

Sébastien Michaud

Garðabær, 6th of August 2025

202507-0151/I.M.B.

10.02.01

Permit to use a drone within protected areas in Iceland

The Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland has received an application from Sébastien Michaud, dated on the 25th of July 2025 for a permit to use drone within Friðland að Fjallabaki nature reserve, the natural monuments of Geysir, Goðafoss, Gullfoss, Skógafoss and Háifoss.

Friðland að Fjallabaki 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 within 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 Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland.

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. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Nature Conservation 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 Nature Conservation 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 Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland.

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. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland.

Skógafoss is protected as a natural monument, cf. regulation no. 477/1987. Disturbance to geological formations, vegetation and wild animal life in the protected area is prohibited. Operating an unmanned aircraft/drone within the protected area is subjected to a permit from the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland.

Description of the project:

The project applied for is for using a drone within the above-mentioned protected areas during the period of the 7th to 17th of August 2025. Aerial photographs showing the flight paths, take-off and landing points were submitted with the application. The altitude will be up to 40 m (<120 feet).

Geysir: 8.8. Flight time is less than 45 minutes, altitude

Friðland að Fjallabaki: 9.8. four locations, flight time about 15 minutes at each location. Altitude of less than 120 feet.

Geysir : 8.8. Flight time is less than 45 minutes. Altitude of less than 100 feet

Goðafoss : 13.8. Flight time is less than 45 minutes. Altitude of less than 100 feet

Gullfoss : 8.8. Flight time is less than 45 minutes. Altitude of less than 100 feet

Háifoss: 9.8. Flight time is less than 45 minutes. Altitude of less than 100 feet

Skógafoss : 10.8. Flight time is less than 45 minutes. Altitude of less than 100 feet

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 a negative effect on other visitors' experience of the site. The 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 Sébastien Michaud permission on its behalf to use a drone within the above-mentioned areas, apart from the area marked red at Landmannalaugar, see attached map, as described above on the following conditions:

- Keep this letter with you on site during the project.
- The applicant shall inform rangers in the areas 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 Nature Conservation Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- Always stay on authorized paths/tracks/roads.
- Follow rules of conduct that apply to the areas.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Nature Conservation Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 556 6800.
- All disturbances to animals and wildlife are strictly prohibited.
- Off-road driving in Iceland is strictly prohibited.
- 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 Nature Conservation Agency was obtained for the filming/photography.
- 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 near people. Please take precautions 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 for 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.
- **It is forbidden to fly drones in the canyon in front of the waterfall at Skógafoss due to bird protection.**
- For safety reasons, unmanned aircraft are not allowed to fly below 50 m above Strokkur.
- It is forbidden to fly drones next to bird cliffs in a closer proximity than 200 meters during nesting season.
- It is forbidden to fly drones next to bird cliffs in a closer proximity than 50 meters, if birds are on 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 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.

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 construction, drone flights, cinematography and/or photography is **83.200 ISK** according to art. 7. b. in the agency's tariff no. 354/2025.

Supervision:

The Nature Conservation Agency will supervise the project. The supervisors will be rangers from the agency.

Sincerely
Valdimar Kristjánsson
advisor

Ingibjörg Marta Bjarnadóttir
team leader