Press Release

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Fort Drum Public Affairs

Officials break ground on new railhead project at Fort Drum

FORT DRUM, N.Y. (July 22, 2022) -- Fort Drum and 10th Mountain Division (LI) officials, community members and invited guests commenced the initial construction phase of a new railhead with a groundbreaking ceremony July 22 near the project site.

The $31 million investment will expand and modernize the railway-loading facilities on post to efficiently move troops, heavy equipment and vehicles in support of rapid deployments of 10th Mountain Division (LI) units.

The new facilities will include a railhead operations building, loading ramp canopy, guard shack and three loading ramps. Other features include:

\* 1.2 miles of new railroad loading tracks.

\* Concrete ramps and side loading area.

\* Container staging area, material-handling equipment building and marshalling area.

\* Overhead protection from severe weather.

Maj. Gen. (P) Milford H. Beagle Jr., 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander, said that the groundbreaking is the culmination of decades of planning and coordination at the highest levels of the Army and government, supported by people who realize the value of readiness and the importance of sustaining installation relevance.

He said the fact that the 10th Mountain Division is already known for its rapid deployment capabilities begs the question of why would they need a new railhead to deploy even faster.

“The answer is simple,” Beagle said. “We have maximized what we have for many years. As I often say, readiness is about what we have and not about what we don’t have. We have made the best use of what we have, but we have not had what we needed to be maximally effective.”

The overall out-loading capacity of the new railhead facility will increase the ability to handle 179 railcars in a 24-hour period. Beagle said that 96 hours or less is the standard for rapid deployments, and the new railhead will enable them to meet, and more likely, exceed the standard.

“Fort Drum is the only Army Power Projection Platform in the northeast region, not only for the 10th Mountain Division, but all of our Army components,” he said. “Simply stated, this project better enables us to do our No. 1 mission for our nation – deploy, fight and win.”

Lt. Col. Matthew Pride, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deputy district commander, said the railhead is expected to be completed in late 2023. The project is contracted to Structural Associates Inc., of East Syracuse, and the Army Corps of Engineers will oversee the construction.

“The importance of this project cannot be underestimated,” Pride said. “The new railhead will facilitate the ability to project power around the world more quickly and safely. All aspects of the new railhead are being built for a 40-plus-year design life, serving Fort Drum well into the mid-21st century.”

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Photo Captions:

Railhead groundbreaking 1 - The official party for the railhead groundbreaking ceremony July 22 are, from left, Lt. Col. Matthew Pride, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deputy district commander; Bill Halsey, Structural Associates Inc. president; Lt. Col. Oliver E. Davis, Army Field Support Battalion-Drum; Maj. Gen. (P) Milford H. Beagle Jr., 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander; Col. James Zacchino Jr., Fort Drum garrison commander; Command Sgt. Maj. Shelly Jenkins, Fort Drum garrison senior enlisted adviser; and Eric Wagenaar, deputy to the garrison commander. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

Railhead groundbreaking 2 - Maj. Gen. (P) Milford H. Beagle Jr., 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander, addresses the audience at the railhead groundbreaking ceremony July 22 near the project site. The $31 million investment will expand and modernize the railway-loading facilities on post to efficiently move troops, heavy equipment and vehicles in support of rapid deployments of 10th Mountain Division (LI) units. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

Railhead groundbreaking 3 - Lt. Col. Matthew Pride, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deputy district commander, addresses the audience at the railhead groundbreaking ceremony July 22 near the project site. The $31 million investment will expand and modernize the railway-loading facilities on post to efficiently move troops, heavy equipment and vehicles in support of rapid deployments of 10th Mountain Division (LI) units. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)