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NASA, Swift Engineering Fly New Earth Observation UAS for Testing

BY NICHOLS MARTIN — December 5, 2022 in [Government Technology](#), [News](#)



HALE UAS

NASA's Ames Research Center partnered with Swift Engineering to test-fly a new solar-powered unmanned aircraft system designed for Earth observation and atmospheric research. The High-Altitude Long-Endurance (HALE UAS) flew for two hours to demonstrate low-altitude operations, the space agency [said Thursday](#).

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The effort is part of NASA's Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer program. HALE met all systems check, aerodynamic, power and control requirements during the demonstration.

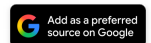
The 72-foot UAS has a payload capacity of 10 to 15 pounds and is built to fly at up to 70,000 feet above the ground. NASA and Swift expect HALE to be able to operate in missions that last over 30 days.

"The successful flight test is an important first step towards realizing a new capability to support NASA science," said [Matt Fladeland](#), a researcher of Ames Research Center.

HALE will go on to undergo high-altitude tests that would determine whether the aircraft will soon receive operational capability status.

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