

COMSAT Station

At Talkeetna

Announcement

Long-awaited action to improve communications in Alaska came Wednesday with the approval of the construction of a COMSAT station at Talkeetna and the announcement that the Air Force is now prepared to sell the Alaska Communications System.

The office of U.S. Congressman Howard Pollock revealed the two developments in Fairbanks Wednesday. Pollock said that the installations of the satellite communications station will move Alaska's communications from the horse and buggy stage "into the satellite era of the 21st Century."

Construction of the station will begin this summer and is expected to require 15 months to complete at a cost of between

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\$10 million and \$12 million. It is scheduled to become operational in the summer of 1970.

Once complete, the Talkeetna station will transmit telephone, telegraph, television, and radio signals by satellite.

The other major development announced by Pollock's office is the decision by the Alaska Communications System Evaluation Board to select the successful bidder for the purchase of the Air Force ACS by this coming July.

The statewide telegraph and telephone system, first operated by the Army and now by the Air Force, will be sold to a private firm. The sale will result in the state's first privately owned telephone and telegraph system.