Airborne Topographic Lidar Helps USGS with Colorado Disaster Recovery

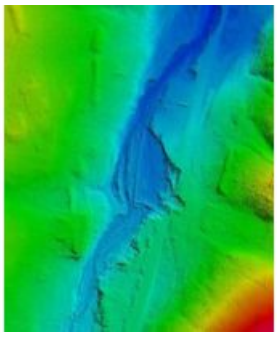

Photo Science, a Quantum Spatial Company, has recently been awarded a major contract task order to provide the US Geological Survey (USGS) with high-resolution remote sensing data (airborne topographic Lidar) for areas devastated by extreme flooding within the South Platte watershed in Colorado, USA. The storm resulted in more than 30 centimetres of rainfall during a two-day period, taking eight lives and destroying more than 1,500 homes along the urban corridor from the city of Denver north to Fort Collins.

The USGS project, co-funded and coordinated with FEMA, the State of Colorado, and the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), will assist the federal, state, and local governments with supporting disaster response, recovery, long-term recovery, and other future disaster loss-reduction efforts.

Photo Science will collect Lidar of the 9,000 square kilometres project area before the winter snow season hampers efforts. Photo Science has mobilised multiple aircraft and survey crews to the area to achieve the stated objectives. The data, once delivered, will be shared by USGS with its partners in a coordinated manner so that planners, scientists, and engineers can learn about the event to help mitigate the effect of future weather disasters in this area.

Photo Science's programme manager, Michael Shillenn CP, said whenever an event of this magnitude over such a large area occurs, there is tremendous scientific value in the analysis of elevation data of this accuracy and resolution that will be used to improve quality of life for those living in the areas affected.