Flood Sensor Monitoring with Real-time Data

GREEN STREAM TECHNOLOGIES SEND ALERTS WHEN WATER LEVELS RISE
HAMPTON ROADS AT GROUND ZERO

The metropolitan region in Southeastern Virginia called “Hampton Roads” is prone to flooding. The area is home to two million citizens and 14 military installations, including Langley Air Force Base and Naval Station Norfolk, the largest naval complex in the world. Like many of the 665 coastal communities in the U.S., this region regularly floods during moderate to heavy rains and high tides. Hampton Roads has the additional burden of experiencing land subsidence – the ground is sinking as sea levels rise.

Recurrent flooding leaves neighborhood roads with standing water and stalled vehicles. The Director of IT Development for the City of Norfolk approached Jim Gray, an electrical and systems engineer, about the city’s chronic flooding problem. What started as an innovative pilot project to keep the city apprised of how high waters were getting and which roads were impassable is now Green Stream Technologies, which leverages Semtech’s LoRa devices and the LoRaWAN open protocol.

“I proposed using this new technology called LoRa devices in low-cost sensors to monitor flooding from bridges and poles”

– Jim Gray, President and CEO, Green Stream Technologies

Green Stream Technologies is an environmental technologies company. The business helps to create smarter, safer and more resilient communities with the power of Internet of Things (IoT) technology and data analytics.

THE ROAD TO RESILIENCE THROUGH IoT

Green Stream’s end-to-end flood monitoring solutions are designed using commercial, off-the-shelf ultrasonic sensors and easy to deploy LoRa-enabled gateways. The data is communicated over a network provided by Senet, a leading provider of LoRaWAN services and platforms enabling IoT connectivity.

The Green Stream flood sensors are autonomous, requiring no external power or wired network connection. Each sensor is a self-contained, weather-proof, solar-powered unit that comes with a universal mounting bracket and extension arm. The sensors are small enough to be installed on top of crosswalks, light or electric poles and bridges. The rugged devices are positioned above a body of water or over dry land.

“You get to the intersection and see that it is flooded, but you have to get to work. There is no way to tell how deep the water is, so you drive into it and it’s much deeper than anticipated. Hampton Roads lost several cars and two police vehicles during Hurricane Matthew.”

– Karen Lindquist, COO, Green Stream Technologies

LoRa®
Use Case

IoT Challenge

- Monitor real-time flooding data in coastal communities
- Notify citizens of hazardous conditions
- Reduce vehicle loss on impassable roadways

LoRa Devices Used

- LoRa delivers low power wireless technology
- LoRaWAN network provided by Senet allows extensive coverage
- Easy to install off-the-shelf LoRa-enabled ultrasonic sensors

Business Value

- Real-time flood monitoring end-to-end solution
- Data integration with emergency management systems
- Hyper-local weather alerts at a neighborhood level

For More Information

About Semtech’s LoRa devices for smart city applications, visit semtech.com/LoRa

About Green Stream greenstream.com
Green Stream systems measure the distance from the surface to the LoRa-enabled sensor and calculate the precise water height and depth. The data sampled is communicated in six minute intervals to gateways and sent to the Green Stream Cloud. The flood data can be viewed on Green Stream’s web-based dashboard or mobile devices. Green Stream also integrates into consumer smart phone apps like Waze and direct warning systems that provide push notifications.

GREEN STREAM PINPOINTS FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

When Green Stream looked at connectivity options, Wi-Fi did not provide the range needed and Cellular networking was not practical due to its battery consumption requirements. LoRa devices were the preferred choice for its long range, low power capabilities and small footprint. Senet, a contributing member of the LoRa Alliance®, provides LoRaWAN network connectivity.

“We are looking forward to working a lot more with Semtech and Senet. They are knowledgeable and provide a seamless collaborative process.”

– Karen Lindquist, COO, Green Stream Technologies

After a series of product prototyping, refinement and calibration testing, the first Green Stream deployment occurred in the City of Norfolk in April 2017, specifically in the Ghent neighborhood and around the Hague Footbridge. Deployments in Virginia Beach and numerous communities in North Carolina soon followed.

Green Stream’s main customers are municipalities – at the state or local level – and private environmental firms. Green Stream’s sales cycle is quite fast as system expenses often fall under pre-defined expenditure caps, eliminating the requirement for a cumbersome request for proposal (RFP) process.

“Part of our appeal is that while some municipalities may already have government-sponsored sensors in place, they are quite large and very expensive. We are hearing, ‘for the same amount of money we pay for one sensor, we’re getting 10 to 20 of yours’ and the cost to maintain them drops drastically with our system.”

– Jim Gray, President and CEO, Green Stream Technologies

HOW IT WORKS: GREEN STREAM

The step-by-step process of Green Stream’s LoRa-enabled solution
Green Stream is expanding beyond Hampton Roads and coastal communities into U.S. inland communities around the Missouri River basin, and into parts of the globe where Senet has deployed its network infrastructure.

Green Stream is working with sea level rise experts at Old Dominion University’s Department of Ocean, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences to establish a standard model for deployment in new areas – determining how many LoRa-enabled sensors are needed and where should they be placed. Green Stream is also working on a predictive analytics model utilizing ground water saturation sensors and hyper-local weather data to quickly predict and prevent flooding damage.

For more information on Green Stream Technologies visit greenstream.com