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Press Release

New FirstNet Cell Sites Launch along Gunflint Trail and near Lichen Lake to Support First Responders in Remote Northern Minnesota Wilderness

New Infrastructure Will Help Advance Public Safety, Improve Connectivity for Area Residents and Visitors

GRAND MARAIS, Minn., Nov. 16, 2021

What's the news? First responders in northern Minnesota are getting a major boost in their wireless communications thanks to the [FirstNet®](#) network expansion currently underway by [AT&T*](#). We've added two new, [purpose-built cell sites](#) – one located along the Gunflint Trail near Gunflint Lake and Magnetic Lake and another located near Lichen Lake in the Superior National Forest.

These FirstNet sites will serve those traveling in the remote wilderness of northern Minnesota. One site will provide coverage when traveling along the Gunflint Trail north of Grand Marais. The second will provide coverage when traveling along State Highway 165 near Lichen Lake north of Tofte. The sites will also give first responders on FirstNet – America's public safety network – access to *always-on*, 24-hours-a-day priority and preemption across voice and data.

Why is this important? We look at FirstNet as the most important wireless network in the country because it's serving our first responders. And unlike commercial networks, FirstNet provides dedicated mobile broadband. To ensure AT&T and the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) are putting coverage and capacity where first responders need it most, the FirstNet build is being done with direct feedback from state and local public safety officials. This helps ensure Minnesota first responders connect to the critical information they need – every day and in every emergency. FirstNet sites already launched in communities across Minnesota include Bagley, Baudette, Blackduck, Cloquet, Echo Trail (northwest of Ely), Faribault, Fillmore County, Finlayson, Graceville, Grygla, Gunflint Trail, Hovland, Isabella, Kellogg (Hwy 42), Kjostad Lake, Lewiston, Tofte, Togo and Williams.

What are the benefits to first responders? Building upon [AT&T's current and planned investments](#) in Minnesota, we're actively extending the reach of FirstNet to give agencies large and small the reliable, unthrottled connectivity and modern communications tools they need. These sites were constructed using Band 14 spectrum, as well as AT&T commercial spectrum. Band 14 is nationwide, high quality spectrum set aside by the government specifically for



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FirstNet. We look at Band 14 as public safety's VIP lane. In an emergency, this band – or lane – can be cleared and locked just for FirstNet subscribers. That means only those on the FirstNet network will be able to access Band 14 spectrum, further elevating their connected experience and emergency response. Band 14 has been added on more than 700 existing sites across Minnesota, including markets such as the Twin Cities, Duluth, Rochester, Mankato, the Iron Range, St. Cloud and the Brainerd/Baxter area.

How does this help Minnesota residents? This new infrastructure will also help improve the overall coverage experience for AT&T wireless customers in the area. Residents, visitors and businesses can take advantage of the AT&T commercial spectrum bands, as well as Band 14 when capacity is available.

What is FirstNet? FirstNet is the only nationwide, high-speed broadband communications platform dedicated to and purpose-built for America's first responders and the extended public safety community. Shaped by the vision of Congress and the first responder community following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, FirstNet stands above commercial offerings. It is built with [AT&T](#) in public-private partnership with the FirstNet Authority – an independent agency within the federal government. The FirstNet network provides public safety truly dedicated coverage and capacity when they need it, including unique benefits like *always-on* priority and preemption, and high-quality Band 14 spectrum. These advanced capabilities enable FirstNet to help fire, EMS, EMA, law enforcement and 9-1-1 personnel save lives and protect their communities.

What people are saying:

Paul Weirtz

President, AT&T Minnesota

"Minnesota's first responders deserve reliable coverage across the state to help them effectively and efficiently address incidents. And with FirstNet, that's exactly what they're getting. We're pleased these new sites will provide critical wireless coverage in some of Minnesota's most remote wilderness areas. We have a [responsibility](#) unlike any other network provider, and we couldn't be more pleased to support the public safety mission by bringing northern Minnesota's first responders, residents and visitors greater access to the connectivity they need."

Edward Parkinson

CEO, FirstNet Authority



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“FirstNet is a dedicated broadband platform for public safety, by public safety. We worked hand-in-hand with the Minnesota public safety community to understand their needs for the network. And this new site is a prime example of how that input and feedback is becoming reality. We look forward to supporting Minnesota’s first responders’ use of FirstNet to help them protect our communities when moments matter most.”

Where can I find more information? Go [here](#) to learn more about how AT&T is supporting Minnesota. For more about the value FirstNet is bringing to public safety, check out [FirstNet.com](#). And go [here](#) for more FirstNet news.

FirstNet and the FirstNet logo are registered trademarks and service marks of the First Responder Network Authority. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

About the First Responder Network Authority

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) is an independent authority within the U.S. Department of Commerce. Chartered in 2012, its mission is to ensure the building, deployment, and operation of the nationwide, broadband network that equips first responders to save lives and protect U.S. communities. Learn more at [FirstNet.gov/mediakit](#) and follow the FirstNet Authority (@FirstNetGov) on Facebook and Twitter for updates.

***About AT&T Communications**

We help family, friends and neighbors connect in meaningful ways every day. From the first phone call 140+ years ago to mobile video streaming, we @ATT innovate to improve lives.

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