

# Bluesky Acquires US Aerial Survey Company Col-East



British aerial mapping specialist Bluesky International is expanding its business into North America following the acquisition of Col-East, a Massachusetts-based aerial survey company. Col-East has been mapping the northeast United States for 65 years and will continue as Col-East International, forming the US arm of Bluesky.

Founded in 1952, [Col-East](#) has a long established reputation for very high quality topographic mapping, with particular expertise in specialist aerial surveys such as high precision aeronautical mapping, requiring highly skilled analysis. Bluesky has seen an increase in the demand for specialist large scale mapping, 3D modelling and feature extraction in recent years in the European market, and the company intends to apply these skills to the expanding US market.

## Lidar

[Bluesky](#) has revolutionised aerial mapping techniques in the UK in recent years, backed by the latest digital cameras and 3D laser mapping technology. The company will not only be equipping Col-East aircraft with the latest digital aerial surveying equipment, including cameras and sensors for laser (Lidar), thermal and infrared capture, but will also be building on the existing technical and highly experienced Col-East skill base by introducing new workflows and image processing techniques honed in the highly competitive UK and European markets.

Britain has a long tradition as a pioneer in mapping techniques, and the Bluesky team was behind the creation of what was the world's first nationwide high resolution aerial photo map, created back in 1998. Since then the company has developed new systems and techniques that are underpinning advances in environmental and 3D mapping, and we will be introducing these advancements to the US market with the acquisition of Col-East, according to Rachel Tidmarsh, managing director of Bluesky International.

## Aerial imaging services

As well as topographical mapping and aeronautical work, Col-East offers a range of aerial imaging services, such as the production of terrain models, orthophotos and volumetrics, offering cost-effective mapping solutions from estates to development sites and complex transportation corridors. Col-East owns a huge archive of aerial photography that has been captured over many years and dates back to 1946. Col-East will gain immediate access to Bluesky's proprietary technology used in the development of some ground-breaking derived products, including 3D building modelling, tree mapping, air quality mapping and state-wide solar power potential mapping. Products will also be available to purchase through the new Col-East online Mapshop which will be launched imminently.

It's a very exciting time for Col-East, commented Mark Thaisz, general manager of Col-East. Bluesky is bringing significant investment, new technology and added resources that will allow the business to expand freely. Already they have equipped an aircraft with a new Vexcel UltraCam Eagle survey camera, which offers high accuracy and unsurpassed clarity to bring a whole new edge to the aerial survey market in New England.