

## PROPOSAL NAME:

A flight to sustainability // Sikorsky UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopter Loan

## PROPOSAL CATEGORY:

Ecosystem Fund Allocation

## TEAM DESCRIPTION:

Submitted by 12GAUGE on behalf of NightHawk Holdings, Bradley Friesen & Colin Pelton.

NightHawk Holdings already owns one UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter which is currently being converted to utility/firefighting duty and will be the first Firehawk based in western Canada and the first one in Canada with night vision and night firefighting capabilities. NightHawk Holdings plans to add more units to the fleet as funding options allow and at a pace that is manageable for the operating partner.

## ABSTRACT:

NightHawk Holdings, led by [Bradley Friesen](#) and Colin Pelton, are seeking a \$5,700,000 USD loan for the acquisition of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. The loan is to be repaid with interest through quarterly ApeCoin acquisitions to be distributed either to the DAO Treasury or to the community through a token-locking mechanism. This Black Hawk will be converted to a custom firefighting Firehawk machine, wrapped with ApeCoin blue and community delegate patches, and be used to fight fires across North and South America. For the first time ever, the ApeCoin DAO has the opportunity to deploy funds from the treasury in a way that helps others while also providing a return on investment. Let's dive in.

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The global climate change trajectory of recent years has created a situation where wildfires, created by both human and natural events, are occurring at a rigorous pace. In 2023 alone, the world witnessed wildfires which destroyed many homes and devastated lives in numerous North American communities and virtually wiped out the town of Lahaina. South America has also witnessed massive wildfires in Chile and Argentina. In Canada alone, the 2023 wildfire season has seen the most area burned in Canada's recorded history with 6551 wildfires (as of October 6, 2023) burning more than 45 million acres, evacuating 155,856 people (as of July 7, 2023). Most experts are predicting that while we may have some years with reduced wildfire activity, the general trend is towards an increase in the number and intensity of wildfires and related catastrophic loss of homes, communities and sadly human and animal life as well.

Western Canada and many other communities currently only have access to "light" category helicopters and very few medium and heavy category helicopters. These larger helicopters can typically carry 3-5x the water or fire retardant loads of light helicopters and can deploy these loads faster and more efficiently. NightHawk Holdings currently has 7 light helicopters in its operating fleet and has well-established relationships with the government forest services responsible for fighting wildfires in Western Canada and beyond.

The addition of a night vision equipped Firehawk helicopter to NightHawk Holdings fleet will dramatically increase the early response and tactical firefighting capabilities of NightHawk Holdings fleet and bring much needed larger capacity and night capabilities to communities that have historically not had these services available.

The overall project cost as outlined above is estimated at up to \$5,700,000 USD and is proposed to be an interest-bearing non-compounding loan with interest calculated quarterly on the outstanding principal loan amount at the current Canadian prime interest rate at the time less 2%. The loan will be repaid out of operating revenue for the helicopter purchased at a rate of \$1,500 USD per paid operating hour until the loan and interest are fully paid off.

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## BENEFIT TO APECOIN ECOSYSTEM:

While the primary benefit to the ApeCoin DAO is an interest-bearing loan repayment, one of the unintended consequences of firefighting is positive publicity. The additional Firehawk helicopter added to NightHawk Holdings Helicopters' fleet will benefit communities that come under wildfire risk and attack in the coming years. While this helicopter will be primarily based in British Columbia in Western Canada, they are very mobile and it is expected and planned that they will be deployed in

other communities as required and as the fire season moves regionally throughout the year. We are already in discussion with firefighting teams in the US and Chile to provide our Firehawks to them during our local wildfire off-seasons.

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#### STEPS TO IMPLEMENT AND TIMELINE:

The goal will be to add a second UH-60 Firehawk to the NightHawk Holdings fleet by April 2024 which should be ahead of the anticipated wildfire season in western Canada. To achieve this we would begin with the following steps immediately after receiving funding:

- Approval of DAO funding application
- Receipt of ApeCoin and conversion to USD
- NightHawk Holdings purchase of second UH-60 helicopter (estimated at ~ \$2m USD)
- Transport of UH-60 to contractor in California and conversion to civilian utility / Firehawk configuration (estimated at \$1.6m USD)
- Purchase of ancillary firefighting and ground support equipment (happens concurrent with above activities and estimated at \$800,000 USD)
- Hiring / training of additional pilots and ground support crew (happens concurrent with above activities and estimated at \$500,000 USD)
- Start-up /operating budget in case of slow start to fire season (estimated at \$400,000 USD)
- Contingency 7.5% (\$400,000 USD)

#### OVERALL COST:

\$5,700,000 USD to be repaid in full with interest.

Interest is to be calculated quarterly on the outstanding principal loan amount at the current Canadian prime interest rate at the time less 2%. The loan will be repaid out of operating revenue for the helicopter purchased at a rate of \$1,500.00 USD per paid operating hour until the loan and interest are fully paid off.

#### REPAYMENT OPTION #1:

Funds are to be repaid to the DAO Treasury. Converted quarterly, \$APE will be distributed to the DAO Treasury until fully paid off.

#### REPAYMENT OPTION #2:

Funds are to be repaid to the community. Using the Digital Art Movement token-locking contract (or similar), the ApeCoin community will have the opportunity to lock up \$APE and receive a corresponding percentage of loan repayment based on their total tokens locked and duration. Funds will be converted quarterly to \$APE and distributed until fully paid off.

- Repayment Option #1
- DAO Treasury
- Repayment Option #2
- Community

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Once the above model is proven successful there may be opportunities to repeat or expand the relationship with further UH-60 purchases and Firehawk conversions & deployment.