

Canadian Forces and US Army Winter Training Exercise Coming in March

US and Canadian troops to learn winter warfare near Gogama

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The Canadian Forces are planning a major winter war-games type exercise south of Timmins, near Gogama, this winter. The purpose of the event is to acquaint Canadian soldiers with the skills required to carry out duties in winter conditions. Soldiers from the U.S. Army will also be involved in the event.

The entire exercise from set-up to clean-up will be underway in the Gogama area from March 7 through to March 23. It is expected that roughly 365 soldiers will be involved in the event.

The winter training is all part of the Canada First defence strategy to enable Canadian Forces to operate in extreme northern conditions, said a statement the 33rd Canadian Brigade Group (CBG) which is headquartered in Ottawa. This is part of the federal government's commitment to maintaining Canadian sovereignty in the high Arctic.

CBG is comprised of reservist army regiments from Timmins, North Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Pembroke, Ottawa, Kingston, Brockville, Cornwall, Belleville, Peterborough, Cobourg and Oshawa. Most of the soldiers will be attending to earn their basic qualification for winter warfare.

There will also National Guard units from the United States taking part in the training as well as officer cadets from the Royal Military College in Kingston.

Also involved will be the Canadian Rangers, which consists of Aboriginal persons who work in a volunteer capacity for the Canadian Forces, who will provide expertise in wilderness operations.

The exercise will include such things as winter survival, tactical training outdoors, moving soldiers and equipment in severe conditions, setting up defences in snow and ice conditions and treating injuries from cold weather operations.

The 33rd CBG statement says Gogama was chosen because it provides sufficient space for a large military exercise as well as affording Canadian troops to work and cooperate with civilian agencies such as the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ontario Provincial Police and the community first aid station.

Aside from the warfare training for soldiers, the event is also a training exercise for those involved in logistics, support, transportation and medical needs.

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