



## **SUBMARINE SQUADRON ELEVEN**

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

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#### **San Diego Submarine Departs for Arctic Ocean**

NAVAL BASE POINT LOMA, CA. (February 27, 2009) - Los Angeles class fast attack submarine, USS Helena (SSN 725), homeported in San Diego, departed today for Ice Exercise 2009 (ICEX-2009) being conducted in the Arctic Ocean.

USS Helena, commanded by Commander Daniel Brunk, will conduct classified testing of submarine operability and war fighting capabilities in Arctic waters. The exercise will be supported by the Applied Physics Laboratory Ice Station (APLIS) being built on the Arctic Ocean sea ice north of Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. Range Safety Officers there will monitor the movement of and communication with USS Helena and Norfolk-based submarine, USS Annapolis (SSN 760).

The camp consists of a small village, constructed and operated especially for the ICEX by the Applied Physics Laboratory of the University of Washington.

In 1958, USS Nautilus (SSN 571) became the first submarine to conduct a submerged transpolar crossing and reach the North Pole. Since the success of Nautilus' voyage, arctic operations have been a crucial part of the missions conducted by nuclear submarines.

The U.S. submarine force conducts exercises in waters around the globe, including the Arctic, to guarantee assured access to any ocean in the world. The submarine force continues to use the Arctic Ocean as an alternate route for shifting submarines between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Submarines can reach the western Pacific directly by transiting through international waters of the Arctic rather than through the Panama Canal. U.S. submarines must continue to train in the Arctic environment to refine and validate procedures and required equipment in support of operational safety.

The overall exercise has been planned and will be coordinated by the Navy's Arctic Submarine Laboratory located at Naval Base Point Loma, CA. In addition, several members of the staff of Submarine Squadron ELEVEN, also at Naval Base Point Loma, will be working at the ice camp in support of this exercise.

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