

# U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

## Satellite Broadband Delivers Internet Connectivity for Managing Reservation Operations in Recreational Parks

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is the federal government's largest provider of water-based outdoor recreation in the nation. Each year, over 350 million people visit USACE's recreational parks, lakes, and trails to escape their hectic schedules and relax in the great outdoors. Visitors may reserve campsites, cabins, or park shelters via the National Recreation Reservation Service™ (NRRS), the one-stop reservation resource for recreation facilities and activities offered by the USACE, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Forest Service. Today, the USACE relies on Eyak Technology, LLC (EyakTek) and Hughes for the satellite broadband Internet service to access NRRS records and to facilitate its reservation operations located in recreational parks across the United States via one managed network service.



### USACE's Need for Internet Connectivity at Recreational Parks

The USACE maintains 12 million acres of land and water across 43 states. Park rangers and field staff who work at these recreational parks are responsible for managing reservation operations onsite. The NRRS system enables onsite staff to check-in visitors with campsite or cabin reservations, or those who have reserved park shelters for use, access real-time reservation/visitor information at each site, and process credit card transactions. Additionally, a few of the USACE's recreational parks are located in remote areas not connected to terrestrial telecommunications infrastructures and have little or no reliable wireless communications capabilities. In these instances, park rangers and staff were unable to access the NRRS Web site, impeding their ability to perform their mission. The USACE realized that it needed to provide Internet connectivity at these sites, as well.

### Satellite Technology—Connectivity in Areas with Diverse Terrain

Because several of the USACE's recreational parks are located in areas such as mountains and forests, or near lakes and rivers, the USACE needed a network solution to enable Internet connectivity in these environments. Unlike terrestrial and wireless technologies, satellite broadband does not rely on cables, wires, or towers for its always-on Internet connection. Instead, users only need a satellite terminal, an antenna, and a clear view of the southern sky. Satellite broadband enables USACE's field staff to access real-time NRRS information and manage visitor reservation operations in its most geologically diverse recreational areas.

“Satellite broadband technology is the perfect solution for providing Internet connectivity in recreational parks,” said Tony Bardo, assistant vice president for government solutions at Hughes. “With satellite, Internet connectivity is possible regardless of the user's location or the area's terrain.”

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In 2007, the USACE tasked EyakTek—an Alaska-native owned small business with expertise in communication services—to provide a turnkey satellite broadband solution to enable Internet connectivity so that field users could access the NRRS online. EyakTek selected Hughes—the global leader in satellite broadband networks and services—as its subcontractor. “We knew Hughes was able to provide an economical solution based on their experience of providing similar services to other customers,” said Jay Eberly, program manager for EyakTek.

## Connecting USACE Locations to the Internet

Eyaktek and Hughes have installed terminals at 469 USACE sites enabling park rangers and staff to access NRRS reservation information via satellite broadband. In doing so, they consolidated the USACE's reservation operations under one managed network and have provided the following:

- Broadband Internet connectivity between the NRRS center and a Hughes Network Operations Center (NOC)
- A Hughes NOC providing connectivity to all locations within the continental United States
- Satellite space segment providing the central network relay point for all communications between the NOC and the USACE remote satellite terminals
- Managed bandwidth (1 Mbps downstream/128 kbps upstream)
- A Hughes Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSATs) comprising an antenna/radio and modem
- Multi-tiered Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) network security

In addition, Eyaktek and Hughes provide the USACE with 24/7 help desk support and next business day maintenance.

## About Hughes

Hughes Network Systems, LLC (HUGHES) is the global leader in providing broadband satellite networks and services for large enterprises, governments, small businesses, and consumers. Its broadband satellite products are based on global standards approved by the TIA, ETSI, and ITU standards organizations, including IPoS/DVB-S2, RSM-A, and GMR-1. To date, Hughes has shipped more than 2.2 million systems to customers in over 100 countries. Headquartered outside Washington, D.C., in Germantown, Maryland, USA, Hughes maintains sales and support offices worldwide. Hughes is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hughes Communications, Inc. (NASDAQ: HUGH).

## About EyakTek

Eyak Technology, LLC ("EyakTek") provides award-winning solutions in communications, information technology, healthcare, and critical infrastructure and security services.

A recognized leader in the industry, EyakTek has consistently been ranked as one of the Top 100 Federal Contractors. As an Alaska native-owned Small Business, and in keeping with the tenets of the ANC Program, EyakTek provides significant returns to the community of native shareholders.

## A Cost-effective, Optimized Solution

The USACE has streamlined its administrative operations by contracting with a single vendor to provide broadband Internet connectivity, and with one monthly consolidated bill, rather than hundreds. At the same time, the USACE has ensured that each location has consistent, reliable, and secure Internet service that can be easily optimized to accommodate the peak demands (for example, around the Fourth of July) required during USACE's seasonal operations.

## Moving Forward

Eyaktek and Hughes continue to support the remote communications needs of USACE recreational parks, as well as other NRRS interagency partners. They recently installed terminals at three recreational sites for the U.S. Forest Service, another NRRS user. In fact, one location was so remote and the terrain so harsh that contractors had to wait for the snow to melt, and required an airplane and a four-wheel drive vehicle to access the installation site. "The customer had some specific 'line of site' challenges," said Eberly, "We knew Hughes had the experience and the solution to identify an appropriate line of site, and our team pulled it off."

For more information, call 1-800-416-8679 or visit [government.Hughes.com](http://government.Hughes.com).

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