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BlackSky Awarded IARPA Contract to Develop Platform for Global Construction Monitoring Using Next Generation Artificial Intelligence

Revolutionary AI Platform from BlackSky to Fuel Space-based Monitoring Program

HERNDON, Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- BlackSky, a leading provider of global monitoring services and geospatial insights, today announced an award from the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA) for a multi-phase, multi-year research contract. IARPA is responsible for leading research programs to overcome difficult challenges relevant to the U.S. intelligence community.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210106005111/en/

BlackSky is autonomously monitoring construction activity at the Flamingo Bay Naval Base in Port Sudan with the power of Spectra AI. Leveraging this powerful technology, BlackSky automatically flags new construction and monitors naval traffic into and out of the port, alerting its customers to important changes in near real-time. (Photo: Business Wire)

BlackSky has been selected to aid in the development of IARPA's Space-based Machine Automated Recognition Technique (SMART) Program. The SMART program aims to automate the quantitative analysis of space-based imagery to perform broad-area searches for natural and man-made events using time-series imagery. BlackSky will expand upon its Spectra AI platform to develop a responsive system that can automatically monitor large-scale construction of critical infrastructure such as military bases, stadiums, campuses, dams, and airports.

"This is a tremendous breakthrough in unsupervised learning for our Spectra AI platform and an unprecedented step toward the future of global monitoring," said Brian O'Toole, CEO of

BlackSky. “The IARPA SMART program is a natural fit for BlackSky given our deep expertise in geospatial analytics and our proven ability to deliver first-to-know insights.”

Under the contract, BlackSky will create open source, supervised, and semi-supervised learning algorithms to recognize data patterns specific to large-scale construction projects. The combined effort will leverage the resources of NASA’s and U.S. Geological Survey Landsat’s constellation and Sentinel, the European space agency’s constellation.

About BlackSky LLC

BlackSky is a global monitoring company. We monitor activities and facilities worldwide by harnessing the world’s emerging sensor networks and leveraging our own satellite constellation. We process millions of observations daily from space, air, environmental sensors, asset tracking sensors, Industrial IoT, and Internet-enabled narrative sources. BlackSky’s on-demand swarm of satellites can image a location multiple times throughout the day. We monitor for pattern-of-life anomalies to produce alerts and enhance situational awareness. Our monitoring service is powered by cutting-edge compute techniques including machine learning, artificial intelligence, computer vision, and natural language processing. BlackSky’s global monitoring is available via a simple subscription and requires no IT infrastructure or setup. For more information visit www.blacksky.com

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