

# Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Rules, Regs and Requirements

Ver. Jul 28, 2015

## Applicable Rules and Regs

## Checklist of Requirements

### Refuge management action

Our project:  
(1) FWS project (our staff\*) or  
(2) another entity (contractor, government agency, university, etc.) takes action at our direction

\*Note: All DOI UAS operators must comply with [OPM-11](#) requirements, including but not limited to completing an OAS-approved UAS qualification course.

### Refuge Use

All other uses (e.g., recreational, research, etc.)

- (1) [FAA rules for civil operators](#) (contractors)
  - Must stay <200 ft in altitude (can apply for higher airspace)
  - UAS must be <55 lbs
  - Must not interfere w/ manned aircraft
  - Must operate under Visual Flight Rules
  - Must remain in Visual Line-of-Sight from operator
  - Must notify nearby airports and heliports
- (2) [Operational Procedures Memorandum 11](#) (DOI operators):
  - Must meet all UAS training requirements
  - Must stay <400 ft in altitude (can apply for higher airspace)
  - UAS must be <55 lbs
  - Must not interfere w/ manned aircraft
  - Must operate under Visual Flight Rules
  - Must remain in Visual Line-of-Sight from operator
  - Must remain outside of 5 miles from any airport or heliport
- (3) [Operational Procedures Memorandum \(OPM\) 6](#), Aviation Management Plans (all operators)
- (4) Conditions of the Certificate of Authorization or Waiver from the FAA (all operators)

- (1) Service reg [50 CFR 27.34](#)
  - No unauthorized launching or landing of aircraft on refuges
  - No harassment of wildlife with aircraft
- (2) Appropriateness policy [603 FW 1](#)
- (3) Compatibility policy [603 FW 2](#)
- (4) [FAA rules for hobby/model operators](#)
  - UAS must be <55 lbs unless certified
  - Must not interfere w/ manned aircraft
  - Must remain in Visual Line-of-Sight from operator
  - Not for commercial purposes
  - Must notify nearby airports and heliports
- (5) [FAA rules for civil operators](#) (commercial)
  - Conditions of the Certificate of Authorization or Waiver from the FAA (commercial and university operators; recreational users do not need a COA)

- ☐ Operator obtains Certificate of Waiver or Authorization from the FAA and provides a copy to the refuge
- ☐ NEPA compliance: refuge prepares an Environmental Action Statement of Categorical Exclusion if no extraordinary circumstances exist
- ☐ Operator obtains permission to conduct operation from the refuge (Special Use Permit, Letter of Agreement, MOU)
- ☐ Commercial operator complies w/ FAA rules for civil operators
- ☐ Refuge follows all applicable purchasing rules and all DOI aviation contracting rules if entity is a commercial operator
- ☐ DOI operator complies with OPM-11
- ☐ Refuge works with operator to develop a Project Aviation Safety Plan (PASP) meeting the minimum requirements of OPM-6
- ☐ Refuge obtains a biological opinion on impacts to T&E species for ESA compliance (if applicable)
- ☐ Refuge prepares a Wilderness Minimum Requirement Analysis for Wilderness Act compliance (if applicable)
- ☐ Refuge contacts OAS and Region 8 external affairs to inform them of the UAS mission at least three months in advance:
  - ☐ Bob Van Buskirk, Safety Specialist/Aviation Manager
  - ☐ Brian Mullin, Aviation Training and Safety Specialist
  - ☐ Cynthia Sandoval, Region 8 External Affairs
- ☐ Refuge enters project information into [UAS project log database](#)
- ☐ Non-FWS entity maintains operational control of UAS assets at all times (recommended, see [OPM-11](#))

- ☐ Refuge determines use is appropriate
- ☐ Refuge determines use is compatible
- ☐ Commercial and university operators obtain Certificate of Waiver or Authorization from the FAA and provide a copy to the refuge
- ☐ NEPA compliance: (1) refuge prepares Environmental Action Statement of Categorical Exclusion if no extraordinary circumstances exist; or (2) refuge completes minor amendment to CCP for a new use
- ☐ Operator obtains permission to conduct operation from the refuge (Special Use Permit or other authorization)
- ☐ Recreational operator complies w/ FAA rules for hobby/model operators
- ☐ Commercial operator complies with FAA rules for civil operators
- ☐ Refuge obtains a biological opinion on impacts to T&E species for ESA compliance (if applicable)
- ☐ Refuge prepares a Wilderness Minimum Requirement Analysis for Wilderness Act compliance (if applicable)
- ☐ Non-FWS entity maintains operational control of UAS assets at all times