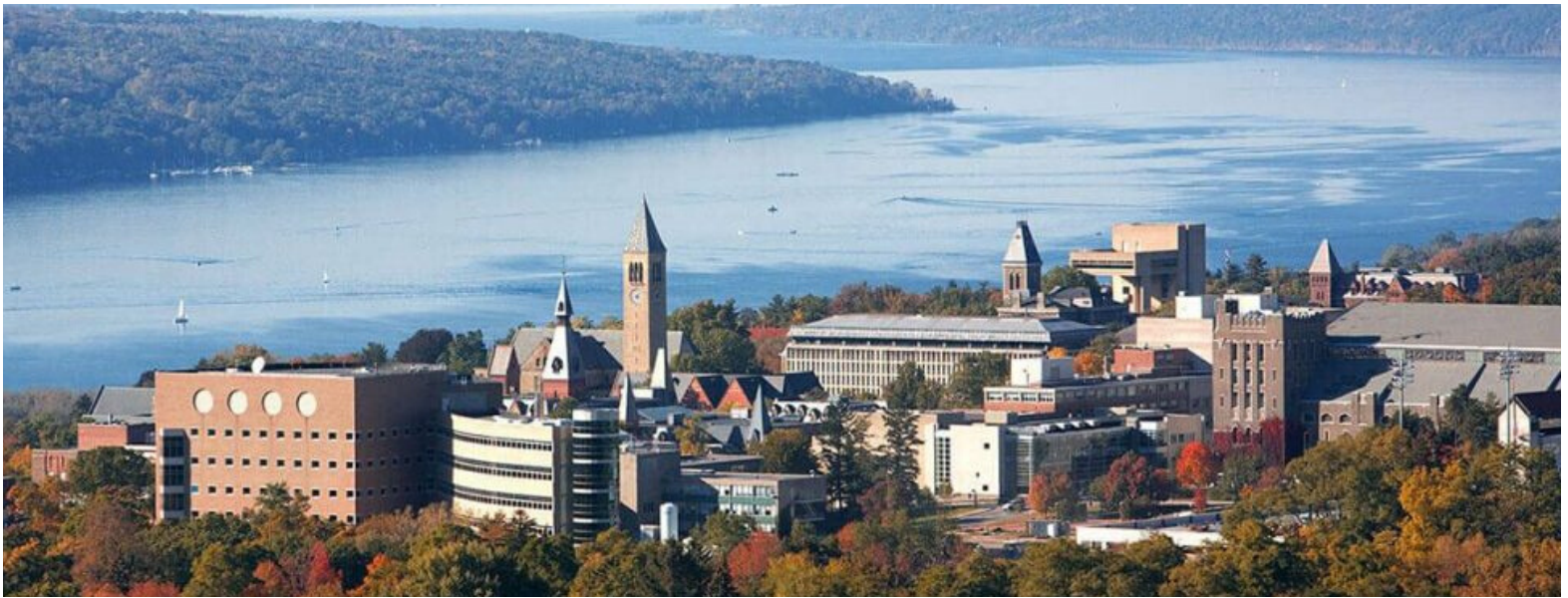


EagleHawk helps Cornell University uncover nuisance leaks in buried steam lines with drone-enabled inspections



CHALLENGE

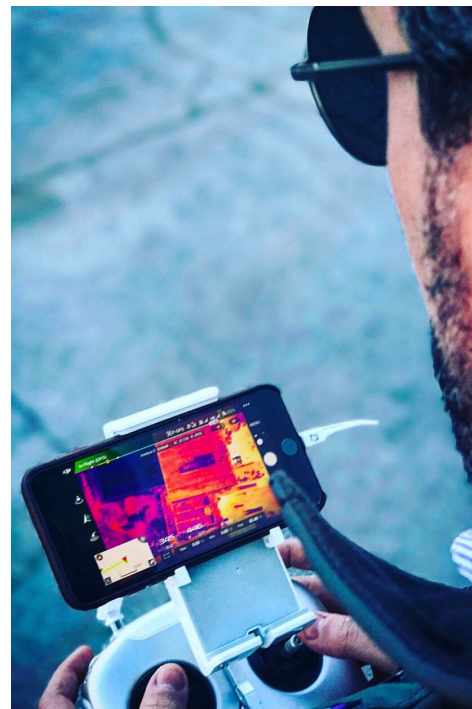
Frank Perry has been Cornell University's Utilities Project Manager for decades. Part of his responsibilities includes managing and maintaining the university's district heating system. This utility provides heat and hot water to the entire campus and is crucial for the school to operate safely, efficiently and effectively, especially during the cold winter months experienced throughout Upstate New York. For years, Frank's team hired a consultant that used a helicopter service to perform aerial inspections of the system to look for any leaks or issues. While this method worked better than traditional ground-based inspection techniques, Frank felt it wasn't the most efficient way to inspect the steam system. Helicopter-based inspections required using loud equipment, flying low over a populated campus, and resulted in large data files that weren't always user friendly. As the drone industry began to emerge over the past decade, Frank became interested in utilizing drones and technology to improve their inspection approach, but had trouble finding a reliable, experienced, and affordable solution. Then in 2017, he met the EagleHawk team while they were on campus and was intrigued by their new and innovative drone-enabled inspection techniques.

SOLUTION

Through conversations with EagleHawk CEO Patrick Walsh, Frank learned how EagleHawk's expert team of FAA certified drone pilots and thermal imaging analysts use professional drones equipped with cutting-edge thermal cameras and sensors to make large-scale district heating system inspections **easier, safer, faster, more efficient, and more cost-effective**. In fact, EagleHawk's solution was so affordable - 40% less than the helicopter cost - that Frank signed up for a three-year contract instead of inspections every third year.

EagleHawk worked closely with Frank's facilities team, Cornell's campus safety and risk management officials, and local airspace control authorities to plan the data collection flights and ensure that the inspection process would not conflict with student operations or unforeseen emergency medical flights. Using the electronic utilities basemap to aid in the pre-flight mission-planning process, the EagleHawk team was able to coordinate the data collection flights in a matter of a few short weeks and collect all the data across the entire campus in a single day!

Within three weeks of completing the data collection flights, a comprehensive final report was delivered to Frank's team, along with hundreds of high-resolution visual and thermal images and videos. The power of combining cutting-edge technology with experienced pilots and data analysts became immediately apparent, as the inspection uncovered several possible concerns.



RESULT

Frank says the decision to use EagleHawk was a "no brainer", especially after the first inspection report found leaks and issues that the helicopter method hadn't detected. Frank believes using EagleHawk's technology-enabled solution is worth the initial financial investment as it's saved the school money and energy by locating any issues before they become serious, costly problems.

"One leak can be very expensive and result in a huge loss of energy over time," Frank says. **"EagleHawk's data is easy to comprehend, more accurate, and offers a great user experience."**



Frank says his leadership has been happy with the outcome and one of the best perks of working with EagleHawk are the people.

"They have a team player mentality, just like us. You do business with people, not companies, and EagleHawk is made up of people who are on the cutting-edge of technology and offer useful services and solutions for their clients."



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