



San Clemente beach expansion



Photo by Areca T. Wilson

Representatives from various city, state and federal agencies participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of Phase One of the San Clemente beach nourishment project May 31 in San Clemente, California. The project includes the construction of a 50-foot-wide beach fill along a 3,412-foot-long stretch of shoreline, using 251,000 cubic yards of compatible sediment. [Read the full story on Page 11.](#)

Section 595 signing

LA District signs monumental project partnership agreements with four cities, one county

BY DENA O'DELL
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PHOENIX — Representatives from four Arizona cities and one county met with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' officials June 10 to sign project partnership agreements for five environmental infrastructure projects in Arizona.

"I am honored to be here today to sign these very important project partnership agreements under the Section 595 Environmental Infrastructure Program and to reaffirm our commitment to support and assist communities in Arizona with pressing water infrastructure needs," said Col. Andrew Baker, commander of the Los Angeles District, during the signing and press event at the LA

District's Phoenix Office. "These projects bring critically needed infrastructure to water systems throughout the state. Without Section 595 authority, championed by Representative (Greg) Stanton and his staff, we wouldn't be here today."

The Section 595 Environmental Infrastructure Program provides a federal investment in critical water infrastructure projects in Arizona due to the state's climate challenges, which include extreme heat, prolonged drought, wildfires and flash flooding.

In 2021, legislation was passed to expand the existing environmental infrastructure program to include Arizona, under the 2020 Water Resources Development Act. The program provides criti-

cal assistance to communities and tribal nations across Arizona to address their aging water and wastewater systems.

City and county officials signing the agreements during the ceremony included Tempe Mayor Cory Woods for the Kyrene Water Reclamation Facility in Tempe; Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett for the Flagstaff Killip Elementary School; Maricopa Mayor Nancy Smith for the Maricopa Aquifer Recharge Facility; Tolleson Mayor Juan Rodriguez for two new wells in the City of Tolleson; and Coconino County Chair Judy Begay for a water and sewer system replacement at Fort Tuthill Water in Coconino County.

['595' continued on Page 4](#)

Senior PA pro recognized



Courtesy photo

Brooks Hubbard, LA District public affairs specialist, left, poses for a picture with Lt. Col. Stephen Brooks, LA District deputy commander, right, after receiving the Civilian Service Achievement Medal during a June 4 ceremony at the LA District headquarters building in downtown Los Angeles. Hubbard, who has served with the Public Affairs Office for years, is being recognized here for his distinguished service as a rehired annuitant and senior public affairs specialist in support of the LA District's Public Affairs Office from June 2023 to June 2024. During his time, he produced countless video, photography and print products, and provided extensive coverage of district events to tell the LA District's story and educate the public about the district's missions, programs and projects.



Helping Maui was my small part to help us accomplish big things for the recovery of their community."

DANIELLE LENOX PARALEGAL SPECIALIST
USACE LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

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Commander's message: FEVS, summer, coastal tour

Hello Team SPL — and happy summer!

The summer season started off extremely well for me with a visit from my wife and kiddos! They've got a week here in Southern California (my wife Shannon for work downtown and my daughters for Circus Camp with their San Clemente cousins — fully expecting to be amazed and astounded at its conclusion) before we head to Maine for a Norman Rockwell Fourth of July in the Penobscot Bay area with my folks and extended family. I can't wait! I hope this summer has some great times in store with family and friends for you as well, and all the best for a wonderful and well-deserved Independence Day holiday!

Before I get into the meat of this month's commander's column, I'd like to put out another plug/request for your participation in this year's edition of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, or FEVS, before it closes on Friday, July 5 (in the off chance you missed my emails on the subject!)

So, the FEVS is STILL not mandatory, but here are three compelling reasons to take it that may be of interest to you:

1) We'll use what we find out to make SPL better! I'll share the results with you at an upcoming town hall or Coffee with the Commander and let you know what we're doing to address shortfalls and improve upon what we're already doing well!

2) If we get to 65% participation, WE ALL get 59 minutes. Help a fellow SPL'er out with a 59-minute head start on the weekend of your choice!

3) Donuts! The three office locations with the highest percentage completion as measured by folks who send me an email that reads "It's donut time: I filled out the FEVS today!" will get donuts on



COL. ANDREW BAKER
LA DISTRICT COMMANDER

me! Note that I'll be using this information for donut tally numbers only — the survey is 100% confidential.

Employees who have been with USACE since November 2023 are eligible to take the survey. If you fit this criterion and you have not yet filled out the survey, you can find the link to do so in an email in your

Outlook inbox from EVAC@opm.gov. Just search your inbox for that term, click on the link, and knock it out! If you've got any questions about the survey in general, check out my emails on the subject and the links within. THANKS AGAIN IN ADVANCE for helping to make SPL be an even better place to work!

Summer officially kicked off just a few days ago and it came with a vengeance throughout most of our area of operations. It's hot (!) — and it's a different kind of hot than I experienced the over last couple of years at altitude in the mountains of Honduras. Please take some time to think about how you're staying safe considering this significant change in the weather. For me, it's focusing on drinking water (me AND my kiddos, who are more interested in just about everything but this), putting on sunscreen in the morning and taking it easy when I'm working hard or exercising outside. Take some time to think through your own safety plan this summer as it relates to your own summer activities. Stay hydrated, wear a life jacket (and ensure your loved ones are doing the same) and watch your alcohol intake. For me, summer means family road trips — be safe out there as well. I'll be driving all over Maine during Fourth of July week, along with a good chunk the drivers from the entire state of Massachusetts (if you know, you know) ... give yourself some extra time and

don't rush! It's much better to arrive a little late and in one piece than not all.

To those who were able, thanks so much for joining me at my inaugural commander's coffee event last week! I had a great time, learned about some things (I had no idea about CalVet — what a great program — and am newly interested in the way ahead on refurbishing some of our outdated workspaces as we're able) and was glad to be able to talk a little bit about our revamped governance week (by the way, I'm REALLY excited about this initiative — it's going to allow us to see ourselves and our successes through the same lens as the South Pacific Division and Headquarters USACE use). I'm looking forward to the next one scheduled for July 10 — join us online or first-come, first-served in person (for actual coffee!) in the 12th floor conference room at 8 a.m.!

Big thanks to our outstanding Veterans Affairs Long Beach and Fort Irwin teams for hosting the SPD commander, Col. James Handura, and me last week — and to Mr. Steve Dwyer and the Navigation teams all the way from Port Hueneme to Morro Bay, along with the Vandenberg Space Force Base team for hosting our intrepid DPM Mr. Justin Gay, me and others earlier this month! I always come away from those visits so impressed and humbled to be part of this amazing team. As I write this column, it hasn't happened yet, but big thanks to all those who had a hand in putting together Engineer Day! What could be a better day at work than relaxing with the team and recognizing folks for amazing accomplishments?

Thanks again, and as always, for all you do helping us to safely delivery quality projects on time and within budget!

Proud to be SPL!

Col. Andrew Baker

Click on the icons below to connect with SPL on social media!



Rep. Greg Stanton with Arizona's 4th Congressional District — who championed funding for the program for Arizona in 2020 — was present at the event and announced additional funding through the program for the five projects, including:

- \$5.34 million for the City of Tempe to help reopen its Kyrene Water Reclamation Facility to ensure the City of Tempe can provide its residents with a clean and reliable water supply, recycling water and to protect its water supply by banking treated water underground.
- \$1.5 million for the City of Flagstaff for the Killip School Regional Detention Basin to mitigate flooding due to rain events from post-fire burn scars from the 2019 Museum Wildfire. The basin will collect and retain flood waters that will otherwise flood and cause damage to their neighborhoods.
- \$6.5 million for the City of Maricopa to construct an aquifer recharge facility to recycle water that will improve the sustainability and resilience of the city's water supply and allow for future growth.
- \$2.5 million for the City of Tolleson to construct a new well that will allow the city to make improvements to an existing drainage area to provide more efficient and reliable maintenance for potable water wells, and,
- \$3.4 million for Fort Tuthill and Coconino County to replace old water and sewer lines at a regional tourism and recreation site, which he credited to Senator Mark Kelly for securing funds for the project.

"This infrastructure authority is utilized not just by me, but the other members of the Arizona delegation ... so this is Team Arizona coming together for these important projects," Stanton said. "These are smart investments that will help us use water more efficiently and protect against flood threats, and I am pleased that the communities that are represented here can move forward with them."



Photo by Dena O'Dell

Tolleson Mayor Juan Rodriguez, center, and Col. Andrew Baker, LA District commander, right, sign a project partnership agreement June 10 between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Tolleson for a Section 595 Environmental Infrastructure project, while Representative Greg Stanton with Arizona's 4th Congressional District, left, along with other City of Tolleson officials, look on during a signing event and press conference at the USACE Phoenix office.

The Los Angeles District has 20 active Section 595 projects in Arizona, with seven completed project partnership agreements — now 11 of them signed this year, Baker said.

"Lately, whenever I come out to Arizona, it feels like we are celebrating another project milestone for residents and stakeholders, so this is awesome," Baker said. "I love coming out to Arizona for that reason."

"These agreements are an important mile-

stone along the path toward these communities getting to construction and, ultimately, realizing the benefits of these projects," Baker added. "They also represent the culmination of a lot of hard work beginning at the grassroots community level and extending all the way up to the halls of the U.S. Congress."

Stanton said the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been a great partner on the projects.

"We hope to continue to grow the Corps' work even more in Arizona," he said.



Courtesy photo

Sam Law, an engineering technician with the LA District, receives a certificate of appreciation from Col. Eric Swenson, Hawaii Wildfires Recovery Field Office commander, recently in Maui, Hawaii. Law was recognized for his contributions in support of recovery efforts following the Maui wildfires Aug. 8, 2023. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is actively supporting the Federal Emergency Management Agency, state of Hawaii and the county of Maui. USACE efforts include providing temporary power, building a temporary elementary school, planning, temporary housing and removing debris from impacted areas in Kula and Lahaina.

Supporting Camp Pendleton Day

Lt. Col. Stephen Brooks, LA District deputy commander, delivers remarks as an invited guest speaker during Camp Pendleton Day, hosted June 27 by the Society of American Military Engineers at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, near San Diego. The event brought together all five Southern California SAME posts — Los Angeles (of which Brooks serves as president), Inland Empire, Oxnard-Ventura, San Diego and Orange County — to collaborate, learn, network and give back as they serve and support the military community.



Courtesy photo

Around the District

"I feel like I'm optimizing the acquisition of goods and services for our mission partners while being a good steward of taxpayer resources."

Dan works on several task order projects, specifically facility improvements at Creech Air Force Base, the Phoenix VA, Alamo Dam and Painted Rock Dam. He started working for USACE in June 2023. Dan is from Citrus Heights, California.



Paul "Dan" Bane
Contract Specialist



LA District town hall: Celebrating people, highlighting priorities



Photo by Areca T. Wilson

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District leadership hosts a town hall June 12 at the district's main office in Los Angeles. The event provided leadership the opportunity to communicate priorities, highlight recent wins and recognize employees.

BY ARECA T. WILSON
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

LOS ANGELES — U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District leadership hosted a town hall June 12 at the district's main office.

The event provided leadership the opportunity to communicate priorities, highlight recent wins and recognize employees. It also gave employees a platform to ask questions and provide feedback directly to higher ups.

"It's been four months since we did this, so much has happened ... thanks for everything you're doing for the district and really for the communities," said Col. Andrew Baker, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' LA District. "We get to provide this great service to the American public, and I'm really proud to be a small part of that and to serve with you as we do that."

During his remarks, Baker foot stomped the importance of safety. He also highlighted several recent events and current projects such as the dredging and beach renourishments, which includes Encinitas Beach, Solana Beach, Surfside-Sunset and San Clemente; the Department of Veterans Affairs projects, which includes San Diego Medical Center's Spinal Cord Injury and Community Living Center, Greater Los Angeles' Critical Care

Center and Long Beach Medical Center's Mental Health Inpatient/Outpatient facilities and Community Living Center; and a central coast tour, which lasted four days and visited multiple sites.

"Being on the ground and talking to harbor managers, directors of public works, and those kinds of people, they really drove home how important our efforts are for them," Baker commented about the central coast tour. "It really makes a huge difference for those communities, and they're super happy with us. It really made me proud to be part of the team, so thanks for that."

Prior to opening the floor to employees, Baker presented Fiscal Year 2024 Second Quarterly Local Awards. Below are the recipients:

Kevin Inada Employee of the Quarter Award: Capt. Gregory Sacenti

Recognizes an employee who has demonstrated one or more of the following: The highest ideals of public service; a commitment to the USACE LA mission; extraordinary work ethic; creative and/or cost-conscious problem solving; leadership skills; and efforts contributing to taking LA District from good to great.

Mike Cogan Safety Employee of the Quarter Award: Walter Anthony Ocon

Recognizes an employee for their out-

standing contributions in safety and occupational health promotion to the organization.

The Commanders Eagle Award: Luis Martinez-Rodriguez

Recognizes an employee who exemplifies LA District's motto, "Building Strong and Taking Care of People!" through their efforts in "going the extra mile" in their dealings with customers, stakeholders and team members.

The Compass Award: Max Roseman

Recognizes coaches and mentors who essentially function as guides, providing experience-based advice to help show the way to other employees and help them navigate through unfamiliar terrain.

The Helping Hand for Other (H20) Award: Manya Singh and Thomas Luu

Recognizes employees who have volunteered their time to enhance the LA District community

in some way.

The Outstanding Team Member Award: Hiliary Innerbichler

Recognizes outstanding team members' contributions.

The Outstanding Team Award: Tres Rios, Arizona Ecosystem Res Project Delivery Team

Recognizes outstanding PDT's model teamwork efforts to remind all employees of the importance of high functioning teams. Team members:

- Christopher Stanton
- Claudia Garcia
- Gabrielle Dodson
- Jeannine Hogg
- Sasha Voight
- Timothy Rose
- Kate Connor
- Tiffany Bostwick
- Bob Phan
- Douglas Dahncke
- Juan Sandoval
- Naureen Hasib
- Stephanie Dang
- Mark Cooke
- Juan Zuniga
- Mylene Guron
- Erica Kemp-Weitzman

LA District hosts Industry Day

PHOTOS BY ARECA T. WILSON
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

LOS ANGELES — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers facilitated an Industry Day June 20 at the Veterans Affairs Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, Los Angeles. The event was for informational purposes only and provided material on upcoming Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System projects, the procurement process, construction contract administration and subcontracting requirements.

The presentation can be viewed at <https://sam.gov/content/home>.



Mary Fronck, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers San Francisco District contracting officer, discusses the procurement process during an Industry Day June 20 at The Veterans Affairs Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, Los Angeles. The event was for informational purposes only and provided material on upcoming VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System projects, construction contract administration and subcontracting requirements.



Representatives of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers facilitate the June 20 Industry Day at the Veterans Affairs Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, Los Angeles.

LA District leaders tour central coast ports, projects



Photo by Robert DeDeaux

Morro Bay Harbor Director Ted Schiafone and Los Angeles District Commander Col. Andrew Baker detail the positive impacts of dredging and breakwater projects for City of Morro Bay leadership June 5 in central California. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is committed to harbor dredging operations to ensure supplies travel easily through our central California waterways.

BY ROBERT DEDEAUX
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. —Three U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District leaders toured several ports and civil works project sites June 3-6 along the central coast of California.

Col. Andrew Baker, LA District commander, joined the LA District's Deputy Engineer Justin Gay and Navigation Branch Chief Charles "Steve" Dwyer to meet with city mayors, council representatives, harbor masters and other stakeholders during the visit to discuss current dredging operations and promote the district's engineering and construction capabilities as a necessity to supply chain resilience and waterway navigation.

"If safe navigation is not maintained, con-

tainer ships cannot get in and out; this trade is essential to our nation's economy," said Dwyer a 55-year LA District subject-matter expert. "We bring decades of experience in dredging and maintaining navigation infrastructure."

The LA District supports West Coast supply chains, waterway navigation and beach nourishment through extensive dredging operations along the coast of central California. The district also supports California with a wide variety of planning projects, engineering, construction and environmental services. Projects include flood-risk management, navigation safety, recreation, and infrastructure and environmental stewardship.

DAY 1: PORTS-A-PLENTY

The LA District leadership team started their harbor tour at the Oxnard Harbor Dis-

trict's Port of Hueneme (pronounced "why-neme") in the city of Port Hueneme.

Port of Hueneme Director and CEO Kristin Decas and Chief Operations Officer Christina Birdsey presented an extensive historical review of the port's impact to the West Coast supply chain. According to Birdsey, the Oxnard Harbor District is the fifth largest importer of refrigerated goods and the sixth largest vehicle importer/exporter in the U.S.

"I think people saw during COVID how important ports are to the supply chain, and the terms of 'supply chain' and 'logistics' became important because they saw their shelves become empty," Birdsey said.

The Port of Hueneme regularly dredges to ensure cargo ships are not grounded.

['COAST' continued on Page 9](#)

['COAST' continued from Page 8](#)

"Dredging is important because people and goods can safely navigate in and out of our harbors," said Dwyer, a University of Southern California graduate.

Immediately following the Port of Hueneme tour, the USACE team traveled north to take a boat tour of the Channel Island Harbor District.

According to the Channel Island Harbor District official website, it was built as a recreational harbor in the 1960s and 1970s on 310 acres of land and water, with approximately 2,150 boat slips, as well as marina facilities, restaurants, sportfishing facilities and shops.

The team concluded the day with a visit to a third harbor district, the Ventura Port Harbor District, to discuss future dredging operations and the importance of maximizing the use of dredging material to nourish nearby beaches.

DAY 2: PORTS OF WATER AND SPACE

The next day, Baker and the USACE team met Santa Barbara Councilwoman Kristen

['COAST' continued on Page 10](#)



Photo by Robert DeDeaux

Morro Bay City Manager Yvonne Kimball and Los Angeles District Deputy Engineer Justin Gay discuss the positive impacts of dredging and breakwater projects June 5 in Morro Bay, California. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is committed to harbor dredging operations to ensure supplies travel easily through our coastal California waterways.



Photo by Robert DeDeaux

Los Angeles District leaders meet with the Ventura County Public Works Agency at the Ventura County fish ladder project to coordinate engineering and construction projects June 6 in Ventura County, California. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed the fish ladder to allow steelhead trout to migrate upstream.

[‘COAST’ continued from Page 9](#)

Sneddon and the Santa Barbara harbor master before touring the harbor.

“These periodic visits and meetings are very effective in showing the local sponsors and local communities our support, while also bringing visibility to the important work of my Navigation Branch,” said Dwyer, a part-time teacher at USC’s School of Architecture. “Both Justin and Col. Baker saw how happy our local sponsors are with what the LA District Navigation Branch provides.”

After touring the coastal port, the USACE team visited the Vandenberg Space Force Base, also known as “Space Country,” June 4 where they met with Vandenberg Space Force Base departments to discuss the “Spaceport of the Future” program and national defense projects.

“I love the dynamic nature of the work at the resident office,” said Matthew Hall, a project engineer stationed at Vandenberg’s USACE field office. “I get to collaborate with three different military branches across multiple agencies throughout various districts, states and time zones.”

Vandenberg is the U.S. Space Force’s West Coast spaceport and test range. The base is one of two high-capacity spaceports for the U.S., providing strategic space access capabilities that deliver on-orbit systems for global space operations.

“I truly believe in the programs we support, and I’m fortunate to be surrounded by dedicated professionals who make it all happen,” said Hall, a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, New York, and an active-duty officer of 11 years.

DAY 3: PORT SAN LUIS AND MORRO BAY

On Day 3 of the port and site project visits, the LA District team started their morning at the Port San Luis Harbor District in Avilla Beach, California.

The Port San Luis Harbor boat tour took the team around Hartford Pier, or Pier 3, where the LA District completed a breakwater repair project October 2023. Pier 3 was con-



Photo by Robert DeDeaux

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District command team and Port of Hueneme executives and representatives meet in the Oxnard Harbor District before touring potential dredging projects along the coast June 3 in Port Hueneme, California. The Port of Hueneme is the name of port, and “Port Hueneme” is the city in which the port resides. The Port of Hueneme is included in the Oxnard Harbor District, which is the fifth largest importer of refrigerated goods and the sixth largest vehicle importer/exporter in the U.S.

structed in 1873 and still features fish markets and a restaurant.

“Doing visits like this is one of the reasons I’m still working,” said Dwyer, who holds two master’s degrees: one in urban development and another in computer science. “I could have retired 10 years ago.”

From Pier 3, the USACE team traveled half an hour north to Morro Bay.

“An annual maintenance dredging project was completed June 4,” said LA District project manager Blake Horita in a Morro Bay dredging project update. “Material was placed in near-shore placement, located south of the harbor.”

According to the Morro Bay City official website, Morro Rock, a state historic landmark located along the coast of Morro Bay, was an important navigational aid for mariners for more than 300 years because the rock is approximately 576 feet tall.

“Most people have no awareness of the role we play in maintaining safe navigation, but the people who are aware are very appreciative,” Dwyer said.

DAY 4: A FISH LADDER, BUT NO PORTS

Day 4 project site visits were different from the previous three days.

Although the entire trip’s primary focus was on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ commitment to safe harbor dredging operations, the team scheduled an important meeting with the Ventura County Public Works Agency.

During a tour with the Ventura County Public Works, the LA District team was joined by its emergency management chief, David Kingston, to discuss potential flood-mitigation projects for the county. The district’s emergency management team works closely with counties to coordinate projects and recommend mitigation methods before natural disasters.

The last stop of the district’s four-day project site tour was to the Ventura County fish ladder project, where USACE built a structure that allows steelhead trout to migrate upstream to access their historic spawning waters. Even the endangered fish species can count on the LA District to support its water navigation infrastructure.

In total, the LA District team toured nine projects and ports and is committed to harbor dredging operations to ensure supplies travel safely and easily through central coastal California waterways.

To learn more about the LA District’s programs and projects, visit www.spl.usace.army.mil.



Photo by Areca T. Wilson

Community members and representatives from various city, state and federal agencies attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of Phase One of the San Clemente Beach Nourishment project May 31 in San Clemente, Calif. As part of the project, re-nourishment will occur every six years, on average, for eight additional nourishments.

City, Corps celebrate San Clemente beach expansion

BY ARECA T. WILSON
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SAN CLEMENTE, Calif. — The City of San Clemente hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the reopening of part of its expanded beach May 31 in San Clemente.

The event occurred following the completion of Phase One of the San Clemente Beach Nourishment project, which aims to reduce coastal storm damage along the city’s shoreline.

“As a lifelong southern Californian, I know that beaches are the foundation of the community,” said U.S. Representative Mike Levin, representing California’s 49th Congressional District. “They are critical for recreation, tourism (and) infrastructure in our local economy ... but over the years, our beaches have lost massive amount of sand due to the loss of natural sources, climate change, rising sea levels, coastal erosion and severe weather events.”

The project includes the construction of

a 50-foot-wide beach fill along a 3,412-foot-long stretch of shoreline, using 251,000 cubic yards of compatible sediment. Over 50 years of federal participation, re-nourishment will occur every six years, on average, for eight additional nourishments.

“I want to begin by recognizing the great team of professionals from the Los Angeles District, Manson Construction, San Clemente and our federal and state partners — all of them are critical for getting us to where we are today. We could not have made it here without everyone in each of these individual teams rowing together in unison,” said Col. Andrew Baker, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Los Angeles District. “It’s been a tough road, and through perseverance, some long days and late nights, and, most importantly, incredibly solid teamwork across the board, we were able to deliver sand to this beautiful beach ahead of Me-

morial Day, and, most importantly, reduce storm-damage risk for the City of San Clemente.”

The opening of the newly expanded beach portion was not only celebrated by government leaders, but it was also a welcomed improvement for the community, according to one beachgoer, Christine Howard, who expressed her appreciation for the upgrade.

Howard said she comes to the beach often to meditate, walk the beach trail and enjoy some quiet time.

“I think it’s really important for everything they said and more,” she said. “I realize that it affects not just the local economy; it makes an impact on future erosion and the ecosystem, too, so I wholeheartedly support it. I’m grateful to be in San Clemente, and I just so love how everyone worked together. I was really impressed how it was local all the way to federal and how they made it happen.”



Photo by Dena O'Dell

Col. Andrew Baker, LA District commander, second from right, says a few words about Danny Carrasco, third from right, while the district honors him for his 41 years of service to the LA District during the 2024 Engineer Day event June 27 in South El Monte, California.

2024 ENGINEER DAY

The LA District turned its focus to its people and its history June 27, as the organization celebrated Engineer Day at Whittier Narrows Recreation Area in South El Monte, California. About 117 people received length of service awards, ranging from five to 50 years of public service to the nation during the ceremony.

The district also honored its newly retired chief of the Contracting Division, Danny Carrasco, who served with the LA District for more than 41 years, as well as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' 249th birthday, which was June 16. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' history dates back to 1775, when the Continental Congress established an Army with a chief engineer and two assistants during the American Revolution. On that same date, Gen. George Washington also appointed the Army's first engineer officers.



Photo by Dena O'Dell

Employees and family members of the LA District are gathered June 27 at Whittier Narrows Recreation Area in South El Monte, California, to celebrate 2024 Engineer Day, during which more than 100 employees received awards and recognition, including for length of service.



Photos by Dena O'Dell

Employees and family members of the LA District are gathered June 27 at Whittier Narrows Recreation Area in South El Monte, California, to celebrate 2024 Engineer Day, during which more than 100 employees received awards and recognition, including for length of service.

LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS

FIVE YEARS

- Tiffany Armenta
- Sarah Coles
- Martin Flores
- Mason Gamble
- Jeffrey Geraci
- Dennis Lee
- Tommy Lek
- James Marcilla
- Natalie Martinez-Takeshita
- Andrew McLarty
- Vanessa Navarro
- Kevin Nguyen
- Shaan Nisar
- Jenniffer Oroxon
- Jenessa Quiroga
- Max Roseman
- Lillian Schaffer
- Emma Shipley
- John Stomp IV
- Joaquin Torres, Jr.
- Heather Tran
- Mark Turgeon
- Odafe Umukoro
- Stephen Woody

FIFTEEN YEARS

- Baron Arakawa
- James Ashworth III
- Tiffany Aulbach
- Timothy Brown
- Bonivee Delapaz
- Naureen Hasib
- Blake Horita
- Charena Lafayette
- Damien Lariviere
- Veronica Li
- Nhat Thuan Mach
- Daniel Moore
- Eric Negrete
- Dena O'Dell
- John Oshima
- Luis Perez
- Portia Pham
- Anabel Pho
- Jennifer Rivo
- Jared Rowley
- Reuben Sasaki
- Naeem Siddiqui
- Priyanka Wadhawan
- Jennifer Yoon

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

- Eric Cadena
- Robert Delgado
- Monica Eichler
- Elida Guerrero
- Jeremy Jackson
- James Mace
- Lisa Mangione
- Scott Oglesby
- Kataneh Shojaie
- Elizabeth Thomas
- Freddy Zuniga

THIRTY YEARS

- Ihsan Ansari
- Jeffery Armentrout
- Larry Estrada
- Lawrence Watkins

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

- Maria Ang
- Kirk Brus
- Gary Burger

- Jodi Clifford
- Debra Flores-Estrada
- Francine Nevarez
- Veronica Perez
- Tino Rakowitz
- Rosa Ramirez
- Terresa Reed

FORTY YEARS

- Christina Chavez
- Kelly Howard
- Robert Kwan
- Patricia Vasquez
- Veronica Vasquez
- Thomas Weber
- Ruby White

FORTY-FIVE YEARS

- Richard Cadena
- Kathleen Rabet
- Robert Smith Jr.

FIFTY YEARS

- Louis Munoz II

TEN YEARS

- Richard Alcalá, Jr.
- Richard Cordova, Jr.
- Walter Davis, Jr.
- Eduardo Diaz
- Jeniece Frazier
- Jeff Guh
- Harry Hendler
- Gregory McCoy
- Brian McDowell
- Brian McMahon
- David Myles
- Walter Ocon
- Evelyn Orta
- Quoc-Hung Phan
- Stuart Royal
- Sergio Valdovinos

TWENTY YEARS

- Stephen Baack
- Crystel Botar
- Kyle Dahl
- Melanie Ellis
- Jesus Fierros
- Jaime Kaskowitz
- Linda McCart
- Patrick McKinley
- Dominic Pebenito
- Natalie Rodgers-Rivas
- Mark Russell
- Aurelia Sigsbury
- Katherine Stephens
- Jon Sweeten
- Richard Wagner
- Derek Walker
- Kenneth Wong



Photo by Richard Rivera

Members of the LA District display their 10-year Length of Service certificates during Engineer Day June 27 in South El Monte, California.

Division commander meets with VA Long Beach team



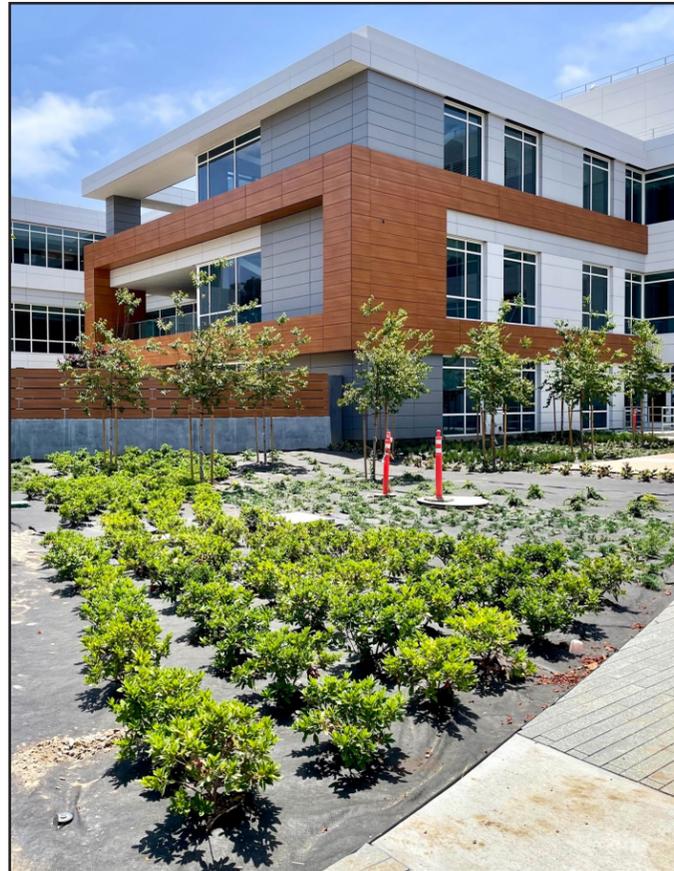
Photos By Dena O'Dell

Malak Shehadeh, civil engineer, left, joins Allan DeLeon, project engineer, second from left, and Ivan Caceres, LA District's Veterans Affairs Long Beach lead quality assurance representative, right, to pose for a picture with Col. James Handura, South Pacific Division commander, second from right, after receiving a division commander's coin for their work on the Community Living Center and Outpatient Mental Health facility following a tour of both projects at the Veterans Affairs Long Beach Healthcare Complex June 17 in Long Beach, California.



ABOVE: Col. James Handura, South Pacific Division commander, left, receives an update from Ivan Caceres, the LA District's Veterans Affairs Long Beach lead quality assurance representative, right, during a tour of the Outpatient Mental Health facility at the Long Beach VA Healthcare Complex June 17 in Long Beach, California. The more than 79,000-square-foot Mental Health Outpatient facility is scheduled for completion this fall.

RIGHT: The Community Living Center is pictured June 17 at the Veterans Affairs Long Beach Healthcare Complex in Long Beach, California. The three-story facility is a more than 181,000-square-foot facility that will provide 120 beds, divided into 10 residential living complexes that can house 12 patients in each complex. It is scheduled for completion this summer.



Photos By Dena O'Dell

ABOVE: Col. James Handura, South Pacific Division commander, gets briefed by a contractor about the progress of the Simulations Center during a June 18 site visit to the project at Fort Irwin, California.



Progress at Fort Irwin

CENTER AND TOP LEFT: Col. James Handura, South Pacific Division commander, and Col. Andrew Baker, Los Angeles District commander, along with employees and contractors with the LA District Fort Irwin Resident Office, enter the Simulations Center to view the construction progress June 18 at Fort Irwin, California. The LA District broke ground on the new \$52-million Simulations Center in March 2023. The 68,000-square-foot facility will afford the capabilities of not only training Soldiers at the brigade level, but also at the division level in real-world virtual scenarios. Estimated construction completion is in 2025.

60th Anniversary Civil Rights Act

STRENGTH IN UNITY. UNITY THROUGH EQUALITY.



July 2nd

