

CBS News - 60 minutes
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New York City, NY 10019
United States

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Subject: permit to drive off road Meradalaleið

The Environment Agency of Iceland has received an application from CBS News, dated December 7th 2022, for a permit to drive off road to the volcano in Meradalir.

According to art. 31 in the Nature Conservation Act no. 60/2013 it is prohibited to drive off road in Iceland. If off-Road driving is a necessary component of filming, the Environment Agency of Iceland can give authorization.

Description of the project:

Permission is requested to drive two cars on 35 inch tires to the volcano site in Meradalir to transport filming equipment. The filming would take place for one day in the period January 12th - 13th 2023.

Review:

The Environment Agency of Iceland requested review from the police in Suðurnesjum on January 3rd 2023. The review from the police was received on January 4th 2023. In their review no comments were made regarding the request to drive on the Meradala track to the eruption site.

Impact assessment:

The Environment Agency of Iceland considers the project likely to have negative impact on nature on the site the car will drive through. The Environment Agency considers that the impact can be reduced if conditions of the permit are followed and the car follows the same route first responders and research institutions use.

Conclusions and conditions:

The Environment Agency of Iceland hereby grants CBS News permission on its behalf drive off road to the volcano in Meradalir as described above on for one day in the period of January 12th -13th 2023.

This permit is only for transporting equipment not people.

The permit is granted by on the following conditions:

- The applicant must report to the police before he enters the area and follow their instructions.
- Vehicle tire size must be a minimum of 35 inches. Air must be released from the tires to minimize disruption on the worst part of the route.
- The vehicle's must be equipped for winter driving.
- Vehicles must be parked in such a way that they do not obstruct the approach of emergency personnel and scientists.

- The police can limit or block access to the area, for example because of safety, weather, conditions or the number of cars in the area.
- It is only allowed to drive to the eruption site by Meradaleið. It is not allowed to drive outside that track.
- The permit is only valid for one round trip during the season.
- The permit only covers driving to the eruption stations via the Merardala track and not around
- Keep this letter with you on site during the project. The permit conditions should be introduced to the staff of the project before work begins.
- If the project dates or description changes the Environment Agency shall be notified as soon as possible.
- To prevent the film/advertisement from encouraging off-road driving in Iceland vehicle driving of road should never be seen in the product being produced. The vehicle should only drive to and from the designated filming area.
- If any complications occur during the project, please contact the ranger or the Environment Agency of Iceland, tel. +354 591 2000.
- The vehicle emission control must be in good condition and it must be secure that no polluted liquid contaminates the soil or water.
- When driving off-road it should be done in a way that causes the smallest possible damage to the environment.

If the applicant 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.

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 for off-road driving based on Article 92 of Act no. 61/2013 on Nature Conservation. The fee is 39.400 ISK according to art. 24. a. in the agency's tariff no. 535/2015.

Supervision:

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

Sincerely

Inga Dóra Hrólfsdóttir
director

Lára Björnsdóttir
advisor