AirForestry gets permission to fly outdoors with its large drone - The Swedish Transport Agency gives the green light.

AirForestry has reached a crucial milestone, and is now able to test its drone system outdoors, where it will be used to thin out trees from the air. The Swedish Transport Agency has issued a permit for the company to fly its large drone at its test arena east of Uppsala.

With self-developed drones that are able to thin out trees from the air, AirForestry wants to pave the way for new gentle and sustainable methods of caring for and managing the forest. The company’s large harvesting drone measures 6.2 metres and is being developed to thin out forests.

A key element for the company was to be able to start test flights with the drone outdoors, which is why an application for this was sent to the Swedish Transport Agency. The permit was granted in April this year.

“Being able to carry out test and evaluation flights outdoors is a very important step for us. The fact that we got our permit so quickly, and for a drone as large as ours, shows the high credibility of our flight operations and that we have worked correctly from the start with both our technical development and flight operations”, says Mauritz Andersson, CTO and one of the founders of AirForestry.

The Swedish Transport Agency has granted AirForestry’s application for operational authorization for operations with unmanned aircraft, for a specific category according to SORA. The permit applies to the company’s closed test areas east of Uppsala. Only a few other companies have a permit to fly drones in this size classification.

Paul Carbonnier is a trained pilot and has been in the aviation industry since the 90s. Today, he is AirForestry’s Head of Flight Operations and, among other things, will be responsible for structures, processes and areas of responsibility for the company’s flight operations. He emphasises the
importance of building flight safety at an early stage.

“The market and the use of UAS, unmanned aerial systems, is growing explosively both in and outside of Sweden and we are only at the beginning of the development. It is very exciting to work with these issues at AirForestry, which is one of the global leaders in its field.”

AirForestry has also received support from Vinnova in the Vehicle Strategic Research and Innovation (FFI) program and Upscaling for a sustainable industry.

AirForestry was founded in 2020 and provides solutions for forest management that with the help of electric drones can thin out trees from the air. AirForestry reduces the need for access roads, eliminates the consumption of diesel, and provides a better working environment for those who work in the forest.