

GeoLinks Installs 88 High-Tech Cameras in Southern and Northern California to Provide Critical Insight in High Risk Fire Areas

In collaboration with ALERTWildfire, UC San Diego, University of Nevada Reno, CENIC, SCE and PG&E, in three months GeoLinks has installed 88 cameras to improve confirmation and response efforts in combatting California wildfires.

California; DATE; [GeoLinks](#), a California-based telecommunications provider and competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) public utility, has successfully installed and provided high speed, low latency, symmetrical data connections to 88 high-definition, pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) cameras throughout Southern and Northern California to provide critical situational awareness during wildfire events. In collaboration with [ALERTWildfire](#), University of California San Diego, University of Nevada, Reno, [CENIC](#), Southern California Edison (SCE), and Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), the multi-hazard camera technology provides data related to fire ignition points critical in informing situational awareness and wildfire response.

This state-of-the-art camera network, developed and managed by UC San Diego and the University of Nevada, Reno, connects firefighting agencies with real-time imagery and environmental data enabling first responders to allocate and scale resources appropriately. Situated on GeoLinks' vertical solar and wind-powered assets, the collected data is transmitted via GeoLinks' [ClearFiber™](#) network then handed off via a strategic partnership to [CENIC](#)'s private research and educational network to reach the universities, fire officials, utilities, and other users. This vital information allows involved parties to confirm ignition locations, verify 911 reports, image fire behavior, and ultimately deploy informed response and public warning.

“To give a little more context on GeoLinks involvement, we really dove head first in state disaster recovery efforts when hundreds of our clients, neighboring anchor institutions, and team members became displaced during the [2017 wildfires](#),” said GeoLinks Co-Founder and CEO Skyler Ditchfield. “When vital communications towers were destroyed by the fast-moving wildfire, our team worked around the clock to restore critical connectivity throughout affected counties. The same responsiveness transpired during 2018’s wildfire season; this included providing the same-day installation of a high capacity circuit for key Red Cross shelters free of charge. I realized what a difference we could make in this space with our unique capabilities of building rural and urban networks in off-the-grid locations where these are needed. Our dedication, passion, agility, and unique capabilities in supporting disaster recovery, initiated our involvement with our university collaborators.”

State, private, public and first-responder support for the expansion of this camera system is persistent and irrefutable. “The safety of my firefighters and the communities they protect is my priority, so having more information about a fire before we encounter it is an added safety measure that benefits our first responders,” said former San Diego Fire-Rescue Chief Brian Fennessy. “Having access to a live view of our highest fire risk

areas will greatly improve situational awareness and our coordination with CAL FIRE. In turn, that allows for quicker response times, better response strategies and faster evacuation orders to ensure our communities are better prepared in the face of a wildfire. During the ignition of the Church Fire, I could watch the smoke on my iPhone, the color, the direction, and immediately knew the resources that I needed to deploy and the time they would be engaged. Furthermore, the crews could watch how the fire progressed on their iPads as they approached the fire, real-time situational awareness — these fire cameras are a game changer.”

The 88 new cameras are located throughout high fire-risk areas throughout California. SCE and PG&E, along with public agencies and the general public, have access to the camera feeds around-the-clock through the www.alertwilfire.org website to monitor wildfire activity. Up to 160 cameras are expected to be installed by GeoLinks throughout SCE’s service area by 2020, which will allow approximately 90 percent coverage in high fire-risk areas. Similar efforts are underway at PG&E to cover their service area.

“I see this project as more of a mission than just a new line of business. None of this would be possible without the amazing work of Dr. Neal Driscoll of UC San Diego and Dr. Graham Kent of UNR who have been the pioneers of this work,” continued Ditchfield. “Our collaboration is now to super charge their founding efforts. Also, big kudos to the utilities for getting this underway; it truly shows their dedication to making a difference in future fire mitigation. The effects of this work will be nothing short of lifesaving.”

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About GeoLinks

[GeoLinks](#), a Southern California based telecommunications provider and competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) public utility, is recognized on both a state and national level for its unparalleled capabilities in supporting disaster recovery. Named “Most Disruptive Technology” in the 2018 Central Coast Innovation Awards, GeoLinks’ innovative proprietary network, ClearFiber™, utilizes a combination of terrestrial fiber optic backhaul, carrier-grade full-duplex fixed wireless equipment, and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licensed spectrum, to deliver ultra-reliable high-speed broadband Internet access to businesses and anchor institutions throughout California. With the unique ability to build solar and wind-powered redundant telecommunications facilities “off the grid,” GeoLinks is able to deploy broadband to remote and unserved communities in a fraction of the time and for a fraction of the cost of fiber. Consequently, the company is recognized as a leader in closing the digital divide and proudly sits on an array of national boards, coalitions, and working groups, including: the Schools, Healthcare & Libraries Broadband ([SHLB](#)) Coalition; the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association (WISPA); the Broadband Consortium of the Pacific Coast (BCPC); and the FCC’s Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee. Recently the Company received the [Christina Haska Distinguished Service Award](#) from

CENIC for GeoLinks' pro-bono services providing critical data circuits to institutions during California's recent natural disasters.

About CENIC • www.cenic.org

CENIC connects California to the world — advancing education and research statewide by providing the world-class network essential for innovation, collaboration, and economic growth. This nonprofit organization operates the California Research and Education Network (CalREN), a high-capacity network designed to meet the unique requirements of over 20 million users, including the vast majority of K-20 students together with educators, researchers, and others at vital public-serving institutions. CENIC's Charter Associates are part of the world's largest education system; they include the California K-12 system, California Community Colleges, the California State University system, California's Public Libraries, the University of California system, Stanford, Caltech, USC, and the Naval Postgraduate School. CENIC also provides connectivity to leading-edge institutions and industry research organizations around the world, serving the public as a catalyst for a vibrant California. For more information, visit www.cenic.org.