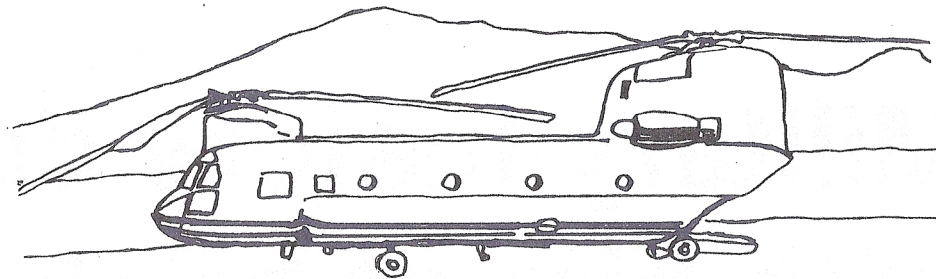




Andrew Feick photos

Spc. Scott Brigham operates a chainsaw to clear trees for the helicopter extraction.



Rescue:

Engineers extract downed Chinook

By Andrew Feick

23rd Engineer Company

FORT RICHARDSON — What would you do if you needed to recover a CH-47 Chinook helicopter crashed on a hillside in the woods?

Simple: call the engineers.

Shortly after the call for assistance came in, 1st Platoon, 23rd Engineer Company (combat) (heavy) began clearing trees to create a suitable extraction site for the downed helicopter. This seemingly simple task was made difficult by the steepness of the slope on which the helicopter was lodged.

The greatest site-clearing asset proved to be the D-7 bulldozer support from the Earth Moving Platoon.

Pfc. Leon Orange, the dozer operator, maneuvered the dozer, clearing all but the steepest slopes, which engineers with chainsaws handled. In addition, Orange built a berm under the helicopter to ensure that it would not slide down the slope when the supporting trees were cut away.

When the engineers finished clearing more than an acre of woodland, the remains of the Chinook were extracted in two sections.



Pfc. Leon Orange uses a D-7G bulldozer to clear the extraction site for the Chinook helicopter.