



Press Release

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For Immediate Release
By: Sgt. Karima Turner, DMVA PAO

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Alaska Army National Guard Rescues Three Hunters *1/207th Aviation transports hunters to safety*

CAMP DENALI, Alaska—The Alaska Army National Guard rescued three stranded hunters near Bethel Wednesday.

In response to a request from the Alaska State Troopers, the 11th Rescue Coordination Center tasked the Alaska Army National Guard's 1/207th Aviation, based out of Bethel, with rescuing three hunters approximately 30 miles northwest of Bethel Oct. 22.

“Due to weather conditions the aircraft was unable to take off for several hours,” said Senior Master Sgt. Carla Terrazas, 11th Rescue Coordination Center superintendent. “Once the weather hold was lifted, they were able to pick the hunters up and transport them back to Bethel in less than an hour, and the hunters were released to the Alaska State Troopers without any medical issues.”

The aviators were put on a weather hold due to blizzard conditions and at some points a half mile or less of visibility. Once the weather lifted, the 1/207th Aviation responded with a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter with a crew of four to locate the stranded men.

The hunters became stranded when the waterways they were traveling on froze over and they were unable to make it back to Nunapitchuk.

“You never know what the weather is going to do while you are out in Alaska,” Terrazas said. “It’s not unusual for the weather to drastically change within a matter of hours, and it’s important to always be prepared.”

“They were in fairly good condition, when we found them,” said Chief Warrant Officer Two Kristopher Nicholson, 1/207th Aviation, UH-60 Black Hawk pilot. “When we got to them, they were trying to walk back to Nunapitchuk, so they were further south than our original grid coordinates. It’s normally safer to stay in one place once you have been spotted that way we can come straight to you and pick you up without having to search. These guys were a little better off

because they had a civilian very high frequency radio, so we were able to talk directly to them, but I wouldn't recommend trying to walk out."

The Alaska Army National Guard was awarded three saves for the mission.