

## **NOAA contractors take to the air to help NOAA chart under the sea.**

Although NOAA's Office of Coast Survey usually uses hydrographic vessels to capture bathymetric data for its nautical charts, sometimes the office uses Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) data for hydrographic surveying.

This month, the Coast Survey selected two private contractors to acquire shallow water, shoreline and coastal LIDAR data under a 3-year contract. Work has begun off the coast of St. Thomas and St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Additional task orders may be awarded against these contracts, as dictated by NOAA's requirements and appropriated funds.

NOAA selected Fugro LADS, Inc. (Biloxi, Miss.) and David Evans and Associates (Vancouver, Wash.) for the LIDAR Hydrographic Services contract.

Significance (required:) BOAA has used LIDAR since 1996 to augment its traditional vessel-borne hydrographic survey data acquisition methods. While surveyed performed from boats fitted with multibeam and side scan sonar provide greater resolution, an aircraft flying a LIDAR system over a shallow coastal environment can cover a large area quickly and safely.

Using the private sector for this work allows NOAA to utilize its surface assets more efficiently.

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