



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
DIVISION OF PARKS AND FORESTRY
STATE PARK SERVICE



POLICY

NUMBER: 2.38

DATE: July 8, 2015

SUBJECT: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this policy is to ensure that the use of an unmanned aerial vehicle is addressed in a consistent manner on all lands and waters administered by the Division of Parks and Forestry, State Park Service.

For the purpose of this policy, an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), commonly known as a "drone" or referred to as a Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA), is defined by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) as "an aircraft without a human pilot aboard" and is hereinafter referenced as UAV.

BACKGROUND: There has been a dramatic increase in the number and use of UAVs in recent years. The increase in the use of these devices has the potential to cause unacceptable impacts such as harming visitors, interfering with emergency operations, causing excessive noise, impacting viewsheds, damaging historic resources and critical infrastructure, posing security risks and disturbing wildlife.

This policy is necessary to maintain public health and safety within all lands and waters administered by the State Park Service and to protect park resources and visitors.

Except for the limited permitted use of fixed-wing model aircraft in several park areas, no other use of aircraft is permitted in NJ State Parks. The use of UAVs on lands and waters administered by the State Park Service is a new use and is not defined in N.J.A.C. 7:2-2.22 (a)(7) as a "remote controlled model plane or other mechanical device."

APPLICABILITY: This policy applies to all State Park Service owned or managed properties.

POLICY: The operation of a UAV is hereby specifically prohibited within all lands and waters administered by the State Park Service unless specifically approved by the Assistant Director, State Park Service in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:2-1.4(b).

IMPLEMENTATION: Search and rescue organizations, fire fighting and law enforcement agencies, other governmental and first-response agencies may request permission for the scheduled operation of a UAV on lands or waters administered by the State Park Service. Approval may be given for the purposes of training or reconnaissance through the Assistant Director, State Park Service. Accredited Universities may also request permission for the

scheduled operation of a UAV for scientific research projects with a letter signed by the course instructor on official college letterhead. Requests must be made ninety (90) days prior to the intended date of use through a Special Use Permit (SUP), which can be coordinated through the park office. The Superintendent shall outline the safety zone within which only the persons associated with the UAV may be permitted.

Use of a UAV for public emergency operations by the aforementioned agencies, on lands or waters administered by the State Park Service, will be immediately approved with notification provided to the State Park Service, State Park Police, or NJDEP Trenton Dispatch at 1-877-WARNDEP.

State Park Service, State Park Police, State Forestry Services, and the Division of Fish and Wildlife staff will be approved to utilize a UAV for appropriate official use, through the Office of the Assistant Director.

All requests to launch, land, or operate a UAV on lands or waters administered by the State Park Service will be adequately evaluated as to the appropriateness of the requested activities and whether the use of a UAV will result in unacceptable impacts to park resources and visitors.

The following will also be considered:

- * Applicability of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and NJ Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics and any other applicable regulations for commercial use of a UAV.
- * Potential for injury or damage to park resources or use that would be contrary to the purposes for which the park was established, use that would cause unacceptable impact to the atmosphere of peace and tranquility maintained in wilderness, natural or historic locations within the park.
- * Potential for impact to program activities, visitors services, or the operation of public facilities or services provided by State Park Service concessionaires or lessees, or present a clear and present danger to public health and safety.
- * Potential to result in significant conflict with other existing uses.

If it is determined that the requested activity is appropriate and compatible with the values and resources of the park, a SUP for launching, land and operating a UAV may be granted. The permit will clearly identify the designated area(s) where the UAV may be operated within the park. The SUP will also contain appropriate terms and conditions to ensure safe operation of a UAV and mitigate any unacceptable impact to the resources.

In addition to the standard SUP conditions included on all permits, the conditions listed on Exhibit A (attached) will also be required.

This policy is effective immediately.


Mark Texel, Director
State Park Service

Exhibit A

- * UAV may not disturb or harass wildlife.
- * UAV may not interfere with official law enforcement, fire or medical services, or other emergency operations.
- * UAV will not be flown in a reckless manner or outside the designated area(s).
- * Inexperienced UAV operators must be accompanied and assisted by an experienced operator.
- * Operators must avoid flying directly over people, vessels, vehicles, or structures and must avoid endangering the life and property of others.
- * UAV must be within visual sight of the operator, with no visual aids authorized, at all times during flight.
- * Operator must report all accidents immediately. This includes any accident that may have resulted in injury to any person or thing even if only a minor injury.
- * UAV flights will be restricted to posted park hours of operation.
- * The use of flammable liquids for fueling a UAV is prohibited.