

BLUE RIVER, OREGON

“...with Project OVERCOME, we are delivering world-class Internet access to the region and truly building it back better.”

- **Geoff Turner**, CEO, Elevate Technology Group



Thanks to new and reliable connectivity, a live-streamed Olympic qualifying event raised over \$3,000 for the community in one night.

In 2020, the Holiday Farm Fire devastated the Blue River, Oregon community. The forest fire wiped out Blue River's Internet infrastructure, burning down wooden poles used to anchor the community's above-ground fiber network. Local activists recognized the need for a more resilient connectivity solution. They used funds from Project OVERCOME to construct a 60-foot solar-powered communications tower and created a robust wireless backhaul link with spectrum in the 11 GHz band.

The momentum started by Project OVERCOME immediately sparked progress in the Blue River community. In June 2020 - a few months after the start of the project - Blue River hosted the McKenzie International event, a Tokyo Olympic qualifying track meet. Because of Project OVERCOME, the event organizers could offer a pay-per-view live stream of the race. Thanks to this capability, over \$3,000 in net proceeds were donated to the McKenzie Track and the Oregon Community Foundation – Community Rebuilding Fund.

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In fire-ravaged Blue River, Oregon wireless engineers and community volunteers deployed an Internet connection to help their neighbors.

The wireless network deployment directly impacted community members' lives as well. The experience of Tracy, a mother of a couple of McKenzie School District students living in the underserved area, illustrates the effect on day-to-day activities. Previously, Tracy's family used a low-performance satellite Internet service. The speed of the satellite connection was nearly unusable for homework, telehealth, and streaming needs.

Project OVERCOME facilitated the build of core infrastructure to provide high-capacity and low-latency connections which enabled additional investments by Elevate Tech Group to run fiber to private residences, including Tracy's home. Using the wireless link for backhaul, Tracy's family and many of her neighbors now enjoy symmetrical fiber services. This connection allows for downloading, uploading, video calls, remote learning, telework, and much more.

The Project OVERCOME tower also established a permanent network hookup for multiple air quality and wildfire detection cameras that help protect citizens in the region. The real-time view from the cameras on the Project OVERCOME tower can be accessed online at alertwildfire.org and contributes to Blue River's general public safety strategy. With Project OVERCOME, these "digital lookouts" help protect public property, private assets, and critical infrastructure.



GRANTEE AND PARTNERS

Onward Eugene, Elevate Tech Group, McKenzie School District