

**From:** Bob Th [REDACTED]@nps-ddp.org  
**Subject:** Fundraising I Department Form  
**Date:** November 26, 2018 at 4:26 PM  
**To:** info@airborneworks.com



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Services: Fire Department, Search & Rescue, Forest Fire  
Other:

Message Body:

We are the Stevensville Rural Fire Department in Stevensville, Montana. Our fire department protects 103 square miles in the Bitterroot Valley of western Montana. Our services include fire suppression, both structural and wildland, EMS, search and rescue, and river rescue. We are an all volunteer department with 46 members currently.

We have several uses for a drone. The primary use would be in search and rescue situations. River rescues are particularly challenging as it can be difficult to find the victims. The Bitterroot River in our district has several areas where the river diverges into several channels. These areas can change annually and present a problem for rescuers to locate and reach the victims. A drone would allow us to locate the victims much faster than sending several crews on foot to search the river, sometimes not knowing which channel to search or which way to go from the starting point. Sometimes major channels can block access to smaller channels where victims might be trapped hampering search efforts.

Similar situations can exist in searches on forest service hiking trails. A lot of time could be saved by searching from the air.

Other uses would be for wildland fires. In the early stages of a fire it can sometimes be difficult to determine the extent of a fire especially in heavy forest. An overhead view would greatly enhance our ability to size up these fires and provide a much more efficient plan of attack.

We would make our drone and operator available to all our usual mutual aid partners in our county of 2400 square miles. This includes neighboring fire departments, the local police and sheriff's office, county search and rescue, Highway Patrol, National Forest Service, and our local ambulance service.

The drone capabilities would need to include the capability to send live video to the operator with a screen at the controls. We would also need a reasonable endurance time aloft. Nice-to-have items would be obstacle avoidance, GPS stabilization, and extra batteries.

Thank you for your consideration.

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