

300 Reindeer Being Moved To Togiak

The Air National Guard began transporting 300 reindeer last Wednesday from Nunivak Island to Togiak, a distance of about 450 miles. The operation was originally planned for Tuesday but it was delayed 24 hours due to some unexpected reason.

The reindeer were tranquilized with a medication that lasts three or four days to expedite the handling of the semi-wild animals. They were transported by the National Guard's C123 aircraft.

It was expected that eight trips with the C123 would be necessary transporting about 37 animals in a load in a three-day operation. The airlift was expected to be concluded by Friday.

The plan was to transport the ani-
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Reindeer Airlift...

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imals to the end of the runway at Togiak where they would be enclosed in a holding pen until they were ready to be moved to Hagemeister Island, some 25 miles from Togiak, where they were to be released to graze.

The project was coordinated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs Project Development Office in Anchorage under the direction of Vernon Bottenfield, Project Development officer.

In the plan to acquire a reindeer herd, the people of Togiak voted to place the deer in private ownership rather than community ownership.

Three men were picked to operate the new business and they are: Jesse Foster, Chris Bavilla, and Jack Gosuk, all of Togiak.

The village of Togiak is known as a progressive community and the village government is administered by a very active council.

Over 300 people live at the Bristol Bay community.