

Bush Pilot

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Alaska National Guard helps out with "Whales" shoot

Joshua Saul | Oct 12, 2010



An Alaska Army National Guardsman acting as a stand-in for the upcoming movie "Everybody Loves Whales" is seen climbing the ladder of a CH-54 Skycrane helicopter during filming at Bryant Army Airfield, October 4. Stand-ins are used as temporary replacements for stars providing the production crew a chance to rehearse before filming. Photo by Pfc.

Karina Paraoan, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs Office Barrow.

The stranded whales were discovered Oct. 7, 1988 by an Alaska Inupiat hunter after changing weather conditions and shifting ice trapped them in shallow water before they began their journey south to warmer waters.



Alaska Army National Guard State Command Sgt. Maj. Gordon Choate prepares a pair of Army cold weather gloves to be worn by an Alaska National Guardsman as an extra in the upcoming movie "Everybody Loves Whales." A team of Alaska National Guardsmen work daily to assist the production team with the military scenes to ensure the accuracy, attention to detail and correct portrayal of the

Here's the presser, and here's a story I wrote about the movie yesterday.

Alaska National Guard assists Hollywood in major movie production

CAMP DENALI, Alaska - The Alaska National Guard is working closely with production crews here in Alaska in the filming of a Universal Studios movie based on a whale rescue that captured the world's attention near the end of the Cold War.

The movie "Everybody Loves Whales," starring well known actors Drew Barrymore, Kristen Bell, Ted Danson, John Krasinski, Dermott Mulroney and Vinessa Shaw, brings together a Hollywood storyline with the true story of how people from around the globe came together in 1988 to free three gray whales trapped in arctic sea ice 18 miles northeast of

At the forefront of this international incident, the Alaska National Guard was pivotal in its role to help free the whales utilizing a CH-54 Skycrane helicopter, while working closely with members of President Ronald Reagan's administration and with the former Soviet Union.

Twenty-two years later, Hollywood has come to Alaska and has asked the Alaska National Guard to assist them in the filming of the movie.

"We usually have a Department of Defense representative from our Los Angeles office providing the coordination, advice and daily assistance to the production company," said Vicente "Vince" Ogilvie, deputy director of entertainment media, office of the assistant secretary of defense for public affairs.

"However, for "Everybody Loves Whales," that role is being provided by the Alaska National Guard."