



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

Memorandum No. 15-009

Date: 26 June 2015

TO: NWCG Executive Board Members

FROM: Dan Smith, Chair, NWCG Executive Board *Dan Smith*

SUBJECT: Unmanned Aircraft Systems Technology Assessment Demonstration

This memorandum requests NWCG member agency assistance for a joint U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Forest Service unmanned aircraft systems technology assessment project. Please share this with the appropriate individuals in your agencies.

The U. S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) are seeking NWCG member agency prescribed fire projects on which to conduct unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) technology demonstrations for the purpose of assessing aircraft/system/sensor suitability with wildland fire and natural resource mission areas. The agencies are seeking prescribed fire projects scheduled for implementation in summer and fall 2015. No UAS assessment demonstration support costs will be borne by the hosting unit.

Thorough planning will occur prior to any UAS assessment demonstration. Certificates of Authorization (COA), Project Aviation Safety Plans (PASP), and Risk Assessments will be developed. Coordination with the FAA will occur. A UAS specialist will be present to oversee UAS operations. Manned aircraft and UAS will not operate in the same airspace.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate candidate prescribed fire projects.

- Segregated aerial ignition and UAS operations
- Broadcast burn
- Multiple day burn
- Located away from populated areas
- Minimum 5 nautical miles from nearest airport
- Agency line officer authorization

Please submit candidate prescribed fire projects that may be able to host a UAS assessment demonstration by completing the online form found at this link. <http://goo.gl/forms/PcBhITXzso>

This UAS assessment is based on the DOI/USFS document, *2015 Unmanned Aircraft Technology Demonstration Overview, December 5, 2014* (attached). The lessons learned from the UAS assessment demonstrations will inform future DOI and USFS decisions on UAS applications in the wildland fire environment.

The DOI issued a Request for Information (RFI) in April and subsequently awarded three vendors, VDOS and Textron Systems, Lockheed Martin and Insitu the opportunity to demonstrate their UAS capabilities. UAS technology assessment demonstrations related to this request will be conducted by one of these vendors.

Please direct any questions you have regarding this request to Brad Koeckeritz, Chair, Interagency Fire Unmanned Aircraft Systems Subcommittee (Bradley.Koeckeritz@ios.doi.gov, 208-433-5091) or Bob Roth, Co-Chair (Rroth@fs.fed.us, 406-829-6712).

Attachment:

A. 2015 Unmanned Aircraft Technology Demonstration Overview

cc: Jon Rollens (Chair, National Interagency Aviation Committee), Brad Koeckeritz (Chair, Interagency Fire Unmanned Aircraft Systems Subcommittee), Bob Roth (Co-Chair, Interagency Fire Unmanned Aircraft Systems Subcommittee)