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Press Release

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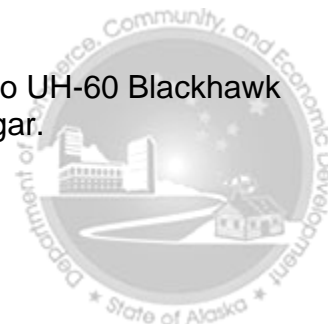
Reserve Marines Support Join Relocation Effort

(ANCHORAGE, AK) – Commissioner Emil Notti from the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development and Maj. Gen. Darrell Moore, the commanding general of the 4th Marine Logistics Group, Marine Forces Reserve, will visit the community of Newtok on Aug. 18 to observe joint state and military efforts to assist with the relocation of the community.

Commissioner Emil Notti, Senator Lyman Hoffman and Representative Bob Herron, as well as the staff of the Alaskan Congressional Delegation were invited by Moore to visit the 40 U.S. service members at the new site for Newtok.

The Marines are part of a joint U.S. military effort to help Newtok relocate to Nelson Island, about 10 miles away. Due to geological phenomena, Newtok is sinking below sea level and the land itself is rapidly eroding. It is therefore necessary to move the village so that the residents can maintain their sense of community in a more stable region nearby.

Officials will be transported to the new site, "Mertarvik," by two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters flying out of the Bethel Army National Guard hangar.



The group of officials will conduct a site visit for about two hours and listen to Moore's plans for the 4th Marine Logistics Group's efforts to support the relocation effort. Commissioner Notti stated, "The future for Newtok is tenuous at best if it were not for such efforts from the Marines through the Innovative Readiness Training program. This operation is a stellar example of the cooperation offered by the Department of Defense with the State of Alaska in meeting an urgent need of a community in peril. My Department has led a coordinated federal, state agency effort to help the people of Newtok of which the Marine Corps participation is most valuable. We look forward to working with the Marines through the IRT program in ensuring the future of this unique community and the culture it represents."

The assistance of the Marines and other military units is part of the Innovative Readiness Training Program. This civil-military partnership is designed to improve military readiness, while simultaneously providing quality services to remote communities. When asked about the significance of this specific project, Major General Darrell Moore, the Commander of the 4th Marine Logistics Group said "This is an outstanding opportunity for Reserve Marine Engineers to perform expeditionary engineering in an austere environment while also helping the village of Newtok in their relocation efforts."

For more information about the village of Newtok and their relocation efforts, visit the Newtok Planning Group website at:
http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/planning/Newtok_Planning_Group_Webpage.htm

For information about the Innovative Readiness Training Program, visit the Dept of Defense, Reserve Affairs, IRT website at:
<http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/html/irt.html>

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