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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Leader Reaction Course encourages cohesion

By Pvt. Alex Abraham, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Army National Guard Soldiers tested their wits at a Leadership Reaction Course Tuesday, June 10, at West Camp Rapid.

The LRC is an obstacle course designed to encourage creative thinking and team participation in addition to allowing individual Soldiers to test their leadership skills.

Soldiers from the 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion of Montana and the 168th Petroleum Supply Battalion of Nebraska had to use clever thinking, indirect methods and group teamwork to overcome the various obstacles in their paths.

Each unit split into teams, and the members of each team had to plan and work closely with each other to overcome the obstacles. Some of these obstructions required more elaborate or daring plans, and everyone was involved in the process.

“You get the knowledge of different people,” said Pfc. Fernando Rodriguez from the 168th. “Everyone adds what they can to complete the mission.”

The obstacles have an objective in addition to the goal, essentially throwing a complex problem into an already-intricate challenge, said Master Sgt. Mary Jackson, South Dakota Army National Guard, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the course.

For example, one mission has the Soldiers retrieve a toolbox (the objective), and at the same time, avoid the simulated landmines to get to the other side (the goal), said Jackson.

Working through the obstacles allowed the participants to think outside the box, encouraging them to listen to other Soldier’s plans and then placing their trust in one another to perform the actions necessary to pass the barrier and move to the next challenge.

Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Bretthauer, a member of the 168th from Scottsbluff, Neb., said the training he received was excellent.

“We’re going through the obstacles, developing team building and showing cohesiveness between different units,” he said. “It’s been a great day!”

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High resolution photos will be available at the following Web site:

LINK: <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/sites/GC2008/default.aspx>

Photo Cut Lines:

080610-A-3900A-131.JPG: Spc. David Ely, Spc. Erik Anderson, Pvt. 1st Class Gerold Haseagle, and Spc. Brian Wray of the 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Montana Army National Guard, work to save their makeshift bridge on an obstacle at the Leadership Reaction Course Tuesday, June 10, at West Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., as part of the 2008 Golden Coyote training exercise. (National Guard photo by Pvt. Alex Abraham) (RELEASED)

080610-A-3900A-050.JPG: Spc. Mark Villagrana of the 168th Petroleum Supply Battalion, Nebraska Army National Guard, and his battle buddies get hung up on an obstacle at the Leadership Reaction Course Tuesday, June 10, at West Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., as part of the 2008 Golden Coyote training exercise. (National Guard photo by Pvt. Alex Abraham) (RELEASED)

080610-A-3900A-025.JPG: Members of the 168th Petroleum Supply Battalion, Nebraska Army National Guard, struggle to get through an obstacle at the Leadership Reaction Course Tuesday, June 10, at West Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., as part of the 2008 Golden Coyote training exercise. (National Guard photo by Pvt. Alex Abraham) (RELEASED)

080610-A-3871S-115.JPG: Pvt. 1st Class Cary Rae Stapley of the Montana National Guard's 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion navigates an obstacle with the help of Spc. Brian Wray and Spc. Eric Buckley at the Leadership Reaction Course Tuesday, June 10, at West Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., as part of the 2008 Golden Coyote training exercise. (National Guard photo by Sgt. Lance Schroeder) (RELEASED)

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION about the South Dakota National Guard, please visit our Web site at <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/default.aspx>

NOTE: The South Dakota National Guard will host the annual Golden Coyote exercise from June 7 – 21 in the southern Black Hills. More than 4,000 service members from 92 units representing 27 states and four foreign nations are participating in the exercise. The Golden Coyote exercise has been conducted for the past 24 years. The exercise provides relevant training opportunities in support of the war on terror and homeland defense.

Residents should be aware of an increase in military traffic throughout the Black Hills and an increase in the level of noise due to military operations. Aviation activity will be operating out of Camp Rapid and the Army Aviation Support Facility next to the Rapid City Regional Airport.

Aircraft will be primarily training on equipment and personnel transport missions as well as medical evacuation. Aircraft will respond to real-world emergencies during the exercise and remain in an all-hours-ready status during the exercise.

Spectators to military training are welcome, however caution is warranted and spectators are asked to remain at a safe distance from all moving military vehicles and aircraft to prevent injury to personnel or damage to property.