World Wide Web provides interactive freeway map

□ Travel time to Houston and Dallas can be reduced by studying the freeway conditions through the Internet before leaving town.

By Jill Saunders THE BATTALION

Texas A&M students leaving campus for home can study current travel conditions on major Houston freeways through the World Wide Web.

Corey Ferrier, assistant research scientist with the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), said a color-coded Houston map showing current traffic speeds can reduce travel time for commuting students.

"If students are taking a trip to Houston, [the map] can help them decide what will be the quickest way to get there, because they will know where the traffic is moving slowly," Ferrier said.

The interactive Houston freeway map is a project of TTI and the Texas Department of Transportation. The project observes the speeds of moving cars by using the automatic vehicle identification (AVI) system.

The system uses AVI tags on cars and AVI readers placed along the freeways. The readers record the speed of a passing car and the time it takes the car to reach the next reader.

"The car's speed is calculated, and we take the average speed of cars traveling down a freeway, color code it, and that is the color you see on the map," Ferrier said.

Dan Hickman, TTI research associate, said more than 40,000 people volunteered to have AVI tags placed in their cars.

"Volunteers were given a tag, and they put it inside their windshield behind the rear view mirror," he said. "People with AVI tags can set up an tag to pay the tolls."

The idea for the project began a year ago. To ing began when the Houston area freeway me was put on the Internet in December 1994.

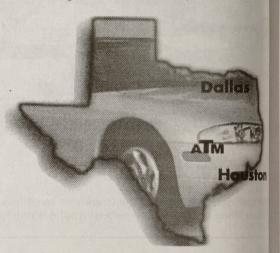
Mark Coppock, TTI audio and visual specialism.

said the benefit of TTI on the Internet is easy at cess to traffic information.

"We wanted to get our research out to people, swe put the Web page up," he said. "Our goal is provide usable, easily accessible information

sources to our audience. A&M students also can view snapshots show ng current views of several freeway sights in the

Dallas area The Dallas area Web pages can be access through the TTI home page at http://tti.tamush by clicking on More Transportation Web Sites. In direct address of the Houston freeway map on the Web is http://herman.tamu.edu/houston-real.html



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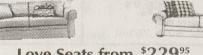
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Fort Hood soldiers ship out for Kuwai

☐ The deployment for exercises in the Mideast is known as Operation Intrinsic Action.

FORT HOOD, Texas (AP) -The waiting ended Tuesday for soldiers headed for military exercises in Kuwait.

About 1,300 soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division waited their turns to board five planes chartered to take them overseas from Gray Army Air Field.

The deployment for exercises in the Mideast, known as Operation Intrinsic Action, was originally planned for October, but

was moved up because of reports of pending military activity by Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

"Once again you've shown the greatness of the American soldier, and his and her ability to react to any situation," Gen. John Tilelli, Forces Command commander, told the troops minutes before one plane left about noon.

The planes were originally slated to move out Sunday, but a Clinton administration spokesman said anonymously that bureaucratic delays coupled with flight crew rest rules held

up the flight plan. The first planeload of materials with its advance party 80 soldiers has already arriving Kuwait, Lt. Col. Rand Schoel said.

The flights leaving Tuesday

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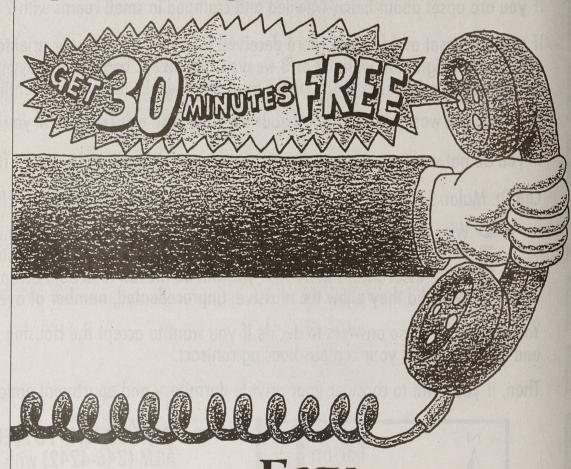
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were scheduled for a final state side refueling stop at Dover Force Base in Delaware before proceeding overseas. Once the soldiers arrive at

17 hours of travel, they'll tax part in the four- to six-week op eration in the desert.

Members of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force from River side County, Calif., will conduct exercises in the Middle East in separate show of force, 1st li Dave Griesmer.

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