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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Aurora's Skate<sup>®</sup> SUAS Supports Aerial Surveying Missions in Peru**

Manassas, VA, August 7, 2012 – Aurora Flight Sciences Skate<sup>®</sup> Small Unmanned Aerial System (SUAS) recently traveled to Peru in support of Vanderbilt University's efforts at the Mawchu Lacta archeological site.

Aerial survey operations using Skate<sup>®</sup> consisted of routine survey flights at altitudes above 13,000' MSL using a High Definition (HD) camera to capture still images. The still images were then "stitched" together using Agisoft's PhotoScan. The mosaicked image is orthorectified using ESRI's ArcGIS software. The archaeologists use the orthorectified result on iPads running Garafa's GIS Pro software for data collection. The provided imagery is better than what can be obtained through the use of satellites. Vanderbilt has developed a flight planning algorithm that plans an optimal image collection path based on a number of factors. The mapping of large archaeological sites is typically completed using kite-, blimp- and pole-based low altitude aerial photography, which increases the time and manpower required to survey each site. Vanderbilt is excited about the possibility of Skate<sup>®</sup> to rapidly survey and photograph the site in a matter of minutes, a huge improvement on the current method which typically takes multiple seasons for a large site like Mawchu Lacta. The project is a collaborative effort between Associate Professor of Computer Science and Computer Engineering Julie A. Adams and Assistant Professor of Anthropology Steven Wernke of Vanderbilt, and is primarily funded by a Vanderbilt University interdisciplinary research grant with additional support from the National Science Foundation (NSF).



Skate<sup>®</sup> flies over the zone.



High definition photograph of Mawchu Lacta archeological site taken by Skate from 13,500 ft MSL.

“Aurora is very excited about Skate's contribution to this effort in Peru. Again and again Skate has proven it's versatility, and this is another example of the system's wide range of capabilities,” said Carl Schaefer, Aurora's Director of Small UAS Programs.

### **Aurora Flight Sciences Corporation**

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Aurora's Skate<sup>®</sup> is an internally developed SUAS targeted as a back packable ISR platform ideal for budget conscious military, law enforcement, and commercial operators. Skate<sup>®</sup> SUAS is highlighted, along with other Aurora Flight Sciences UAS technologies, this week August 7-9 at the Association of Unmanned Vehicle System International (AUVSI) Exhibition in Las Vegas, NV.

### **About Aurora Flight Sciences**

Aurora Flight Sciences designs and builds robotic aircraft and other advanced aerospace vehicles for scientific and military applications. Aurora is headquartered in Manassas, VA and operates production plants in Bridgeport, WV and Columbus, MS and a Research and Development Center in Cambridge, MA. To view recent press releases and more about Aurora please visit our web site at [www.aurora.aero](http://www.aurora.aero).

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