

# ACV Arctic Test Center: Ted Stevens      RurALCAP Awarded

An Arctic test and development center could be constructed in Alaska for the development of transportation by air cushion vehicles if a recommendation by Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska is adopted.

The Alaska Republican republican recommended that the Department of Defense and the Department of Transportation construct the center to advance development dates of the ACV for Arctic use to the late 1970's.

Air cushion vehicles are completely supported and propelled on a cushion of air. ACV may be capable of carrying passengers and freight weighing from 25 to 100 tons up to 1,000 miles.

Stevens said that the ACV "could provide the means of transforming the Arctic Ocean from an impassable barrier into another Mediterranean.

Many of the major world powers are more easily accessible across the polar icecap than by any other route from the U.S. The strategic value of Alaska as the only American soil on the shores of the Arctic Ocean is clear.

"With rapid advances in other means of transportation already occurring, we should not take a back seat in the construction of these craft nor in the development of the Arctic as a transportation center," Stevens said.

"Studies have shown that air cushion vehicles, properly engineered, can help solve some of Alaska's problems created by prohibitive highway building costs and engineering problems," Stevens said.

One study contends that ACV transportation could profoundly improve transportation reliability in Alaska, stimulate the use of resources in the State and improve the economic lot of Alaskans, notably in rural areas.

It would also have a minimum environmental impact.

Concerning the Navy's role Stevens said that the Navy has performed tests of a small ACV at the Advanced Research Projects Agency near Barrow, Alaska, in order to gather engineering data related to the Arctic.

The ACV successfully operated on the snow, ice, tundra and the polar ice pack.

Earlier this year, Stevens had participated in testing on Chesapeake Bay, near Washington, by the Coast Guard to demonstrate the capabilities of experimental air cushion vehicles to government officials.

Stevens said the 10-ton model he had inspected and taken a ride on was capable of operating on land, water, or ice at speeds up to 70 knots.

It "floated on a cushion of air generated by a 7-foot centrifugal fan and could clear obstacles up to five feet high and ditches over 10 feet wide and 8 feet deep," Stevens said.

The test and development center suggested by Stevens would coordinate the facilities of several governmental agencies.

"Funds may be included in the fiscal 1974 budget for the Federal Railroad Administration to initiate a program for a demonstration of an ACV in Alaska.

"It is considered that the required technology is available and the primary objective of the proposed demonstration would be to evaluate cost, performance and overall effectiveness of ACV operation in the Alaskan environment," Stevens said.



Senator Ted Stevens is pictured in air cushion vehicle (ACV) prior to a test ride on Chesapeake Bay, near Washington, D.C. The Alaska Republican has recommended that agencies of the Federal government construct a center in Alaska for the development of transportation by ACV in the Arctic.

## \$813,000 to Be Used for Head Start

Sen. Ted Stevens announced that Rural Alaska Community Action Program has been awarded \$813,000 in federal funds.

The grant is earmarked for the headstart program and is to

provide pre-school training for children from low income families.

According to Stevens, 851 children will be provided for on a part-day basis, with the funds.

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