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FAA Selects Vendor for Colorado Remote Air Traffic Control Tower Project

LOVELAND, CO – The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced that it has entered into an agreement with Searidge Technologies to install, test and certify a Remote Tower System (RTS) at the Northern Colorado Regional Airport (FNL) located in Loveland, Colorado. This announcement is one of the initial steps toward the implementation of a test site for NextGen air traffic control technology to increase the efficiency and safety at one of northern Colorado’s busier general aviation airports.

Searidge Technologies is headquartered in Ottawa, Canada and specializes in airport surface management using innovative technology solutions. Searidge Technologies was the first company to have an operational video surveillance system in an air traffic control tower, and now has video-based airport surface management technology implemented at 30 airports located in 16 countries.

“Searidge is looking forward to working with the FAA and CDOT Aeronautics to certify one of the first Remote Towers in the United States,” said Moodie Cheikh, Co-founder and CEO, Searidge Technologies. “We are confident in our team and our technology to deliver a flexible solution that will not only meet needs of FNL but also demonstrate how such a system could be used around the country to provide safe, cost effective control services.”

The Northern Colorado Regional Airport (FNL) was chosen as the test facility for this technology earlier in the project development based on several factors including the availability of commercial air service, traffic volume, and the wide mix of aircraft types operating at FNL. “We at the Northern Colorado Regional Airport are more than ready for the start of this pioneering project. I am looking forward to the transition from planning to implementation, and keeping innovation alive and well in Colorado.”, said Northern Colorado Regional Airport Director, Jason Licon.

This leading edge project will be the first in the world to integrate both video and track-based surveillance (radar) to provide a comprehensive view of the airport surface and Class D airspace to air traffic controllers working in a remote facility. The high-tech array will provide an enhanced view and situational awareness of the airport environment and Class D airspace that will be superior to that of a traditional airport traffic control tower, with construction, operational and staffing costs dramatically lower than necessary with a traditional control tower.

The Remote Tower System Project is a strong collaboration between the FAA, Northern Colorado Regional Airport, and the Colorado Division of Aeronautics. “The success of this project is dependent on the strong partnership we have developed with the FAA and Northern Colorado Regional Airport. This unique synergy

“Taking Care To Get You There”

will help establish Colorado as a leader in the next generation of air traffic control technology.”, said Colorado Division of Aeronautics Director, David Ulane.

The Colorado Division of Aeronautics collaborated previously with the FAA on the pioneering development of the Colorado Mountain Radar Project, which deployed Wide Area Multilateration and ADS-B surveillance technologies to provide enhance surveillance (radar) in areas of the Colorado mountains previously without radar coverage. Phase I of this project was completed in 2010 at airports in Craig, Hayden, Steamboat Springs and Rifle, Colorado. Phase II of the Colorado Mountain Radar Project became operational in 2013 and included airports in Durango, Gunnison, Montrose and Telluride, Colorado. Deployment of the Mountain Radar Project increased operational efficiency and safety at eight of Colorado’s busy mountain airports. Lessons learned from the Mountain Radar Project ultimately led to the development of the remote tower concept.

Anticipated FNL Remote Tower Project Schedule:

- Execute OTA - Summer 2017
- Site Survey - Summer 2017
- Install Equipment - Fall/ Winter 2017
- Site Acceptance Test - Winter 2017
- Passive Testing - Spring/ Summer 2018
- Active Testing - Fall 2018 - Spring 2019
- Initial Operating Capability - Fall/ Winter 2019

The Remote Tower System project is being funded with \$8.8 million from the Colorado Division of Aeronautics and approved by the Colorado Aeronautical Board. The Colorado Division of Aeronautics is supported solely by the collection of aviation fuel sales and excise taxes.

The Colorado Airport System consists of 74 public use airports that support over 265,000 jobs, provide \$12.6 billion in annual payroll, and \$36.7 billion in total annual economic output for the State of Colorado.

More information about the Colorado Division of Aeronautics can be found at Colorado-Aeronautics.org

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