



National Reconnaissance Office Release

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NRO Awards Commercial Hyperspectral Capabilities Study Contracts

CHANTILLY, Va. – The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) today announced the award of six study contracts for commercial hyperspectral imagery (HSI). Companies receiving awards under NRO’s Strategic Commercial Enhancement’s (SCE) Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) Framework include BlackSky Technology, HyperSat, Orbital Sidekick, Pixxel, Planet, and Xplore.

"We are operating the largest, most diverse, most capable overhead constellation in NRO's history as we face increasingly complex threats in space and on the ground," said NRO Director Dr. Chris Scolese. "Through these newest contracts, we are very excited to explore the potential of commercial hyperspectral imagery and what it may be able to contribute to our world-class intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities."

Hyperspectral images are made up of light from hundreds of colors across the electromagnetic spectrum. Since hyperspectral imaging collects many different colors of light, any given object will have a unique signature. This enables users to obtain information about each pixel in an image, with the goal of identifying objects and materials. Hyperspectral imagery has a diverse set of applications including agriculture, mining, geology, and intelligence and surveillance.

The commercial hyperspectral capabilities contracts focus on increasing knowledge and understanding of current and expected hyperspectral imagery availability, quality, and operational utility through a two-stage effort. The first stage focuses on analytical studies to provide estimates of system capabilities at both the individual sensor and constellation levels, as well as business and cybersecurity planning. The second stage focuses on assessing on-orbit capabilities and procuring data products.

“In just over four months from RFP release to award, these contracts demonstrate our continued commitment to agile acquisition,” said Pete Muend, director of the NRO’s commercial systems program office. “Speed remains vital to take advantage of the innovation coming from industry, and to assess emerging technologies such as HSI and the potential to address intelligence challenges.”

These awards follow six BAA contracts for commercial radio frequency remote sensing awarded in September 2022, and five commercial radar BAA contracts in January 2022.

The SCE BAAs build on NRO's earlier successful study and operational contracts. They create additional opportunities to expand NRO's commitment to rapid acquisition and commercial space-based data integration.

Learn more at [NRO.gov](https://www.nro.gov)

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NRO is the leader in developing, acquiring, launching, and operating the nation's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance satellites to secure and expand America's advantage in space. We are building a diversified and resilient architecture of spacecraft and ground systems designed to meet the challenges of a changing space environment by accelerating innovation and leveraging strategic partnerships, backed by a diverse and highly skilled workforce. At NRO, we See It, Hear It, Sense It so our nation's warfighters and policymakers have decision advantage amid increasing global competition. Learn more at [NRO.gov](https://www.nro.gov).