

Drone Flight Plan & Wildlife Operations Checklist

Pilot Name: _____

Proposed Date of Flight
(include a range)

Location

Mission Name/ID

1. Objectives

Purpose of the Flight: (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Photography/Videography
 - ☐ Research & Data Collection
 - ☐ Wildlife Monitoring
 - ☐ Deterrence
 - ☐ Other: _____
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2. Legal Compliance

- ☐ Acquire required permits and approvals from local authorities
- ☐ Ensure compliance with all local, regional and federal regulations
- ☐ Acquire approval from local authorities if operating on Indigenous territory
- ☐ Adhere to all local wildlife protection laws

3. Equipment Check

- ☐ Drone model suitable for wildlife operations
 - ☐ Quiet propellers installed (if available)
 - ☐ Telephoto lens for minimizing proximity disturbance
 - ☐ Spare batteries and SD cards available
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4. Flight Path & Location Assessment

- ☐ Identified safe takeoff and landing zones
 - ☐ Avoiding populated areas and aerial obstructions
 - ☐ Checked weather conditions and wind speeds
 - ☐ Assessed terrain and potential interference (trees, power lines, etc.)
 - ☐ Ensure your planned flight will avoid:
 - ☐ Other people (including wildlife spectators)
 - ☐ Wildlife other than your target species (including birds)
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5. Wildlife Impact Assessment

- ☐ Evaluated potential impact on bears and other wildlife
 - ☐ Avoiding sensitive times (e.g., nursing, feeding)
 - ☐ Planning for minimal disturbance (altitude, noise level, speed)
 - ☐ Preparing to adapt based on wildlife behavior
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6. Safety Measures

- ☐ Roles assigned:
 - **Pilot:** _____
 - **Spotter:** _____
 - **Bear Guard:** _____
 - ☐ Maintaining safe distance (300m launch, 100m max proximity)
 - ☐ Emergency protocols established (e.g., loss of control, bear disturbance)

7. Risk & Response Plan

List Potential Risks & Mitigation Strategies:

- Ex. **Risk** > Potential for loss of contact due to terrain
 Mitigation > Maintain an elevation of 50ft in addition to other requirements
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8. Battery & Retrieval Plan

- ☐ Fully charged batteries and backup power available (controller and UAV)
 - ☐ Flight time calculated to ensure safe return with 40% battery remaining (ensuring safe retrieval)
 - ☐ Provide a retrieval plan in case of drone malfunction (based on wildlife), for example:
 - Observe and assess wildlife behavior
 - If the UAV is still flying try to regain contact if it's safe to approach
 - If the UAV has crashed or landed, observe and assess wildlife for disturbance
 - Retrieve the UAV when the wildlife has moved from the area
 - If retrieval is not possible, mark the location, inform local authorities and return at a later time with your spotter and bear guard for retrieval
 - If the wildlife is interacting with the UAV after failure, document and report it to local authorities
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9. Monitoring & Adaptation

- ☐ Continuously observing bear behavior
- ☐ Adjusting flight or aborting if signs of stress occur
- ☐ Communicating with your spotter for real-time adjustments

10. Post-Flight Reporting

Keep a record of your flight for reporting purposes if authorities and/or publishers (video or photo) request proof of a responsible flight

Flight Summary & Observations:

Wildlife Reactions Noted:

Incidents or Concerns:
