

REQUEST FOR EXPERIMENTAL AUTHORITY

BlackSky Global, LLC (“BlackSky”) herein requests an experimental license for an earth station to communicate with its prototype experimental satellite, “Global-1.” The Global-1 satellite is scheduled to be launched on a PSLV rocket in April 2018, pending grant of experimental authority.¹

Experimental Program

The purpose of the Global-1 experimental satellite is to allow BlackSky to test, develop and demonstrate that satellite’s subsystems, in particular those subsystems that have been upgraded from the previous Pathfinder model. In 2016 the Commission authorized BlackSky to launch and operate two prototype satellites, “Pathfinder-1” and “Pathfinder-2.”² The purpose of that experimental program was to test, develop, and demonstrate the efficacy and design of a newly configured microsatellite, including associated software applications, relative to their ability to provide high-resolution remote sensing in the Earth Exploration Satellite Service (“EESS”).

The launch of both satellites was postponed because of delays in the Falcon-9 launch rocket mission and instead, Pathfinder-1 was moved to a PSLV rocket and was successfully launched on September 25, 2016. Although Pathfinder-2 was never launched, the Pathfinder-1 satellite revealed shortcomings that BlackSky hopes to remedy with an updated prototype model, Global-1. Among other things, BlackSky hopes to improve imaging capability and through the new Global-1 program, BlackSky will also be able to gather data regarding the comparative performance and combined coverage of its experimental satellites

Experimental Earth Station

BlackSky already has experimental authority for earth stations to communicate with the Pathfinder satellites under Call Sign WH2XPS.³ That experimental authority is set to expire on March 1, 2018. While BlackSky’s initial plan had been to seek to modify that license to add Global-1 as a point of communication to it, given the changes

¹ See BlackSky Global, LLC, Application for New Experimental Authority, FCC File No. 0864-EX-CN-2017, filed November 13, 2017 (“Global -1 Satellite Application”).

² BlackSky Global, LLC; Callsign WH2XPT, FCC File No. 0053-EX-ML-2016. (“Pathfinder Satellite Application”)

³ BlackSky Global, LLC; Callsign WH2XPS, FCC File No. 0339-EX-RR-2016. (“Pathfinder Earth Station Application”)

involved, BlackSky has determined that the better approach is to seek a new license to comport with the new experiment.⁴

The grant of the instant request will permit BlackSky to communicate and control the satellite and thereby assemble critical feedback as to the performance and overall architecture of the proposed imaging and communications system.

Technical Details of the earth station and its operation with Global-1 are included in Exhibit 2.

Ownership & Control of the Earth Stations

BlackSky owns and operates the antenna providing the UHF uplink. The antenna providing the S-band uplink as well as the backup antenna are owned and operated by the University of Alaska Fairbanks (“UAF”)⁵. Pursuant to its operating agreement, BlackSky will control all transmissions from the earth station while UAF will be responsible for the operation and direction of the antenna.

FAA Notification

Pursuant to 47 CFR §17.7 of the FCC’s rules, FAA notification of the antenna heights is not required. The antennas are not within 8 km (5 miles) of an airport, and are not more than 200 feet in height. Moreover, the parabolic dish antennas are previously licensed without requiring FAA notification.⁶

24-hour Contact Details:

BlackSky maintains a 24-hour, 7-day-per-week hotline at its Mission Control Center, which can be reached at the following telephone number for any interference issues: 844-332-3318. The person on the receiving end of this phone number is rotating. Their supervisor is John Springmann.

⁴ BlackSky originally stated in its application for Global-1 that it would seek to modify the Pathfinder earth station. See Global-1 Application Narrative, FCC File No. 0864-EX-CN-2017. After further review and for the reasons stated above, BlackSky seeks a new license to replace the Pathfinder earth stations.

⁵ The parabolic antennas are licensed to University of Alaska Fairbanks under FCC Call sign E140023.

⁶ *Id.*