



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Jul 01, 2011

## **If You Can't Stand the Heat, Get a UAS**

### ***Office of Air and Marine Unmanned Aircraft Provide Firefighters Aerial Reconnaissance***

**Sierra Vista, Ariz.** — U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Office of Air and Marine (OAM) began providing video and imagery to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Department of Interior (DOI), and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) after more than half million acres have burned in what is billed the largest wildfire in Arizona state history.

The remotely piloted Predator B Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS), launched from the National Air Security Operations Center-Sierra Vista (NASOC-SV), is providing streaming video and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) mapping of areas affected by the fires in the Arizona desert.

The real-time video stream, known as Big Pipe, is a video distribution system that CBP provides to federal, state and local law enforcement agencies so that responders have access to real-time video and still imagery. The images can be viewed anywhere there is an internet connection, including smart-phones.

The UAS has been able to detect fires burning outside of a residence near Hereford in an area that no other federal agency aircraft had been flying. An engine was dispatched to the location and Lance Brady, the incident commander from the BLM is ecstatic about the support the UAS is providing. "This is a HUGE step forward for the Federal Fire community including the BLM and USFS. I cannot tell you how appreciative we are for your cooperation. If we truly saved a home tonight because of this technology and collaboration, I can not tell you how excited I am."

The CBP UAS program provides reconnaissance, intelligence, surveillance, tracking and acquisition capabilities in areas that are difficult to access or otherwise considered too high-risk for manned aircraft or CBP personnel on the ground. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, the UAS flew over 500 hours in support of law enforcement and emergency responders.

-CBP-

*U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.*

### **For more information contact:**

CBP Public Affairs  
Gina Gray  
+1.202.325.4284

Kimberly Kasitz  
Public Relations Manager  
General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc.  
+1.858.312.2294  
[kimberly.kasitz@ga-asi.com](mailto:kimberly.kasitz@ga-asi.com)