disturbance to animals and wildlife is strictly prohibited.
- The applicant shall always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads.
- If the use of unmanned aircraft causes disturbance to wildlife in the area, its use should be ceased at once.
- Off-road driving in Iceland is strictly prohibited.
- If the material is meant for public viewing it must be noted in the video/subtext that permission from the Nature Conservation Agency was obtained for the filming/photography.
- An unmanned aircraft should never be flown near 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.
- 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.

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 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.

Unmanned aircraft should take off and land in a safe distance from other visitors according to regulation 1360/2024 on unmanned aircrafts.

The usage of a drone shall be according to regulation no. 1360/2024 on the operation of remotely piloted aircraft (<https://www.icetra.is/aviation/drones/>).

Please note that according to the regulation all drones need to be registered at the Icelandic Transport Authority. You can register them at the webpage [flydrone.is](https://flydrone.is)

***Permission fee:***

Nature Conservation 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 41.600 ISK according to art. 7. b. in the agency's tariff no. 354/2025.

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