

New Megapixel Camera Monitors Construction Progress

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Two miles of U.S. 129 in Blount County, Tenn., were closed to traffic in March when a rockslide dumped several tons of debris onto the roadway. The Tennessee Dept. of Transportation (TDOT) awarded a \$1.99-million emergency-repair contract to allow the re-opening of the roadway by July 31. TDOT is offering both an incentive of \$6,500 per day to complete the work early and a disincentive of the same amount if the work is not finished in time. According to Yvette Martinez, community-relations officer for TDOT, the project is on schedule despite a stormy spring.

The Canadian contractor, Pacific Blasting & Demolition Ltd., has crews working seven days a week. Martinez says they are on track to complete work by July 1, which would result in a \$195,000 bonus to the contractor.

Motorists can watch the construction progression on the TDOT website at www.tn.gov/tdot. New images are captured every 15 minutes. The state is using EarthCam's new Advanced MegapixelCam, a 12-megapixel webcam that provides twice the high definition. "It was quite a challenge to find the right camera," Martinez says. "The project is in a very remote area, with no cell signal or electrical power source. We needed a camera that had satellite capability and could run off solar panels. This camera offers new technology for TDOT."