



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Aviation Safety

North Texas Flight Standards District Office
8700 Freeport Parkway Suite 220
Irving, TX 75063
(214) 277-8500 Fax: (214) 277-8570

May 5, 2026

Sam Parks
Responsible Person
2026 Great Texas Balloon Race
P.O. Box 3988
Longview, TX 75606-3988

Dear Mr. Parks:

This office has reviewed and approved your Application for Certificate of Waiver (FAA Form 7711-2) for the 2026 Great Texas Balloon Race, in Longview, TX from June 11, 2026 to June 14, 2026.

This office has issued the Certificate of Waiver (FAA Form 7711-1) with special provisions.

If you have any questions, please contact this office at 214-277-8500 for further assistance.

Sincerely,

DIANA

RUTH BAST

Digitally signed by
DIANA RUTH BAST
Date: 2026.05.05
10:20:51 -05'00'

Diana Bast
Aviation Safety Inspector

Enclosures
FAA Form 7711-1 Certificate of Waiver

cc with enclosures:
Sam Parks, Responsible Person, (sdparks1214@gmail.com)



US Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF WAIVER OR AUTHORIZATION

OMB Control Number: 2120-0027 / Expiration Date: 03/31/2024

APPLICANTS - DO NOT USE THESE SPACES

Flight Standards Office
SW19

Date
05/05/2026

Action

☒ Approved

☐ Disapproved - "Explain under "Remarks"

Signature of authorized FAA representative

DIANA RUTH BAST

Digitally signed by DIANA RUTH BAST
Date: 2026.05.05 10:21:08 -05'00'

INSTRUCTIONS

Submit this application to the responsible FAA Flight Standards district office.

Applicants requesting a Certificate of Waiver or Authorization for an aviation event must complete all the applicable items on this form and attach a properly marked 7.5 series Topographic Quadrangle Map(s), published by the U.S. Geological Survey (scale 1:24,000), of the proposed operating area. The map(s) must include scale depictions of the flightlines, showlines, race courses, and the location of the air event control point, Police dispatch, ambulance, and fire

fighting equipment. The applicant may also wish to submit photographs and scale diagrams as supplemental material to assist in the FAA's evaluation of a particular site.

Application for a Certificate of Waiver or Authorization must be submitted 45 days prior to the requested date of the event.

Applicants requesting a Certificate of Waiver or Authorization for activities other than an aviation event will complete items 1 through 10 only and the certification, item 17, on the reverse.

1. Name of organization

Great Texas Balloon Race

2. Name of responsible person

Sam Parks

3. Permanent mailing address

House number and street or route number

P.O. Box 3988

City

Longview

State and ZIP code

Texas 75606-3988

Telephone Number

505-503-9091

4. State whether the applicant or any of its principal officers/owners has an application for waiver pending at any other office of the FAA.

N/A

5. State whether the applicant or any of its principal officers/owners has ever had its application for waiver denied, or whether the FAA has ever withdrawn a waiver from the applicant or any of its principal officers/owners.

N/A

6. 14 CFR section and number to be waived

91.119 (b), 91.119 (c)

7. Detailed description of proposed operation (Attach supplement if needed)

2026 Documentation: 2026 Operations Manual, Emergency Response Plan

8. Area of operation (Location, altitudes, etc.)

10 Nautical miles (10) radius from Operations Headquarters (Maude Cobb Convention and Activity Center), Longview, TX from Surface to 8,000' AGL

9a. Beginning (Date and hour)

06/11/2026

06:00:00

9b. Ending (Date and hour)

06/14/2026

10:00:00

10.

Aircraft make and model (a)

Pilot's Name (b)

Certificate number and rating (c)

Home address (Street, City, State) (d)

Final list to be provided

at the close of pilot registration

and prior to General Briefing

11. The air event will be sponsored by:

Great Texas Balloon Race

12. Permanent mailing address	House number and street or route number P.O. Box 3988	City Longview	State and ZIP code TX 75606-3988	Telephone Number 903-643-2107
-------------------------------	--	------------------	-------------------------------------	----------------------------------

13. Policing (Describe provisions to be made for policing the event.)

Longview City Police Department

14. Emergency facilities (Mark all that will be available at time and place of air event.)

- ☐ Physician ☒ Fire truck ☐ Other - Specify _____
☒ Ambulance ☐ Aircraft rescue vehicle _____

15. Air Traffic control (Describe method of controlling traffic, including provision for arrival and departure of scheduled aircraft.)

A NOTAM will be filed the week prior to the start of the competition

16. Schedule of Events (include arrival and departure of scheduled aircraft and other periods the airport maybe open.)

Hour (a)	Date (b)	Event (c)
		Hot Air Balloon Competition with tasks selected from the Official Rules. Inspector in Charge (IIC) will be provided task sheets, describing flight profiles for each flight.

If sufficient space is not available, the entire schedule of events may be submitted on separate sheets, in the order and manner indicated above.

Please Read >

The undersigned applicant accepts full responsibility for the strict observance of the terms of the Certificate of Waiver or Authorization, and understands that the authorization contained in such certificate will be strictly limited to the above described operation.

17. Certification - I CERTIFY that the foregoing statements are true.

Date 2/27/2026	Signature of Applicant Sam Parks
-------------------	-------------------------------------

Remarks

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

CERTIFICATE OF WAIVER

ISSUED TO

SAM PARKS

ADDRESS

**P.O. BOX 3988
LONGVIEW, TX 75606**

This certificate is issued for the operations specifically described hereinafter. No person shall conduct any operation pursuant to the authority of this certificate except in accordance with the standard and special provisions contained in this certificate, and such other requirements of the Federal Aviation Regulations not specifically waived by this certificate.

OPERATIONS AUTHORIZED

Great Texas Balloon Race (GTBR) will run from June 11, 2026 to June 14, 2026.

The area of operations will be within a 10nm radius of N32°29'36", W094°45'32", identified by a point 5.2 nm from the Gregg County VOR (GGG) on the 356° radial; surface to 8,000FT MSL.

LIST OF WAIVED REGULATIONS BY SECTION AND TITLE

14 CFR §91.119(b) Minimum Safe Altitudes Over Congested Areas, §91.119(c) Minimum Safe Altitudes Over Other Than Congested Areas

STANDARD PROVISIONS

1. A copy of the application made for this certificate shall be attached to and become a part hereof.
2. This certificate shall be presented for inspection upon the request of any authorized representative of the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, or of any State or municipal official charged with the duty of enforcing local laws or regulations.
3. The holder of this certificate shall be responsible for the strict observance of the terms and provisions contained herein.
4. This certificate is nontransferable.

NOTE— This certificate constitutes a waiver of those Federal rules or regulations specifically referred to above. It does not constitute a waiver of any State law or local ordinance.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Special Provisions Nos. 1 to 19, inclusive, are set forth on the attached pages.

This certificate is effective June 11, 2026 0600 CDT to June 14, 2026 1000 CDT inclusive, and is subject to cancellation at any time upon notice by the Administrator or his authorized representative.

BY DIRECTION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

**LONNIE W
RAMON**

Digitally signed by LONNIE W
RAMON
Date: 2026.05.06 08:59:02 -05'00'

**Lewis C. Gonzales, Jr.
Manager, North Texas FSDO**

May 05, 2026

FAA Form 7711-1 (7-74)

DISTRIBUTION: DFW TRACON, GGG TOWER
COORDINATION: FTW FSS, GGG TOWER

ISSUED TO: Mr. Sam Parks, Great Texas Balloon Race
DATE ISSUED: May 5, 2026
VALID: Daily, June 11 to 14, 2025; 0600 to 1000 CDT
ISSUED BY: North Texas Flight Standards District Office

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

This Certificate of Waiver constitutes a waiver of only those regulations stated, to the degree and for the period of time specified in the certificate. The Certificate of Waiver does not constitute a waiver of any state law or local ordinance. Should the proposed operation conflict with any state law, local ordinance, or required permission of local authorities or property owners, it shall be the applicant's responsibility to resolve the difficulty. The provisions of the waiver shall apply, regardless of the statements contained in the application for Certificate of Waiver. The waiver shall be considered void upon completion of the authorized schedule of events or at the latest time shown on the face of the Certificate of Waiver, whichever occurs earlier.

Regulations Waived:

The following regulations are waived as follows:

FAR 91.119(b) "Minimum Safe Altitudes" "over congested areas . . ." is waived to allow participating aircraft to operate within the boundaries of the waiver area below 1,000 feet above the surface and less than 2,000 feet horizontally from the highest obstacle. The waiver does not include flight closer than 500 Feet, respectively, to persons on the surface who are not a part of an airshow act.

FAR 91.119(c) "Minimum Safe Altitudes" "over other than congested areas..." is waived to allow participating aircraft to operate within the boundaries of the waiver area below 500 feet above the surface and less than 500 feet from persons or property. The waiver does not authorize participating aircraft to operate closer than 500 feet to persons on the surface who are not a part of an airshow act.

Common Special Provisions

Failure to comply with any standard or special provision is a violation of the terms of this Certificate of Waiver (CoW) and justification for cancellation of this Certificate and constitutes a violation of Title 49 of the United States Code Section(s) 44711(a)(2)(B) and/or 44711(a)(5).

1. The FAA has the authority to cancel or delay any or all acts or events if the safety of persons or property on the ground or in the air are in jeopardy, or there is a violation of the terms of the CoW.
2. The responsible person, ***Mr. Sam Parks***, Event Director/Balloon Meister will ensure that notification is made to the Leidos Flight Service Station (AFSS) 1-877-487-6867 of the date, time, place, demonstration areas, altitudes, nature of the activity, and duration of the operation and request that a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM D or TFR) be issued.
 - a. Such notice shall be accomplished by providing the controlling flight service station (FSS) with a copy of the CoW at least 48 hours before the event and no more than 72 hours before the event.
 - b. A Class D NOTAM is issued for the entire aviation event. Class D NOTAM verification is required.
3. The responsible person, ***Mr. Sam Parks***, Event Director/Balloon Meister, named in Item 2 on FAA Form 7711-2 must ensure that participants are thoroughly briefed on special field rules and the established flying area (other defined areas within the waived/authorized airspace), manner and order of events, and special provisions of the CoW, before beginning the activities each day.

ISSUED TO:	Mr. Sam Parks, Great Texas Balloon Race
DATE ISSUED:	June 11-14, 2026
VALID:	Daily, June 11 to 14, 2026; 0600 – 1000 CDT
ISSUED BY:	North Texas Flight Standards District Office

- a. No person may participate in any event listed on the CoW unless that person has signed a statement stating that they have received a briefing on the provisions of the CoW.
 - b. For team performances, only the team leader is required; however, a delegate may represent the team leader, provided the person is a pilot member of the team. The team leader must brief each member of the team and will provide the name of each person on the team he/she will brief before the performance.
4. All civil aircraft and pilot participating in the aviation event shall provide the requested data to establish qualification and airworthiness to the event organizer and if required be available for FAA inspection at the time and place agreed upon by the responsible person, **Mr. Sam Parks**, Event Director/Balloon Meister, and the FAA IIC.

NOTE: FAA Checklists, Status Forms, and Job Aids can be used to gather data in advance to establish performer qualifications and aircraft airworthiness.

NOTE: CoW or CoA special provisions never supersede aircraft airworthiness operating limitations. Pilots should review their aircraft operating limitations prior to participating in an aviation event to ensure they are familiar and can comply with the requirements as specified.

5. For civil aircraft, only required flight crewmembers by type design, safety pilots as listed in FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 6, or those persons required to participate in the demonstration (participants integral to the performance, and those conducting safety related functions) will be carried on any aircraft engaged in demonstrations authorized by this CoW. Additional crewmembers or essential personnel may not participate without specific approval by the responsible person, **Mr. Sam Parks**, Event Director/Balloon Meister, and the IIC.
6. No demonstrations shall be authorized or scheduled when a suspension of airport traffic or diversion of other aircraft traffic would cause a hardship to scheduled air carrier operations.
7. A control point shall be established where the certificate holder or responsible person shall direct the demonstration. This person, **Mr. Sam Parks**, Event Director/Balloon Meister, shall be continuously available to the FAA IIC or designated representative and is the person designated as responsible for the overall safety of the event.
8. Adequate communication capability (electronic and visual) must be provided to maintain a safe operation, to control spectators, and to advise participants that the aerial demonstration has been halted or canceled. During a Military Jet Team performance (engine start to shut-down) the Event Director, IIC, and team member communicating with the team lead must all be in direct communication.
9. A crowd line consisting of a physical barrier and/or adequate policing shall be provided to confine the spectators to designated areas. The spectator areas shall have well defined lateral boundaries.
10. The demonstration shall be halted for any reason that is in the interest of safety. It shall also be halted when unauthorized aircraft enter the demonstration area, or when unauthorized persons or vehicles enter the area underlying the flying display area/Target areas.
 - a. Only the minimum number of essential personnel necessary to support operations will be authorized in the flying display areas/Target Areas.

ISSUED TO:	Mr. Sam Parks, Great Texas Balloon Race
DATE ISSUED:	June 11-14, 2026
VALID:	Daily, June 11 to 14, 2026; 0600 – 1000 CDT
ISSUED BY:	North Texas Flight Standards District Office

- b. The holder of the CoW and responsible person, **Mr. Sam Parks**, Event Director/Balloon Meister, assumes responsibility for the security of areas where unauthorized personnel and aircraft are not authorized access and for compliance with the aviation event security plan.
 - c. The IIC has the responsibility to make the holder of the CoW and responsible person, **Mr. Sam Parks**, Event Director/Balloon Meister, aware of any identified safety concerns and if necessary has the authority for canceling or delaying any or all acts if it is deemed necessary in the interest of safety.
11. **Mr. Sam Parks**, Event Director/Balloon Meister will ensure that roads and buildings under the specified flying display area/target area are devoid of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and/or persons in accordance with Emergency Response Plan and Operations Manual.
12. The following facilities shall be provided and readily available in accordance with the submitted emergency response plan at the demonstration site. Fire truck, Ambulance, Crash Rescue Vehicle/Paramedic, Marine Unit and police vehicles will be provided as included in the emergency response plan and Operations Manual.
13. Persons or aircraft not appearing on the CoW application and subsequently added to the CoW or CoA may not participate without specific approval by the responsible person, **Mr. Sam Parks**, Event Director/Balloon Meister, and the IIC. Proof of appropriate qualifications for crewmember(s), and an airworthy aircraft is required before the performance can be conducted at that event site. If applicable, the appropriate category show line must be established for that aircraft before the performance can be conducted at that event site.
14. In the event that a performance involves aircraft operating in the vicinity of parachutists, whether in freefall or under deployed canopies, all pilots and the jump master or team leader of the parachutists involved shall be present at the aviation event safety briefing. The responsible person, **Mr. Sam Parks**, Event Director/Balloon Meister, shall ensure that each participant understands the details of the performance which shall include, at the minimum, the following information:
- a. The number of jumpers performing,
 - b. The types of and/or colors of parachutes,
 - c. The exit altitude and deployment altitude,
 - d. The planned flight path prior to exit, as well as, the descent area of the jump aircraft,
 - e. The number, make(s)/model(s) and color of the aircraft involved, and
 - f. Procedures to be used in the event of an unexpected occurrence.
15. Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Demonstrations are **not** authorized under this CoW.
16. Rocket Demonstrations are **not** authorized under this CoW.
17. Parachute Demonstrations are **not** authorized under this CoW.

ISSUED TO:	Mr. Sam Parks, Great Texas Balloon Race
DATE ISSUED:	June 11-14, 2026
VALID:	Daily, June 11 to 14, 2026; 0600 – 1000 CDT
ISSUED BY:	North Texas Flight Standards District Office

Balloon Special Provisions

18. Section 91.119(b) and (c) are waived to the extent necessary to allow participating balloons to compete in the Great Texas Balloon Race under the terms and conditions set forth in the FAA approved procedures section of the Balloon Operations Manual.
19. The Balloon Operations Manual "2026 Great Texas Balloon Race Operations Manual" is incorporated into this CoW and becomes a special provision thereof. Any action contrary to the terms, controls, procedures, and conditions pertaining to safety set forth in the FAA approved procedures is grounds for cancellation of this CoW.
20. **Mr. Sam Parks, Event Director/Balloon Meister**, shall ensure that each participating event crewmember has read and understands the FAA approved procedures section of the Balloon Operations Manual and the special provisions of this CoW.

ISSUED TO: Mr. Sam Parks, Great Texas Balloon Race
DATE ISSUED: June 11-14, 2026
VALID: Daily, June 11 to 14, 2026; 0600 – 1000 CDT
ISSUED BY: North Texas Flight Standards District Office