

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

**COLONEL ANTHONY M. COROALLES
COMMANDER, US ARMY GARRISON ALASKA**

BEFORE THE

**READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT SUBCOMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

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COLONEL ANTHONY M. COROALLES

Colonel Anthony M. Coroalles was born in Havana, Cuba on 14 October 1952. He graduated from the University of San Francisco and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, Infantry on 1 June 1974. Upon completion of the Infantry Basic Course, he was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Colonel Coroalles has completed degree programs from the University of San Francisco, Bachelor of Sciences in Biology; University of Southern California, Master of Sciences Systems Management; Army Command and Staff College, Master of Military Arts and Sciences; the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Master in Defense Resource and Acquisition Strategy. In addition, Colonel Coroalles has completed Infantry Officers Basic Course, US Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School, the US Army Command and General Staff College, the School of Advanced Military Studies and the National Defense University.

Colonel Coroalles assumed his current assignment as Commander, US Army Garrison Alaska on 6 June 1998. His previous commands and assignments include Commander, 6th Ranger Training Battalion; Executive Officer, 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Light); Executive Officer, 5th Battalion, 14th Infantry, Operations Officer, 25th Infantry Division (Light); Plans Officer, 75th Infantry Regiment (Ranger); Operations Officer, 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry; and Company Commander, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry. His other assignments include Aide-de-Camp to the

Deputy Commanding General, US Army Combined Arms Combat Development Activity; Aide-de-Camp to the Commander, 4th Infantry Division (Mech); Chief, Small Unit Tactics Branch, US Army Infantry School; Chief, War Plans Division, US Army Pacific; Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff of the Army; and Chief, International Plans and Policy Integration Division, Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Army for International Affairs.

His Military decorations and awards include the Legion of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious service Medal (4OLC), the Army Commendation Medal (1OLC) and the Army Achievement Medal (1OLC). Colonel Coroalles wears the Ranger Tab, Master Parachutist Badge, and Expert Infantryman Badge.

Colonel Coroalles is married to the former Patricia Ann Mooney of Columbus, Ohio.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Members of the Committee, Members of the public, I'm honored to provide this testimony before this committee. My name is Colonel Anthony M. Coroalles. I am the garrison commander of the US Army Garrison Alaska and I am here to provide you information on the importance of the current and future uses of withdrawn military lands in Alaska as it pertains to military training.

I believe I am well qualified to discuss the importance of the Alaska Training Lands to the Department of Army, the Reserves of all branches, the Department of Defense and the defense of our Nation. As Garrison Commander, I am responsible for the management of 1.2 million acres on three Army posts—909,000 acres of which are affected by this withdrawal.

The three U.S. Army posts in Alaska are Fort Richardson near Anchorage, Ft. Wainwright near Fairbanks, and Ft. Greely in Delta Junction. The withdrawal only affects maneuver areas at Ft. Wainwright and at Ft. Greely. Maneuver areas at Fort Richardson are not covered by this action. Also, you may recall that Ft. Greely will be realigned under BRAC in 2001. However, only a small part of Ft. Greely was affected by the BRAC realignment decision. All of the maneuver training areas at Ft. Greely were deemed to be essential to the Army's mission, and therefore are to be retained for military use.

There are approximately 623,000 acres on Ft. Greely and 247,000 acres on Ft. Wainwright withdrawn for military use. The East Training Area on Ft. Greely and the Yukon Maneuver area on Fort Wainwright are usable year-round. Therefore, the Army trains on these areas more than any other parcel of military land in Alaska. These training areas offer maneuver training over realistic distances and terrain unmatched at any other Army installation. Additionally, the arctic conditions present during a great part of the year offer a training environment that no other training area can duplicate. In Alaska, air and ground units train in arctic conditions, over realistic distances and frontages, at optimum speeds and tempo.

The withdrawn lands in Alaska are essential to the Army and the Air Force. Both the strategic location of Alaska and the availability of adequate training space provide a unique location from which well-trained air and ground forces can rapidly deploy to the Pacific Rim or Europe. The lands under discussion not only provide the real estate necessary to generate these trained and ready forces, but are ideal because of their size, sub-arctic location, and remoteness from urban areas. Nowhere else in the United States can this combination be found.

Furthermore, as the range and accuracy of our weapons systems continue to increase, the value of the ranges and impact areas in Alaska will also

continue to grow. Modern military forces are equipped with long-range weapons and require large impact areas and long distances to replicate battlefield conditions. The withdrawn lands contain our principal weapons ranges and the two most heavily used impact areas. These areas, which provide a combination of restricted airspace over impact areas, negotiated Military Operations Areas (MOAs), long-range distances, and large impact areas, are ideal for employing all Army weapons systems and most Air Force systems. These large impact areas are also capable of safely containing all conventional explosive ordnance including, the Hellfire missile, Multiple Launched Rockets, and 2000 pound bombs.

Additionally, the U.S. Army Cold Region Test Center at Fort Greely is the Department of Defense Cold Environment Testing Center. This critically important DoD activity requires the withdrawn training lands to test DoD weapons and equipment in a cold environment to ensure our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have the most capable equipment now, and in the future. The withdrawn lands are unique, since no other region of the United States has the same number of consecutive cold days necessary to ensure that required cold temperature testing parameters are achieved in a cost-effective manner. The practical effect of this is that testers do not have to wait as long at Ft. Greely for extreme cold weather, therefore reducing the cost of testing.

Another key factor is the airspace available over these withdrawn lands. The airspace surrounding these lands is key to the Army and the Air Force. Upon the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Philippines, the Air Force relocated their Cope Thunder Training Program to Alaska. This fully instrumented facility is the premier training site for Air Force units from throughout the Pacific Command. Also, two Air Force wings stationed in Alaska, as well as the Alaska Air National Guard take advantage of this facility on a regular basis. A principal attraction of this complex is the large ranges available for ordnance delivery and the unencumbered restricted air space surrounding the impact areas. The Army, Navy, Air Force, and allied Air Forces use the Restricted Airspace and Military Operations Areas to extensively train and conduct realistic maneuvers and tactics. Army infantry and aviation units also routinely use these lands to conduct air assault operations over realistic distances and fire the total array of weapons and ordnance organic to Army units. Without the withdrawn lands and the restricted airspace above them, the quality of air training would be greatly degraded.

These withdrawn lands are not just Army lands, but truly joint-use lands. Besides Cope Thunder, perhaps the best example of the joint aspect of these lands is Exercise Northern Edge. This is a yearly joint exercise conducted in the winter involving Army, Navy, Air Force, and allied forces. The exercise also serves to support our regional engagement strategy by

inviting foreign armies and air forces to train with U.S. forces in Alaska. Recently, Canadian forces, the Japanese Self-Defense force, and elements of the Russian Far East Military District have deployed to the Alaska for Northern Edge Exercises and trained on the withdrawn lands and the airspace above them.

However, military training is not the only activity that takes place on these lands. We have been good stewards of the land and good neighbors to the surrounding civilian communities. The withdrawn lands are made available to recreational users much of the time. US Army Alaska in conjunction with the Bureau of Land Management accommodates hunters, fishermen, boaters, cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, and hikers on a routine and predictable basis. We work most training exercises around the major hunting seasons and actively patrol our training lands with military game wardens and military policemen to keep them safe for everyone.

Also, US Army Alaska has exceptionally effective conservation and reclamation programs. Considerable effort and money have been spent on an examination of the environment and the interactions of that environment with military training. Army stewardship is accomplished through the Integrated Training Area Management program and Natural Resource plans. These model programs and procedures ensure the long-term viability of the training and public uses on the lands entrusted to the Army.

In closing, I believe that these lands are essential to the training of our armed forces. They cannot be replaced or replicated anywhere else in the United States. These unique, multi-use training lands will remain a vital part of our training platform for the long-term and will remain essential to the military's ability to defend our Nation. As such, the continued value of these lands to the military combined with the need to wisely use the resources entrusted to us warrant an extensive renewal period.

I thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this statement and I am prepared to answer any of the committee members' questions.