

NAAA eNewsletter

As Drone Safety Day Approaches on Saturday, NAAA Continues to Promote Drone Safety Measures

In recognition of Drone Safety Day on April 29, NAAA is using its social media channels on Saturday to remind drone operators to be mindful of low-altitude manned agricultural aviation operations and to always give them the right of way. The social media messages will also direct readers to NAAA's [UAV safety tips news release](#) for more information.

The FAA-backed Drone Safety Day is an annual campaign dedicated to educating the drone community of the importance of flying safely, and is the latest in a several-weeks-long series of activities NAAA has capitalized on to promote safe operations of drones around low-level manned ag aircraft.

On April 4, NAAA issued a press release cautioning hobbyist and professional drone operators not to interfere with low-altitude manned agricultural aircraft this growing season.

That press release led to mentions in Farm Journal and a live interview on RFD-TV's *Market Day Report*, which you can watch below. Yesterday NAAA CEO Andrew Moore spoke with the editor of *The Scoop*, a Farm Journal ag retail magazine, who planned on discussing drone safety on the podcast *AgriTalk*.

To ensure the safety of low-altitude manned aircraft, NAAA recommends that unmanned aircraft operators:

- **Give the right of way to a manned aircraft. It's the law.**
- **Equip drones with visible strobe lights, highly visible markings and tracking technology, like an ADS-B In system to monitor ADS-B Out-equipped manned aircraft positions.**
- **Get certified and well-trained in operating an unmanned aircraft.**
- **Contact local agricultural aviation operations before flying by consulting AgAviation.org/findapplicator.**
- **Land your unmanned aircraft immediately when a low-flying aircraft is nearby.**
- **Carry unmanned aircraft liability insurance.**

NAAA also has a [customizable drone safety press release](#) available for members to tailor to suit their own business and local conditions. Members are encouraged to adapt the sample drone safety news release—or one of NAAA's five other [do-it-yourself press release templates](#), for dissemination to the media and public in their local area.

Makeup PAASS Programs Now Available for 2021, 2022 and 2023 – Get C-PAASS Certified Today!

The impact of the PAASS Program on reducing the number of agricultural aviation accidents and drift incidents is proven—26% reductions in both categories since the program first hit the stage. In an effort to present the program's life-saving curriculum to those who may have missed it, the National Agricultural Aviation Research and Education Foundation (NAAREF) has leveraged the NAAA Education Center to host recorded webinars of the PAASS Program from 2021, 2022 and 2023.

If you want to be C-PAASS-certified for the 2023 season but missed one of these three PAASS Programs, this is your opportunity to fulfill that requirement and complete your C-PAASS application. If you missed the 2023 PAASS Program, it is now available for credit for \$850. Starting July 1, its fee will increase to \$1,700. The 2021 and 2022 programs are each now available for credit for \$1,700.

NAAA members also have the option to purchase one year of unlimited access to not-for-credit versions of PAASS for \$120. The not-for-credit versions of the 2021 and 2022 programs are available now, and the 2023 program will be available starting July 1. More than just a

review for yourself, educate your ground crew or other stakeholders to impress upon them the importance of safety and environmental professionalism in your operation. The \$120 option will not give you official credit for PAASS attendance and will not count toward C-PAASS.

The best way to experience PAASS is a live program at your state/regional agricultural aviation convention. However, situations occur that may prevent this from happening. By offering these online options to make up PAASS, everyone can benefit from the wealth of information presented and help move the needle in preventing ag aviation accidents.

[Click here](#) to view all archived PAASS Programs.

New Children's Book Illustrates the Importance of Agricultural Aviation

Children's author Rebecca Victor has written a terrific new children's book called *Ellie the Crop Duster Saves the Farm!* The theme of the illustrated book is about the importance of aerial application to crop protection and combating fires—as well as the importance of farm animals. *Ellie the Crop Duster Saves the Farm!* is the first in a series of aviation-themed children's books written by Victor. Each of the books is named after one of her three daughters.

Rebecca grew up and is now raising her own daughters in a small farming community in Northeastern Colorado. Although her formal education is in the dental field as a dental hygienist, literacy and agriculture have always been a big part of her life.

Rebecca's parents moved out to the farm in Wiggins from Denver when she was just 4 years old. The first thing she did was lead her younger siblings through the biggest, muddiest puddle she could find!

Growing up on a small farm and ranch, Rebecca's family didn't start with much, but what they did have was adventures on the farm and stories. As a little girl she remembers laying on the floor crammed in the living room of their 900-square-foot farmhouse when her cousins would come to visit them from Kansas and listen to her mom and aunt reminisce of days gone by on the family's Buckingham Ranch.

Stories were also Rebecca's favorite part of the holidays when her grandparents would visit and fill her eager ears with their experiences from their childhoods. Adventures of almost burning the precious chicken coop down, to sticking cold feet in cow patties to get warm during wintery morning chores, of spending all day hoeing sugar beet rows for a nickel a day, and looking forward to their only sweets at the holidays of peppermint sticks and oranges.

When asked why airplanes are the inspiration for the main characters in her first series of books, the answer is simply Rebecca's daughter Tessa. Tessa has always loved toys and stories that reflect modes of transportation, planes among them. However, during their many trips to the library and scouring the internet for new airplane books, Rebecca decided she could write her own, so she did.

A fun fact about Ellie's book is the characters in the book are based off of her own farmyard animals. Penny Weber, the illustrator, even illustrated Rebecca's mom in the pumpkin patch scene toward the end of the story, and the funny sayings are things her mom and grandma Shirley say.

Due to the overwhelming support from the agricultural community, Rebecca has plans to continue writing and hopes to complete another book featuring Ellie and her silly co-pilot Miss Frizzle to be released next year.

To order copies of *Ellie The Crop Duster Saves The Farm*, keep up to date with the newest releases and print free activity sheets that go with the story, visit rebeccavictorbooks.com.

NAAA Ag Aviation Expo Hotel Room Block Open

The NAAA hotel room block is now open for the 2023 Ag Aviation Expo in Palm Springs, California, Dec. 4-7. The Ag Aviation Expo will provide you with networking, education and fun in a great city full of restaurants and bars, nightlife, shopping and attractions. It is important for attendees to stay in the NAAA room block. We get the best hotel room rates for our attendees, and if the NAAA hotel block is not filled, we cannot offer great rates for future years!

We have rooms available at three hotels; view the map below showing the hotels' locations or view them [here](#). You can learn more about Palm Springs [here](#).

Renaissance (connected to the convention center)

Reservations: Book your room [online here](#) or call 1-800-468-3571 and identify National Agricultural Aviation Association Convention for the discounted room rate.

Rate: \$159/night

Room block deadline: Nov. 9

Hilton (two blocks from the convention center)

Reservations: Book your room [online here](#) or call 1-800-216-1952 and identify group code: NAA

Rate: \$154/night + taxes

Room block deadline: Nov. 10

Cancellation: Should you need to cancel your reservation, please contact the hotel three weeks prior to arrival or by Nov. 10 to avoid a late cancellation penalty equivalent to the first night's room deposit.

Hyatt (five blocks – a half mile from the convention center)

The Hyatt is located on the main road of Palm Springs—N. Palm Canyon Drive—where there are dozens of restaurants, bars, boutiques and shops. ***Transportation will be provided in the morning and late afternoon/evening.***

Reservations: Book your room [online here](#) (if you get to a screen where it asks you to select hotel, please select Hyatt Palm Springs) or call 1-877-803-7534 and identify group code: G-NA12

Rate: \$149/night + taxes

Room block deadline: Nov. 10

Cancellation: Should you need to cancel your reservation, please contact the hotel three weeks prior to arrival or by Nov. 10 to avoid a late cancellation penalty equivalent to the first night's room deposit.

NOTE: No one from (or on behalf of) any of the hotels or NAAA will contact you to book a hotel room. NAAA recommends that you make your own hotel reservations using the information we provide. Do not book a room with any company that calls you directly.

Details for the 2023 Ag Aviation Expo

- **Dates:** Dec. 4-7, 2023
- **Location:** Palm Springs Convention Center and Renaissance (the two facilities are attached)
- **Kickoff Breakfast Speaker:** **Burt Rutan**, Aerospace Legend
- **Schedule of Events:** See the current, tentative schedule [here](#).
- **Hotel:** [Details here](#).
- **Attendee Registration:** Opens in August.
- **Exhibitor Booth Sales:** Details [here](#) for large booth sales that open in late March and 10'x10' and 10'x20' booth sales that open on July 13. Please email [Lindsay Barber](#) if you would like to secure a large booth space (any booth size 10'x30' or larger).
- **Sponsorship Opportunities:** View the sponsorships opportunities [here](#). We have sponsorships available for all budget sizes. Please email [Lindsay](#) if you would like to secure a sponsorship from last year or be contacted about 2023 opportunities!
- **Auction Donations:** Thank you to Pratt & Whitney Canada for donating a PT6-34AG to this year's NAAA Live Auction. While we are still several months away from the Ag Aviation Expo, we are already **accepting donations** for the Live and Silent Auction. The earlier you inform us of your auction donation, the more advertising you will receive on the NAAA website and in NAAA publications. Support the aerial application industry by donating an item today. Email [Lindsay](#) with your donation details.

Judge Rules Biden Administration's WOTUS Rule Violates State Sovereignty, Enforcement Now Prohibited in 26 States

Two weeks ago a federal judge prohibited the EPA's new waters and wetlands protection rule from being enforced in 24 states, issuing a preliminary injunction similar to a ruling in March blocking the rule in [Texas and Idaho](#). The Biden administration's 2023 Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule that took effect March 20 is now enjoined in more than half the country. A Kentucky federal judge declined to issue an injunction against the rule there in a similar lawsuit in early April.

The 24 states led by West Virginia have "persuasively shown that the new 2023 Rule poses a threat to their sovereign rights and amounts to irreparable harm ... The States involved in this litigation will expend unrecoverable resources complying with a rule unlikely to withstand judicial scrutiny," Judge Daniel L. Hovland of the U.S. District Court for the District of North Dakota ruled last week. The 26 states include Texas, Idaho, West Virginia, North Dakota, Georgia, Iowa, Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia and Wyoming.

Congress put in statute in 1972 that clean water law applied to the waters of the United States and left it to federal agencies to define them. The new Biden WOTUS rule covers more waterways, wetlands and even ephemeral waters that may be dry land most of the year. The definition written during the Trump era was narrower and overturned by a federal court in 2021. An earlier WOTUS definition by the Obama administration was also tied up in court and never took effect.

The Supreme Court is currently considering the Sackett case, which pits the rights of a private property owner against the EPA's authority to regulate an adjoining lake. Many analysts believe this ruling could restrict the EPA's authority and invalidate the Biden WOTUS rule. It's not clear when that decision will come out, but the Supreme Court's last scheduled day to issue opinions is June 26.

Spring 2023 Issue of Agricultural Aviation Now Online!

The Spring 2023 issue of *Agricultural Aviation* is available online and in the Agricultural Aviation Magazine App. Branded as “The Health & Safety Issue,” this themed issue homes in on a variety of health and safety issues—everything from an ag pilot who survived cancer’s return to the cockpit to tips on managing back pain to strategies for reducing wire strikes and drift incidents. Plus, much more!

Featured content in the Spring 2023 issue includes:

- **From Cancer to the Cockpit: Mike Bartholomew’s Battle**
After lymphoma forced Iowa ag pilot Mike Bartholomew to miss the 2021 spray season, his next test came with the FAA as he sought to get his medical certificate back for the 2022 season
- **Reducing Wire Strikes and Drift Incidents**
A breakdown of key moments from the 2022-2023 PAASS Program, which focused on reducing wire strikes and drift
- **Straight Up: Spine Talk**
Common spinal issues and ways to alleviate those aches and pains in season and out
- **NAAREF President’s Message**
4 safety reminders heading into the 2023 aerial application season
- **Washington Report**
How to use the EPA’s Bulletins Live! Two website
- **A Double Dose of Leadership Training!**
After a three-year hiatus, NAAA’s leadership development initiatives returned with a double dose of leadership training

Back issues are available in *Agricultural Aviation*’s [Issue Library](#).

Get the Free Agricultural Aviation App

If you haven’t installed the free *Agricultural Aviation Magazine App* on your smartphone or tablet, you are missing out on a great way to tap into a library’s worth of *Agricultural Aviation* issues in the palm of your hand. Download the *Agricultural Aviation Magazine App* and see how easy it is to use. The app is compatible with all [Apple](#), [Google](#) and [Amazon](#) mobile devices and can be downloaded from their respective app stores by searching “*Agricultural Aviation Magazine*.” Enable push notifications to be alerted when new digital editions are published and to receive occasional notifications about pertinent articles.

NAAA Facilitates Forbes Writer on Article About Largescale Drones in Agriculture

NAAA served as a source for a very balanced article about drones in agriculture written for *Forbes* by journalist Steve Savage. In “[The Role of High Payload Drones in Agriculture as Flying Robots](#),” Savage writes about aerial application work that “the drone and piloted options are more complementary than competitive—each having advantages or limitations depending on scale and logistical complications.”

The full article is available [here](#).

FAA Issues AD for Tail Rotor Drive on Bell 206 Helicopters

The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Bell Textron Canada Limited Model 206A, 206A–1 (OH–58A), 206B, 206B–1, 206L, 206L–1, 206L–3 and 206L–4 helicopters.

This AD was prompted by a loss of tail rotor (TR) drive due to a failure of an adhesively bonded joint between an adapter and a tube on one of the segmented TR drive shaft (TRDS) assemblies.

This AD is effective May 19, 2023, and requires the following:

- Determining if an affected TRDS is installed.
- Repetitively inspecting the bond line for damage.
- Repetitively performing a proof load test of the TRDS assembly.
- Depending on the above results, removing an affected TRDS from service.

View the complete AD [here](#).

Raise Awareness about Ag Aviation Activities in Your Area with NAAA’s Customizable ‘Preseason’ Press Release, Available to Members Only

With the 2023 aerial application season underway or soon to be underway in different parts of the country, NAAA has prepared a customizable, [do-it-yourself press release](#) that members can use to call attention to the fact that ag aircraft will soon be a common sight as ag pilots assist local farmers during the new growing season.

The press release emphasizes the vital role aerial applicators play in the production of abundant food, fiber and bioenergy, especially now amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its potential effect on reducing global food supply. The release also details the training, professionalism and safety of aerial applicators by highlighting the drift-reduction technologies they employ, recurrent training they receive and credentials they must maintain to work as a professional ag pilot.

NAAA encourages members to adapt the [generic “preseason” press release](#) for their own use and distribute it to the public via traditional and social media outlets. Just fill in the blanks, add your own comments and either insert your company logo at the top or print it on company letterhead. Rename the file, save it to your computer, and send it to your local media outlets via mail, email or through their website.

The minor outlay of time and effort is worth it. Some extra attention and publicity up front could avoid misunderstandings down the road once the season enters full swing. The press release template is available for download [here](#).

Besides the [preseason ag aviation awareness press release template](#), the following do-it-yourself press release templates may be adapted to suit member applicators' specific needs. Log into your NAAA account to access them:

- [Importance of Aerial Application DIY Press Release](#)
- [Environmental Safety DIY Press Release](#)
- [Towers and Obstructions DIY Press Release](#)
- [Ag Aviation Security DIY Press Release](#)
- [Drone Safety DIY Press Release](#)

Each press release template has been updated to include the latest industry facts and figures using data gleaned from the FAA, USDA and NAAA, including the 2019 NAAA Aerial Application Industry Survey.

These PR resources and more are available in the [NAAA Media Relations Kit](#) on our website.

Tim McPherson Hosts Open House at Fargo Air Museum

Tall Towers Aviation operator Tim “Toby” McPherson hosted an open house at the Fargo Air Museum on April 12, his second showing in as many years at the air museum. Prior to 2022, McPherson had hosted an open house at his hangar in Page, North Dakota, every spring since 1989.

The full-day event showcased various ag aircraft, including McPherson's refurbished serial #1 Ag-Cat. For added exposure, radio broadcaster Joel Heitkamp hosted his show at the museum from 8 to 11 a.m. *News & Views with Joel Heitkamp* airs locally during the 8 o'clock hour, while the last two hours from 9 to 11 a.m. reach seven states and three Canadian provinces.

The event included representatives from the wheat, corn, soybean, sugar beet and edible bean associations, chemical and seed reps, and members of the public, which was the main point of the event.

NAAA commends McPherson for promoting agricultural aviation in such a public manner. Way to go, Toby!

NAAA's 'Ag Wings of Tomorrow' Scholarship Returns with \$20K Available in '23

Attention, operators and aspiring ag pilots: The NAAA “Ag Wings of Tomorrow” Scholarship is back again! Thanks to the generous support of BASF and Thrush Aircraft, \$20,000 in aid is available through the [2023 NAAA “Ag Wings of Tomorrow” Scholarship Program](#) to assist four aspiring ag pilots in their journey.

The goal of NAAA's “Ag Wings of Tomorrow” Scholarship Program is to strengthen the aerial application industry by helping operator members bring new pilots into the profession and help fund their training. Applicants must be sponsored by an NAAA Operator member. Scholarship recipients may use the proceeds for flight training or aviation or ag-related coursework at a university, college, community college or other institution of higher learning. A stipend for a trainee in an NAAA Operator-sponsored apprentice program is also permissible. The scholarship program is administered by NAAA and funded by educational grants from BASF and Thrush.

This year, NAAA will award up to four scholarships valued at \$5,000 each. Investing in aspiring ag aviators is a win-win for NAAA Operator members and individuals seeking training funds to support their pursuit of becoming a professional ag pilot.

How to Apply

To be considered for the 2023 scholarship, along with completing the two-part application, every applicant must submit:

- **A letter of recommendation** from the NAAA Operator member sponsoring the applicant.
- **An essay of 250 words or less** explaining why the applicant wants to pursue a career in agricultural aviation and how they would use NAAA's “Ag Wings of Tomorrow” Scholarship to further their education and training.
- **A one-page résumé or list of activities** detailing all agricultural and aviation experiences, education and training.

Last year NAAA awarded \$5,000 scholarships to Ross Edwards of Sherwood, Arkansas; Tommy Koebel of Geneva, Illinois; Drew Kroeplin of Highmore, South Dakota; and Adam Jacobs of Graymont, Illinois (pictured above with his sponsor, Scott Petersen, at left, of Pontiac Flying LLC). NAAA will announce the recipients of the 2023 “Ag Wings of Tomorrow” Scholarships in December at the Ag Aviation Expo in Palm Springs, California.

Application Process

To learn more about the 2023 NAAA “Ag Wings of Tomorrow” Scholarship, review the [application instructions and checklist](#).

Applicants must apply using NAAA's online application. A link to the online application is available below. The applicant will fill out ALL applicant and sponsor information. The NAAA Operator Sponsor must write a letter of recommendation on behalf of the applicant. Upload all required material noted in the Application Checklist and any additional supporting documentation using the turbine scholarship's online application portal.

A link to the scholarship application portal can also be found at AgAviation.org/scholarship.

Please contact NAAA at (202) 546-5722 or information@agaviation.org for clarification about any of the application requirements.

While the applicant must be sponsored by an NAAA Operator member, NAAA membership is not a prerequisite for applying for the scholarship. Still, becoming an NAAA Associate member is an excellent way for candidates to learn more about the industry and augment their training.

The deadline to apply for the 2023 “Ag Wings of Tomorrow” Scholarship is Aug. 31.

Restrictions

With the introduction of the new [Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship](#) this year, applicants may only apply for one NAAA pilot-training scholarship per year. They can apply for the NAAA “Ag Wings of Tomorrow” Scholarship or the Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship, *but not both in the same year*.

NAAA Operator members may only sponsor one NAAA “Ag Wings of Tomorrow” Scholarship applicant a year. They can also sponsor a Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship applicant in the same year, but the applicants cannot be the same person applying for both scholarships in the same year.

Two \$3,000 scholarships are available for turbine training to eligible NAAA Operator and Pilot members applying for the [2023 Charles Stokes Memorial Turbine Training Scholarship](#).

Announcing DropFlight: An App That Makes Spray Pattern Testing a Snap

With Operation S.A.F.E. season in full swing across much of the country, it's time to get your aircraft pattern tested!

NAAREF recommends having your pattern assessed, at minimum, every other year or when major changes are made. This is vitally important to ensuring your aircraft is ready to make effective applications this season. Accordingly, NAAA has included biennial Operation S.A.F.E. participation as a core component of its [C-PAASS](#) professional aerial applicator certification.

A new tool—DropFlight—is now available to NAAA members to conduct their own spray pattern testing. DropFlight is an iPhone/iPad app that was recently released, which allows extremely fast scanning and analysis of water-sensitive spray cards, all on your mobile devices. This tool, created in part by an aerial applicator, is targeted specifically for aerial applicators to use in assessing spray pattern uniformity, effective swath width and droplet size across the swath.

DropFlight is being offered exclusively to NAAA members for a one-time cost of \$799 for unlimited use of the app. This represents a significant value in time savings alone compared to traditional methods of scanning cards for pattern analysis. The DropFlight tool will make obtaining actionable results easy (and fast!).

To further reduce friction in getting your spray pattern testing underway, DropFlight is also offering all the needed [testing gear](#). Available as a [convenient kit](#) or by the piece, DropFlight's card mounting system makes it simple to lay out cards uniformly and in the correct orientation to the wind.

Whether you have never pattern tested your aircraft, or you simply weren't able to test all your desired boom setups or application rates at your last fly-in, performing your own pattern testing is a sound investment in the quality of your work.

As an added benefit, if you consult with a [NAAREF-recognized Operation S.A.F.E. Analyst](#) about your pattern testing data, they can report this to NAAREF as participation in Operation S.A.F.E. NAAA members will receive an official letter of participation and credit toward C-PAASS certification.

Download DropFlight on the App Store
Use NAAA member code: NAAA23

The DropFlight team is eager to help and answer any questions you might have. Contact them directly at (616) 953-6423.

Proposed AD for GE M601 and H80 Series Propeller Governors

The FAA has proposed adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain GE Aviation M601E-11AS, M601E-11S, H75-100, H80-100 and H85-100 model turboprop engines. These engines are known to be installed on Air Tractor AT-400 and AT-500 series; Allied Ag Cat Productions Inc. (formerly Grumman) G-164 series; and Thrush Aircraft (formerly Quality, Ayres, Rockwell) 510G and S-2R series.

This proposed AD was prompted by reports of multiple failures of the needle bearing installed in propeller governors having part numbers (P/Ns) P-W11-1 or P-W11-2, caused by self-generated debris from the needle bearing, which led to oil contamination.

This proposed AD would require replacement of the affected propeller governors with a redesigned propeller governor having P/N P-W11-4 or P-W11-5.

The FAA is currently accepting comments on this proposed AD through May 22. View the complete proposed AD [here](#).

GRASSROOTS ALERT: Let EPA Know New Changes to Application Exclusion Zone Rule are Bad for Aerial Application and Agriculture

As NAAA reported [last month](#), the EPA is proposing yet another round of changes to the Application Exclusion Zone (AEZ) rule. First conceived in 2015 as part of the revisions to the Worker Protection Standard (WPS), the EPA intended the AEZ to be a moving buffer zone around pesticide application equipment to protect workers from either drift or direct spray. When someone enters the AEZ, the applicator must cease the application. Confusion and agricultural industry objections to several parts of the rule have led to several iterations of the AEZ rule, culminating in the current proposed changes.

One critical point in the AEZ rule has been how someone inside the AEZ but outside of the agricultural establishment impacts an applicator's ability to make an application. An example of this would be someone on adjacent property or on a roadside. The original AEZ rules required the application to stop when people were in this area, effectively allowing someone outside the control of the applicator or the grower to dictate whether or not the application could be made at the field edges. A 2020 AEZ revision changed this, requiring an application to stop only when someone on the agricultural establishment is within the AEZ. This positive change was quickly challenged in court, and now, in their 2023 proposed revision, the EPA is back to requiring applications be halted whenever anyone, on or off the agricultural establishment, enters the AEZ. The EPA also appears to have not included in these recent changes a 2018 clarification that allows an application to resume if the applicator determines if it is safe to do so, i.e. the wind is blowing away from anyone.

NAAA has [drafted comments](#) to the EPA explaining why this is detrimental to crop protection and completely unnecessary since the law of atmospheric physics precludes drift from traveling upwind. We need your help, though—please consider submitting your own comments to let the EPA know how the 2023 proposed changes to the AEZ will have a negative impact on you and your customers. Please feel free to use NAAA's comments as a guide to assist you with writing your comments on your operation's letterhead.

To comment:

1. Use your web browser to navigate to this webpage: <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/EPA-HQ-OPP-2022-0133/document>
2. At the top you should be a proposed rule with the title "Pesticides: Agricultural Worker Protection Standard; Reconsideration of the Application Exclusion Zone Amendments" as shown below.
3. If you do not see this at the top, you can either scroll down to look for it or click the down arrow next to "Sort by" and select "Comments Due (Newer-Older)" as shown above.
4. Click on the "Comment" button.
5. You can either type your comments in the comment field or attach them as a separate file.
6. Make sure you fill out the rest of the required information and then submit your comment.

Comments are due May 12. Please reach out to NAAA's Director of Education, Safety and Policy, [Scott Bretthauer](#), if you have questions about the proposed changes to the AEZ rule or on how to comment.

Exhibitor Details for the 2023 Ag Aviation Expo: Booth Sales for Aircraft & Large Booth Space Now Open

Join us for the 2023 Ag Aviation Expo in [Palm Springs, California](#), Dec. 4-7. In addition to attending the NAAA Ag Aviation Expo, Palm Springs is full of great restaurants, bars, fun activities, and terrific weather! You can visit the Palm Springs Air Museum, enjoy an off road or BMW driving experience, play golf, visit museums and even gamble at a casino close to the convention center. The area offers many hiking trails and top-notch spas.

Booth Sales for Aircraft & Large Booth Space Now Open: If you plan to bring an aircraft, need a 20'x20'+ island booth, a 10'x30'+ inline booth or plan to be a Diamond or Platinum Sponsor, please contact [Lindsay Barber](#) ASAP. To ensure the best placement on the trade show floor, we appreciate knowing about aircraft and large booth spaces by the end of April.

The NAAA Trade Show will take place Dec. 5, 12 p.m.–5:30 p.m. and Dec. 6, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Review the [NAAA Exhibitor Prospectus](#) and [exhibitor webpage](#) for further details, pricing and dates. The full schedule of events is available [here](#).

Details for the 2023 Ag Aviation Expo

- **Dates:** Dec. 4-7, 2023
- **Location:** Palm Springs Convention Center and Renaissance (the two facilities are attached)
- **Kickoff Breakfast Speaker:** **Burt Rutan**, Aerospace Legend
- **Schedule of Events:** See the current, tentative schedule [here](#).
- **Hotel:** [Details here](#).
- **Attendee Registration:** Opens in August.
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It's Here! Application Now Open for C-PAASS 2023—Certified-Professional Aerial Applicator Safety Steward

Aerial applicators, now more than ever, operate in an environment of competing interests. An ever-increasing demand for timely and effective applications is challenged by factors such as added regulatory burden, rising insurance costs and stiffer pesticide label language, just to name a few. The agricultural aviation industry is rising to these challenges and, in character, has moved to advance education, rather than regulation, as the path forward.

NAAA and NAAREF have jointly launched the Certified-Professional Aerial Applicator Safety Steward (C-PAASS) program to serve as the industry's flagship certification and as a roadmap for the pursuit of the best educational opportunities currently available. This voluntary program allows those aerial applicators who strive to constantly educate themselves to better their safety and application quality to be recognized for their efforts. Secondly, the certification can signal to customers, regulators and others outside the industry their commitment to professionalism.

C-PAASS certification is offered on an annual basis to individual ag pilots, both operator and non-operator. As the first year for C-PAASS, its requirements are based entirely upon education and professional opportunities already available:

1. **Annual PAASS Attendance for three (3) years**
 - 2020-2021 season, AND
 - 2021-2022 season, AND
 - 2022-2023 season
2. **Biennial Operation SAFE Participation**
 - 2022 season, AND/OR
 - 2023 season
3. **Annual Membership in NAAA**
 - 2023
4. **Annual Membership in a State/Regional agricultural aviation association**
 - 2023

To submit a 2023 C-PAASS application:

1. Check your eligibility at <https://education.agaviation.org/cpaass>
 - You will need to log in using your NAAA username/password. Contact information@agaviation.org if you need assistance.
2. If eligible, scroll to the bottom of the page and locate the **2023 C-PAASS Application** tile. Hover over it and click the green **Register (Free!)** button.
3. You will be prompted to attest to your completion of each of the requirements and directed to upload documentation of your 2023 membership in a State/Regional agricultural aviation association. NAAA Staff will be automatically notified to review your application once this documentation is submitted.
4. Your application will be reviewed within three (3) business days.
5. If your application is accepted, you will be provided a link to pay the certification fee (currently \$100) and obtain your digital certificate.

This is only the beginning. As NAAA develops its own Learning Management System (LMS), new on-demand courses and content will be incorporated into C-PAASS. A wide variety of topics will eventually be included in the LMS, including those covered in 14 CFR Part 137 knowledge and skills and those on how to properly set up agricultural aircraft to make on-target applications.

Apply for C-PAASS certification today! Utilize it to inform regulatory officials and insurance agents and to market to your customers that you have undergone additional training and development to ensure you can provide the highest quality service.

Important Call for GPS Data to Protect Manned Ag Aircraft from Drones

In 2022, an FAA advisory committee weighted with drone interests from Amazon, Google and other unmanned corporate interests suggested that the agency promulgate rules that drones operating beyond visual line of sight be permitted to:

- Increase their weight to 1,320 pounds
- Not equip with ADS-B identification technology
- Not give the right of way to manned aircraft when operating in rural, low-altitude airspace because they claimed there are no other users of this airspace.

As an ag aviator, you know these requests to be patently unsafe and based on false premises. As such, we call on you to help us collect information on ag aircraft's use of the low-altitude airspace. NAAA is working with and supports Mississippi State University's (MSU) Raspet Flight Research Laboratory and its continuing research on safe operational distances between low-altitude, manned aircraft and drones. The study's objectives are to:

1. Identify Ag Aircraft Operational Trends
2. Develop Ag Aircraft Operational Model
3. Validate Model through Observation/Collection of Empirical Data
4. Inform/Educate UAS Operators
5. Promote Safety in all Low-Altitude Ag Environments

Your voluntary participation in this study is critical to achieving these objectives. NAAA encourages you to donate your GPS flight log data to participate in this timely research. Logs from any year(s) are welcome and will be washed of any identifying information prior to use.

Many of you have previously contributed during the first stage of data collection from 2017 to 2020 when NAAA members donated 49,180 flight logs from 20 states. The second stage of the study began in 2021 and seeks to additionally include aircraft make and model info. These details are important, as the airspace modeling will be impacted by aircraft types differently, such as fixed-wing versus helicopter operations.

More GPS flight log data is needed to continue this study. Because of the diverse growing areas and unique geographical challenges experienced by aerial applicators, it is imperative that as many states and regions as possible are represented. This will ultimately help facilitate the safe integration of unmanned aircraft into these different airspaces.

As a reminder, NAAA and Raspet have agreed that all submitted information will remain confidential, and all GPS flight logs will be stripped of any personally identifying information before any research is conducted using the data.

There are several methods available to submit your data:

1. Request a secure upload link for larger uploads OR email directly to Madison Dixon, Research Director.
Email: mdixon@raspet.msstate.edu
2. Mail a flash drive or other storage device to the address below. (The device will be immediately mailed back once data is received if a return address is provided):

Address:

Attn: Madison Dixon
Raspet Flight Research Lab – Bldg. 2
114 Airport Rd.
Starkville, MS 39759

NAAA Releases Book of the Century! Buy It Today

NAAA has released the book of the century—a century of agricultural aviation, that is.

One hundred years ago, an aerial crop dusting experiment spawned the birth of the agricultural aviation industry. To commemorate agricultural aviation's 100th anniversary, NAAA is pleased to present ***Agriculture's Air Force: 100 Years of Aerial Application***.

Agriculture's Air Force provides a new, updated account of aerial application's history, 35 years after Mabry Anderson's masterpiece, *Low & Slow: An Insider's History of Agricultural Aviation*, was published. NAAA's meticulously sourced book is based on a collective history of the agricultural aviation industry based on material from *Agricultural Aviation* magazine, *AgAir Update*, *Low & Slow* and other resources.

Beginning with ***Agricultural Aviation's Spring 2021 issue***, NAAA published excerpts from *Agriculture's Air Force* and continued to do so through the ***Fall 2021 issue***. Those stories are just a small slice of what's in the 268-page hardback edition, however. The complete book contains so much more.

Agriculture's Air Force delves into the intersection of agriculture and aviation. It chronicles the agricultural aviation industry's growth from its infancy in 1921 through the boom times after World War II and on to today's modern era of high-tech aerial application.

The finished hardback book has been years in the making but well worth the effort. “This is a significant piece of work covering not just the industry’s history, but its essence,” NAAA CEO Andrew Moore said. “We are proud of it and believe it will make a lasting contribution to the industry.”

The story of agricultural aviation is much like the broader story of aviation: It is mostly punctuated with interesting smaller moments sandwiched between milestone developments. Aerial application is also the story of technological leaps and bounds.

Agriculture’s Air Force covers five eras spanning more than 10 decades. In addition, it features 34 Spotlight pieces focused on significant individuals, organizations, trends, technologies and topics related to aerial application.

Agriculture’s Air Force: 100 Years of Aerial Application may well be NAAA’s most enduring 100th anniversary initiative. One thing’s for sure: It is no textbook. The commemorative book is written from a fresh perspective that is entertaining and enlightening. Readers will come away with a new appreciation for agricultural aviation as a profession and the dedicated individuals who propel it forward.

Order Your Copy of Agriculture’s Air Force Today!

Agriculture’s Air Force retails for \$45, excluding shipping. Order it from [AgAir Update’s Online Store](#).