

# N.C. Department of Resources



# Environment and Natural

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## **State Agency Honoring Cisco, Other Partners for Help During Evans Road Fire**

**RALEIGH** – The N.C. Division of Forest Resources on Monday will present a plaque to Cisco for the company's help during the 40,000-acre Evans Road Fire.

During the fire, Cisco donated to the state firefighting agency the use of its Network Emergency Response Vehicle, or NERV, which served as a mobile command center and enabled firefighting staff to carry out its vital communication function in rural Hyde County.

The press and the public are invited to Monday's event, which will be held at 3 p.m. on the Halifax Mall between the N.C. Department of Revenue and the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. Cisco will bring the NERV so people can get a closer look at the vehicle. The plaque will be presented to Cisco representatives by Wib Owen, director of the N.C. Division of Forest Resources, and Bill Ross, secretary of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

State, federal and local firefighters battled the lightning-sparked Evans Road Fire for more than three months last summer.

"The donation of this outstanding piece of equipment and the personnel who staffed it were a great benefit to the N.C. Division of Forest Resources and the cooperators that battled this massive fire that strained both federal and state resources," Owen said. "This intricate communications vehicle greatly enhanced infrastructure needs in a rural area of North Carolina where networking capabilities are limited."

The 40-foot vehicle is capable of driving into any disaster zone and immediately establishing an Internet connection to provide a platform for satellite feeds, video, wireless broadband access, Cisco Digital Media System, IP telephony, Cisco unified communications and Cisco TelePresence. An identical vehicle was successfully used in October 2007 to assist in the response to widespread wildfires in California.

The NERV enables first responders to easily communicate with each other during emergencies with software that rapidly bridges disparate communications networks. Technology allows virtual talk groups to integrate analog, digital, conventional and trunked radio systems. These can accommodate UHF, VHF or 800 megahertz frequencies, as well as personal computers, Cisco IP Phone, Nextel PTT, cellular and telephony communications, and can be dynamically created and managed based on the needs of the incident. The NERV Command Center employs Cisco IPICS (IP Interoperability and Collaboration System) to help enable public safety personnel to exchange information when they are using incompatible radios.

Headquartered in San Jose, California, Cisco employs approximately 3,700 in Research Triangle Park. For more information about the company, please visit [www.cisco.com](http://www.cisco.com). A video featuring the NERV is at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7Yw3WqQOSE>.

At Monday's event, Owen also will thank Bryan Beatty, secretary for the N.C. Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, and his staff for their help during the Evans Road Fire. Beatty and his staff helped crews with logistical needs, including securing helicopters to fight the fire and closing roads near the blaze.

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