FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

It has been more than ten years since Marquette has witnessed a helicopter and a fixed-wing airplane following an oddly equipped CH-47 helicopter, but they are back!

The Army will be performing icing tests over the Marquette Mich. area in support of a civilian helicopter seeking Federal Aviation Administration certification to fly in icing conditions. The Army’s test team will conduct artificial icing operations from early February through April 2015 for the Augusta-Westland AW-189 helicopter.

The icing team is composed of members of the U.S. Army Redstone Test Center’s Aviation Flight Test directorate near Huntsville, Ala. This team has been performing aircraft icing tests out of Duluth International Airport since 1984, however, this year they will be operating out of Sawyer International Airport supporting a civil aircraft customer.

The team operates two specially modified aircraft to conduct these operations. One is a CH-47D Chinook helicopter equipped with the Helicopter Icing Spray System. The HISS consists of a large internal water tank that allows the Chinook to spray water through an array of nozzles installed on a boom suspended below the twin rotor helicopter. The HISS boom sprays water which creates a controlled cloud environment in which the tested aircraft will fly. The effects of ice formation are then characterized. The second support aircraft is an RC-12G (Beech King Air) equipped with sensors to measure the characteristics of the cloud generated by the HISS before the tested aircraft penetrates the icing cloud.

The FAA will use the data collected to certify the aircraft being tested for flight into known or forecasted icing conditions.

RTC, a subordinate command of the Army Test and Evaluation Command, provides technical expertise, state-of-the-art facilities, and capabilities to plan, conduct, analyze, and report the results of test on missile and aviation systems, sensors, subsystems and components.