NORTH Dakota | Commerce
Be Legendary.

UAS
(UNCREWED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS)

INDUSTRY FACTS

TOTAL INVESTMENT BY THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
$79 MILLION

$39 MILLION
NEW STATE FUNDING FOR OPERATIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

NORTHERN PLAINS UAS TEST SITE
A TOP PERFORMING TEST SITE

THE NATION'S FIRST
BVLOS SYSTEM
VANTIS

NORTH DAKOTA UNCREWED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS (UAS): THE NEXT GENERATION

North Dakota's uncrewed aircraft systems sector continues to lead the nation in supporting the agricultural and energy industries, commercializing intellectual property, and operationalizing federal requirements. To continue this growth and momentum, North Dakota must continue to invest in growing its Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) network, support robust operations at the Northern Plains UAS Test Site (NPUASTS) and expand infrastructure at the Grand Sky UAS Park to support highly diverse and well-paying jobs as well as the national security mission.

GRAND SKY: THE NATION'S FIRST PRIVATE UAS PARK

Grand Sky, the nation's first UAS business and aviation park, is home for flight testing, UAS operations and research and development. Grand Sky offers build-to-suit locations and temporary facilities for commercial UAS development and testing, as well as defense related operations support and has attracted more than $100 million in private investment. Grand Sky offers access to secure defense networks, dark fiber, a 12,351-foot runway, uncongested airspace with less than 10 operations daily and more than 330 days of flying weather annually. Testing operations are supported with electronics component distributors, metal fabrication, 3D printing, and equipment support for the most demanding test requirements. Grand Sky partners like the Northern Plains UAS Test Site (NPUASTS) can support airspace needs. Grand Sky is home to one of the nation's first commercial BVLOS system.

VANTIS

North Dakota is a thriving ecosystem of uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) for public and private use. Through the development of Vantis, a statewide network enabling UAS flights Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS), North Dakota is poised to become the nation's epicenter of commercial UAS activity. Vantis is the first such program of its scale in the U.S. To date more than 200 UAS and 68 manned aircraft test flights have been completed on Vantis, as the Northern Plains UAS Test Site works towards expanding the network across all of North Dakota. Commerce is recruiting new industries to assist with energy production and supporting small communities across the state. Autonomous development and the attraction of private equity throughout the agricultural sector continues at a rapid clip as well, including new start-up activity from Plug and Play.

KEY NORTH DAKOTA GROWTH

$400 million in private sector investment.

Over 1,000 people employed by industry.

Almost 50 UAS companies call North Dakota home.

Federal partners include DoD, CBP and FFA.

INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

North Dakota's UAS ecosystem offers a unique blend of expertise and opportunity that makes it a top destination for companies such as:

- Northrop Grumman
- General Atomics
- Thales USA
- ISight RPV Services
- Packet Digital
- Thread
- Vertipads
- uAvionix

SUCCESSES

- DoD selects Grand Sky to host "Sky Range" program under which 24 Global Hawks will be repurposed and modernized for a new national security mission.
- Leveraging Vantis, uAvionix received FAA approval to conduct BVLOS UAS flights in North Dakota.
- Growing presence of venture capital firms and accelerators supporting an already vibrant ecosystem.
- Pro-business environment that combines valuable UAS capabilities, amenities, and collaborations with state and local programs that help position UAS companies for success.

PREMIER TEST SITE ADVANTAGES

- Strong industry support
- Open terrain
- Robust energy and agriculture industry clusters
- Broad infrastructure, including Grand Sky Business Park and Northern Plains Test Site
- Research collaborations with UND and NDSU in areas such as autonomous systems and agriculture
- History and culture of aviation safety
- Uncongested airspace
- Climate diversity
- Unique testing locations and scenarios

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