

Photo by Stephen Baack

U.S. Air Force Col. Bryan Bailey, commander of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing, on stage at left, addresses attendees during a groundbreaking ceremony for a new KC-46 Pegasus hangar and training facility Dec. 16 at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County, California.

LA District joins Air Force to break ground on KC-46 hangar at March Air Reserve Base

BY STEPHEN BAACK
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MARCH AIR RESERVE BASE, Calif. — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District joined Air Force officials, community partners, stakeholders and contractors Dec. 16 to mark the start of construction on a new KC-46 Pegasus hangar and training facility at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County, California.

The \$133-million project will modernize maintenance and training infrastructure to support the 452nd Air Mobility Wing and long-term mission readiness.

During the ceremony, Lt. Col. Stephen Brooks, deputy commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, said the project reflects close coordination between the Los Angeles and Louisville districts, with the Louisville District awarding the contract in support of Air Force Reserve Command.

“It’s an honor to be here today at March Air Reserve Base, as we break ground on a project of vital importance to our nation’s security and military readiness,” said Brooks, who gave a special thank you to U.S. Air Force Col. Bryan Bailey, commander of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing. “Sir, your leadership and dedication to

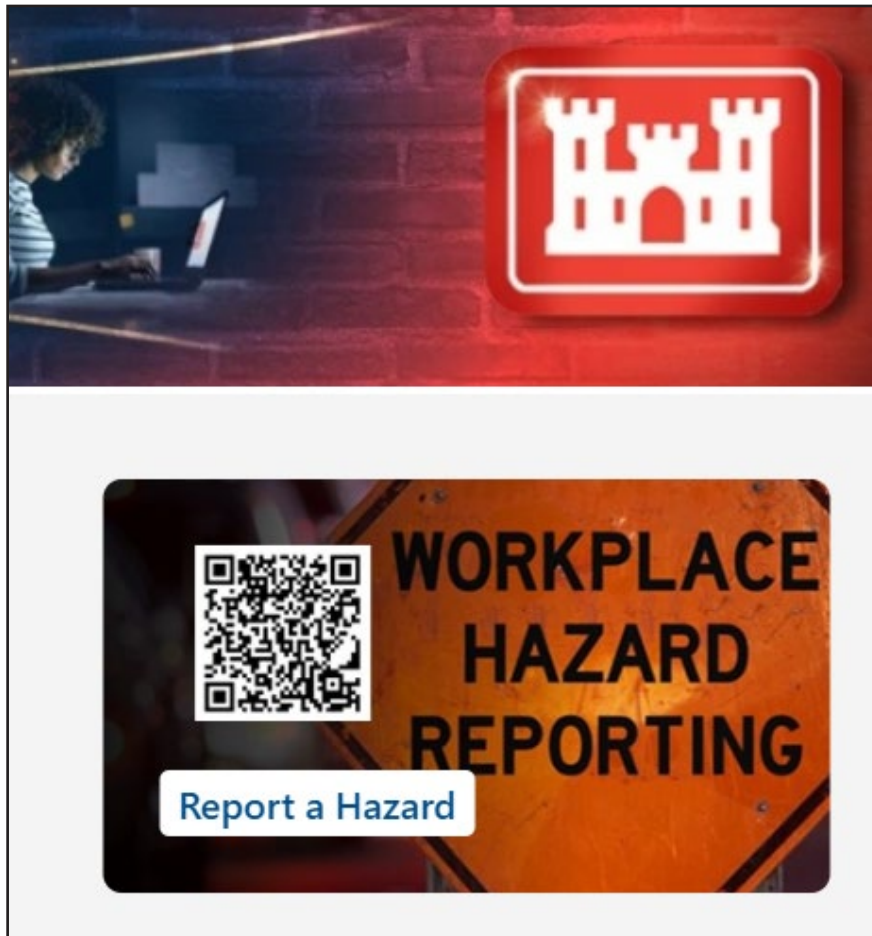
your Airmen are the reasons we are here today, and we are proud to partner with you to deliver this critical infrastructure.”

The project includes construction of a new two-bay aircraft maintenance and fueling hangar designed to simultaneously accommodate one KC-46A aircraft in each bay. Existing facilities within the project footprint will be demolished to make way for the new structure.

“This is a significant moment for March Air Reserve Base, which has been a cornerstone of American airpower for more than a century,”

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**Coming soon:
A new way to report hazards**



Get ready for a new and improved way to report workplace hazards! The new HQ Hazard Reporting Tool is a streamlined system designed to make it easier than ever to report and track safety concerns, ensuring a safer environment for everyone.

This new tool will revolutionize how we handle hazard notifications, streamlining the process across all levels of SPL. One of the most significant features of this new system is the ability to report hazards anonymously, encouraging everyone to speak up without hesitation.

While the official launch is slated for January, you can get a sneak peek of the HQ Hazard Reporting Tool now on the [Safety Office SharePoint homepage](#) and [Hazard Reporting tab](#). We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the new system before its full implementation. Additionally, current QR codes placed throughout district facilities will be updated soon to reflect the new tool.

Stand by for the official launch date and information on training sessions. We are excited to bring you this improved tool and empower every employee to contribute to a safer workplace.

Please reach out to a Safety and Occupational Health Office team member with any questions.

**Official publication
of the
U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Los Angeles District**

**Winter 2025
Volume 48, Issue 4**

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The NewsCastle is published quarterly under the provisions of AR 360-1 for the employees and extended engineer family of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District.

Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the district or of the Department of Defense.

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Reflecting on a year of important work amid uncertainty

Team,

I'm sitting on the Catalina Island Express with my wife and kids — and also my folks, who are in from currently snowy Virginia as I write this. It's foggy outside, but way more temperate than central Virginia. I've got a good number of the people, who are most important to me, in close proximity headed out on an adventure ... it doesn't get much better than that in my world!

It's been quite a year in the mighty SPL. A year of extremes: triumph in wrapping up many



COL. ANDREW BAKER
LA DISTRICT COMMANDER

important projects and initiatives, while successfully setting the conditions for continued righteous work, and uncertainty and stress that comes with balancing a challenging workload with limited resources. It's been great, and hard, and I'm so grateful to have been a part of it with all of you this year, and over the past two and half years. I hope this holiday season affords you the chance to take a break with those you love. It can be a busy time for sure, but I encourage you to take a moment and reflect on all we accomplished together this year — the people we made more

safe from flood risk; the businesses we helped to get their goods to market; the veterans for whom we improved care; and the American people, whom we made more safe by contributing to our nation's defense. It's a lot, and I hope you are as proud of our contributions as I am of you and to be part of this team.

Thank you and happy holidays! This quarter's picture is of me and Lt. Col. Stephen Brooks during a surprise appearance of Santa Claus at the downtown LA headquarters building!

Proud to be SPL!

Col. Andrew Baker



Courtesy photo



Photos by Stephen Baack

Lt. Col. Stephen Brooks, deputy commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, right, participates in a ceremonial shovel turn during a groundbreaking ceremony Dec. 16 for a new KC-46 Pegasus hangar and training facility at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County, California. The \$133-million project will modernize maintenance and training infrastructure in support of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing. Second from right is Col. Bryan Bailey, commander of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing.



RIGHT: Lt. Col. Stephen Brooks, deputy commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, delivers remarks during a groundbreaking ceremony Dec. 16 for the new KC-46 Pegasus hangar and training facility at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County, California. LEFT: U.S. Air Force Col. Bryan Bailey, commander of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing, addresses attendees during his remarks.



[‘HANGAR’ continued from Page 1](#)

Brooks said. “This project will ensure it continues that legacy of excellence.”

Representatives from the Air Force Reserve, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Harper Construction and partner organizations participated in a ceremonial shovel turn to mark the beginning of construction.

Once completed, the hangar will feature reinforced concrete foundations, a steel frame and roof system, insulated metal walls and modern utilities. The facility will include personnel support areas and dedicated storage for hazardous materials, tools, supplies and equipment.

The hangar also will be equipped with fire suppression and fall protection systems, along with environmental controls, such as floor drains connected to the sanitary sewer system and an oil-water separator. Additional work includes communications infrastructure, pavement transitions, parking areas, exterior lighting, fencing, landscaping and other associated site improvements.

In addition to the hangar, the project includes significant renovations to Building 1244 to support fuselage training and cargo pallet storage operations. Planned upgrades include new classrooms, briefing rooms, office space, a breakroom, communications and maintenance areas, and restroom and shower facilities.

Building 1244 also will receive a new roof and updated heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, along with fire suppression

capabilities required for fuselage training operations. Existing hangar doors will be sealed, two rollup doors installed, as well as improvements to traffic flow around the facility.

Construction is expected to take about three years. Officials said the project is part of a broader KC-46 modernization effort at March Air Reserve Base, with additional work planned in future phases.

Bailey, who also delivered remarks during the ceremony, said the new facilities will provide Airmen with modern, purpose-built spaces to train and maintain aircraft critical to the Air Force Reserve mission.

“What a historic day this is,” Bailey said. “This is the culmination of years, if not decades, of work for our community partners, and I want to say thank you for making this day happen. It didn’t happen because of anybody up here; it happened because of the relentless dedication and the advocacy to know that March Air Reserve Base has been a national power-projection platform for over a hundred years.”

Bailey thanked those in attendance, including partners from the Air Force and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as community members throughout Moreno Valley, the Inland Empire and Riverside County, for their commitment and hard work.

“This is a Team March event,” Bailey added. “It took all of us to bring it here today, and it will take all of us going forward to make it successful.”

LEFT: Attendees that include members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District and U.S. Air Force, along with a range of distinguished visitors and contractors, await the start of the Dec. 16 groundbreaking ceremony to mark the beginning of construction on the new KC-46 Pegasus hangar and training facility at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County, California. The \$133-million project will modernize maintenance and training infrastructure in support of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing.

“This is a Team March event. It took all of us to bring it here today, and it will take all of us going forward to make it successful.”

U.S. Air Force Col. Bryan Bailey 452nd Air Mobility Wing Commander



Photo by Robert DeDeaux

Greg Hegge, director of programs and deputy engineer of the South Pacific Border Task Force, center, and Mike Tuttle, a project manager assigned to the South Pacific Border Task Force, center-right, brief the progress of the panel installation at the BMGR-1 project site Nov. 17 near Yuma, Arizona. USACE is replacing permanent border barriers along the southern border.

Senior leaders tour border barrier project

BY ROBERT DEDEAUX
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

YUMA, Ariz. — U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Joint Task Force Southern Border senior leaders viewed the progress of the border barrier installation project at the Barry M. Goldwater Range 1 site Nov. 17 near Yuma.

The tour included U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Commander Lt. Gen. William “Butch” Graham, Joint Task Force Southern Border Deputy Commander Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Jeremy Winters and other senior leaders, who were hosted by South Pacific Border Task Force Commander Army Lt. Col. Jeffrey Beeman.

“It was fantastic to host the entire senior leadership of USACE and showcase the great work our task force is delivering for the enterprise and the nation,” said Greg Hegge, di-

rector of programs and deputy engineer of the South Pacific Border Task Force. “The tour allowed us to show just one small aspect of the support we are providing the country and to USACE through installation and construction of a permanent border barrier.”

USACE is leading the construction, including the planning and design, of a permanent border barrier in the Barry M. Goldwater Range. The construction contract was awarded Aug. 15, and construction began Oct. 15.

The BMGR-1 project protects a vital military installation, strengthens border security and supports the broader southern border mission.

“We are responsible for many different aspects of the southern border mission,” Hegge said. “One of the objectives of this project will allow U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents

to save time and manpower by focusing on more high-risk or unprotected areas of border.”

The project consists of four sections, totaling about 15 miles in the Barry M. Goldwater Range, replacing legacy mesh fencing, much of which has holes cut into it or is climbable, with permanent border barrier. The total cost of this emergency military construction is about \$200 million.

“(Lt. Gen.) Graham created the South Pacific Border Task Force as a single organization to oversee all USACE equities along the southern border,” Hegge said.

“We are exceptionally proud of our role, work and team along the southern border and how it leads to and accomplishes the overall objectives of Joint Task Force Southern Border, while also meeting the intent of the administration’s executive orders,” Hegge said.



Photos by Robert DeDeaux

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Commander Lt. Gen. William "Butch" Graham, left, and Army Chief of Public Affairs Rebecca Hodson discuss the Army's vital role to the nation's civil works programs, including protecting critical infrastructure, flood-risk management and disaster response, while touring Painted Rock Dam Nov. 17 in Gila Bend, Arizona.

Senior leaders tour Painted Rock Dam

BY ROBERT DEDEAUX
LA DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

GILA BEND, Ariz. — U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Commander Lt. Gen. William "Butch" Graham and Army Chief of Public Affairs Rebecca Hodson joined USACE senior leaders Nov. 17 on a tour of Painted Rock Dam, a flood risk management project, located on the Gila River in Maricopa County.

Painted Rock Dam helps protect several towns in two countries, two military installations and one of the nation's largest vegetable-producing regions.

"This is the first time any Army chief of public affairs has traveled to Painted Rock Dam to tour the critical impact the Army plays on the nation's civil works and disaster response program," said Maj. Gen. Jason Kelly, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deputy commanding general for Civil and Emergency Operations.

Painted Rock Dam is within the Gila River Drainage Basin and is operated by the USACE Los Angeles District. The dam consists

of a debris pool, spillway, a gauging station and dikes. The dam is operated on a prediction basis, which establishes the rate of release for floodwaters from the dam, based on upstream and downstream conditions.

"Most seasons, the reservoir remains dry," said Col. Andrew Baker, commander of USACE LA District. "Daily operations consists of maintenance, weather monitoring and assisting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; however, the

last two years have seen an increase of water flow, potentially raising risk to the dam's drainage area of 50,800 square miles. The Painted Rock Dam and its two dam operators, who live on site, help mitigate flood risk to Southern Arizona and, particularly, the city of Yuma."

Construction of the dam began in July 1957 and was completed in January 1960 at a cost of about \$13.7 million.

[More photos from this story on Page 7](#)



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers commander Lt. Gen. William "Butch" Graham and Army Chief of Public Affairs Rebecca Hodson join USACE senior leaders on a tour of Painted Rock Dam Nov. 17 in Gila Bend, Arizona.



Photos by Robert DeDeaux

The Painted Rock Dam Control House entrance is pictured Nov. 17 near Gila Bend, Arizona. The dam is a major flood-control project in the Gila River Drainage Basin, constructed and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District.



Army Chief of Public Affairs Rebecca Hodson joins USACE senior leaders on a tour of Painted Rock Dam Nov. 17 in Gila Bend, Arizona. Hodson expressed the Army's vital role to the nation's civil works programs, including protecting critical infrastructure, flood-risk management and disaster response.

USACE, partners remove 3 tons of debris from encampments in Santa Ana River Marsh

LOS ANGELES DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. — A team with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District and multiple county and city agencies joined forces Dec. 10 to clear debris from homeless encampments in the lower Santa Ana River Marsh, a sensitive habitat that supports several threatened and endangered species.

The half-day operation involved 17 USACE employees — including park rangers, biologists, safety staff and Operations and Maintenance personnel — and 47 partner-agency staff from Orange County Public Works, the City of Newport Beach, Orange County Sheriff's Department, OC CARE and others.

"We came out to the lower Santa Ana River Marsh today to address this ongoing issue, where we have people experiencing homelessness, who will come into the critical habitat and start creating encampments, which causes issues for destruction of the habitat, potentially harming threatened or endanger species that call this place home," said Nick Figueroa, USACE Los Angeles District park ranger.

The coordinated effort of removing debris from the encampments resulted in the re-



Photos by Stephen Baack

Members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, Orange County Public Works and the city of Newport Beach remove debris Dec. 10 at the lower Santa Ana River Marsh.

moval of a total of about three tons of material, Figueroa said. The work was supported by contractors and crews operating chipper and compactor equipment, skid-steer support and dozens of hand tools.

The Orange County Outreach and Engagement team also was present at the site to offer services to the homeless.

"Just as important as debris removal is making sure people know this is a dangerous place to stay," Figueroa said. "The area can flood, and our goal is to connect individuals to safer, sanitary options."

Orange County's engagement team contacted several individuals during the operation, with one person accepting services.

Figueroa also emphasized the value of improved coordination among agencies.

"As park rangers, part of our role is educating the public and our partner agencies about our mission and our authorities," he said. "With established memorandums of understanding with local law enforcement, we're able to get out here earlier and respond before encampments grow large. Today's cleanup was relatively small compared to others we've had, and we were able to finish it in just a few hours."

Safety remained a top priority for all.

"You don't always know what you're going to find when you're uncovering debris," said Mylene Guron, project manager with USACE's Los Angeles District. "Protecting the safety of our people and our partners is always the priority."

The operation is part of an ongoing cost-share partnership among Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties, which jointly monitor, clear and maintain the marsh.

During the event, Orange County Supervisor Katrina Foley visited the site and thanked USACE staff and partner agencies for their continued collaboration.

"She's been a strong advocate for preserving the natural habitat and supporting the agencies that maintain this area," Figueroa said. "We were glad to see her out here today."



The lower Santa Ana River Marsh is seen Dec. 10 in Newport Beach, California. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District and partner agencies routinely monitor and maintain the area to protect sensitive habitat and threatened species.

LA District discusses dam safety during Downey Emergency Preparedness Fair

BY DENA O'DELL

LA DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DOWNEY, Calif. — Representatives with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District participated in the City of Downey's Emergency Preparedness Fair Dec. 6 in Downey.

The LA District was one of 17 organizations participating in the event, which drew a crowd of nearly 175 residents. The LA District set up an information booth to discuss upcoming construction of the Whittier Narrows Dam Safety Modification Project near Montebello, California.

Whittier Narrows Dam mitigates

flood risk for about 1.25 million residents downstream of the dam, including residents of Downey.

"Flood risk is not something most people think about in Southern California — it's usually a dry climate, but there are storms that can cause a flood risk," said Aaron Smith, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dam safety adviser for the project. "This has been a great event. We had the chance to talk to hundreds of residents to make sure they understand their flood risk and make sure they understand the importance of infrastructure, like dams, and the roles they play in their lives."



Photos by Dena O'Dell

Aaron Smith, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dam safety adviser for the Whittier Narrows Dam Safety Modification project, right, tests his abilities using a fire extinguisher during the City of Downey's Emergency Preparedness Fair Dec. 6 in Downey, California.



Marlene Schmitt, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District park ranger, right, allows a resident to try on her park ranger hat during the City of Downey's Emergency Preparedness Fair Dec. 6 in Downey, California.



Photos by Robert DeDeaux

Solar panels over a section of the Gila River Indian Community's canal are shown Dec. 11 at the Gila River Indian Reservation in Arizona. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District joined the Gila River Indian Community for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the project.

LA District completes historic project at Gila River Indian Community in Arizona

Partners gather to celebrate unveiling of solar-over-canal project

BY ROBERT DEDEAUX
LA DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PHOENIX — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, in partnership with the Gila River Indian Community, celebrated the completion of the community's first solar-over-canal project during a ribbon-cutting ceremony Dec. 11 at the Gila River Indian Reservation in Arizona.

"The Gila River Indian Community is the first tribe in the U.S. to partner with USACE through the Tribal Partnership Program with the project," said Gila River Indian Community Governor Stephen Roe Lewis.

During the ceremony, Col. Andrew Baker, LA District commander, highlighted the importance of partnership in completing innovative projects that provide renewable energy to



From left, Gila River Indian Community Councilman Joseph Manuel Jr. joins Tribal Governor Stephen Roe Lewis and Los Angeles District Commander Col. Andrew Baker to cut a ribbon celebrating the completion of the solar-over-canal project during a ceremony Dec. 11 at the Gila River Indian Reservation in Arizona.

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community members:

- This is the first USACE Los Angeles District Tribal Partnership Program project to reach active construction.
 - This was the first solar-over-canal project to start construction in the U.S.
 - This community was the first to implement this technology, resulting in significant reduction in water loss and reducing greenhouse gas emissions generated by electrical power production.
- "This completion of this project

represents broader community impact, nearly net-zero carbon neutral renewable energy production, and a strong partnership among USACE and the Gila River Indian Community," Baker said.

Phase I of the project covers about 1,000 feet of canal, a small portion of a larger project that includes additional miles of the community's irrigation system, which is one of the most comprehensive irrigation systems in Arizona.

"I oversee all planning, design and construction of the P-MIP system, including the solar projects," said David DeJong, director of the Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Proj-

ect, in a written statement. "It was scheduled to be the first in the Western Hemisphere, but our Phase 2 Casa Blanca solar-over-canal project actually was completed first."

The estimated cost of Phase I of the project is \$6.7 million. It is expected to produce about 1,000 kilowatts of renewable energy to offset energy needs and costs for tribal farmers.

"USACE is a very unique federal agency and is very methodical," DeJong said. "It is fitting that this project is in Indian Country and that indigenous people can lead the way in developing culturally compatible energy."

Construction of the project includes solar panels placed over a portion of the community's canal to conserve water and generate renewable energy for tribal irrigation facilities.

"Working with tribal partners is a special responsibility," said Robert "Drew" Savage, project manager with the LA District. "Developing a project and acquisition strategy, we knew we wanted to work with a company that was tribal-owned, so we could partner with a company that could relate to the Gila River Indian Community's vision for the project. Numunu, a Comanche Nation-owned company, fit perfectly."



Photo by Robert DeDeaux

The Gila River Indian Community and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District celebrate the completion of the district's first solar-over-canal project during a ceremony Dec. 11 at the Gila River Indian Reservation in Arizona.



Photos by Stephen Baack

From left, Lt. Col. Stephen Brooks, deputy commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, stands with Chadi Wahby, LA District project manager; David Kingston, LA District Emergency Management Branch chief; and Maj. David Paxton, LA District project manager, during the "Rebuilding Altadena's Parks: A Partnership for the Future" Nov. 21 in Altadena, California.

Altadena officials thank USACE during community gratitude event

Representatives of the Los Angeles District were invited to "Rebuilding Altadena's Parks: A Partnership for the Future" Nov. 21 with Supervisor Kathryn Barger and Director Norma E. García-González to celebrate partnerships and a mutual commitment to supporting the recovery of Altadena's parks. Lt. Col. Stephen Brooks, LA deputy commander, accepted a plaque on behalf of USACE for the Corps' support.



ABOVE: Norma E. García-González, director of the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, left, expresses her gratitude to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers representatives during the "Rebuilding Altadena's Parks: A Partnership for the Future" event in Altadena, California.

LEFT: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, representing the Los Angeles County's 5th District, right, shakes hands with David Kingston, chief of the LA District's Emergency Management Branch, left, and other USACE teammates during a gratitude event Nov. 21 in Altadena, California.

LA District hosts second annual 5K run/walk event at Prado Dam

More than 120 Los Angeles District employees and family members gathered for some fun, fitness and camaraderie during the district's second annual 5K run/walk event Oct. 18 at Prado Dam in Corona, California.

Coming in first place was Caleb Lodge, a civil engineer with the Coastal Engineering Branch. In second place was 1st Lt. Alex Cummings, a project engineer at the Prado Dam Resident Office. And, in third place, was Vincent Aguayo of Victorville, a family member of Los Angeles District employee Alyssa Ziranda.



Photos by Dena O'Dell

Employees, Soldiers and members of the extended Los Angeles District engineer family embark on the 5K run/walk event at Prado Dam in Corona, California.



ABOVE: Participants of the Los Angeles District's second annual 5K run/walk gather for a group photo during the Oct. 18 event at Prado Dam in Corona, California.



LEFT: Runners approach the finish line during the 5K run/walk event Oct. 18 at Prado Dam in Corona, California.



Photo by Shawn Davis

Col. Andrew Baker, Los Angeles District commander, second from left, delivers remarks during the End of Fiscal Year 2025 Town Hall and Awards Celebration Oct. 16 in downtown LA.

LA District celebrates landmark year during town hall celebration

BY SHAWN DAVIS
LA DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

LOS ANGELES — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District marked the end of an eventful year with its End-of-Year Town Hall Oct. 16 at its headquarters in downtown LA.

“The great news is that we had a great year from the delivery standpoint,” said Col. Andrew Baker, commander of USACE Los Angeles district. “(We had) 811 contracting actions — \$2.17 billion — the biggest dollar amount in 127 years.”

More than 250 Los Angeles District employees tuned into the meeting, both in person and virtually, to celebrate the end of the fiscal year and recognize district and employees’ accomplishments.

Baker highlighted several of the district’s projects that were completed in the fiscal year, including USACE’s response to the LA County Wildfire Debris Mission, in which the district supported the mission with more than \$1.8 billion in contract actions. Other notable projects included the completion of the Veterans Administration Long Beach Healthcare System’s mental health in-patient and out-patient facilities and groundbreaking crucial

water infrastructure improvement projects for Yavapai-Apache Nation near Camp Verde, Arizona under the Section 595 Environmental Infrastructure Program.

The Eaton and Palisades fires began Jan. 7 and were some of the most destructive wildfires in USACE history. The debris mission set the benchmark for more properties cleared in just six months — less time than in any comparable wildfire recovery mission in recent history.

“This was an enterprise effort. It started with SPL, and it’s going to end with SPL,” Baker said. “(In total, we had) 1,223 personnel on site — (about) 220 of those folks were from the Los Angeles District. We still have folks out there to this day ... so just an amazing effort and an historic effort for the enterprise and for us.”

Baker’s presentation was followed by overviews from division chiefs, each summarizing the year’s accomplishments and challenges.

“If I could have 10 slides, it still wouldn’t be enough for all the accomplishments that we’ve done in the district this year,” said Kimberly Thomas, LA District deputy district engineer and chief of the Programs and Project Management Division. “I’m so proud to be part

of the team. We’re doing more with (fewer) people, and we’ve got to figure out how to simplify things and take things off of folks’ plates.”

Her presentation, like those of other division chiefs, listed some of the district’s accomplishments in reaching their goals on several key infrastructure projects the Los Angeles District is responsible for across its 226,000-square-mile area, including dams and levee improvements, coastline dredging, and water infrastructure and construction projects across four states and tribal lands.

“I think that this just really shows the professionalism and the dedication to the mission,” Thomas said.

In total, 10 divisions discussed their success stories, complex challenges they resolved and how each business line added overall value to the district.

Baker also recognized three district employees, who have died during the fiscal year: Jenny Ayala, John Oshima and Kenneth “Larry” Miller, recognizing their contributions to the LA District and asking for a moment of silence in their honor.

The district created the “Superhero” Award in honor of Oshima, who passed away in August. The

“Jenny Ayala Award: Beyond the Call of Duty” was named in Ayala’s honor. She passed away in October 2024.

Following the presentations, district leaders recognized several individuals who demonstrated considerable effort and value to the team over the past fiscal year.

AWARD PRESENTATION

Kevin Inada Employee of the Quarter Award

The recipient of the Kevin Inada Employee of the Quarter award was Rana Mishra. The award was named after Kevin Inada, the district’s former deputy chief of the Construction Division, who died in 2012. It is given to employees who demonstrate traits exemplified by Inada during his time with the district. Inada was known for his “taking care of people” philosophy. Rana is recognized for delivering compelling, narrative-driven presentations to the Change Control Board regarding high-profile projects such as the LA River Ecosystem Restoration and the Port of Long Beach Deepening.

Commanders Eagle: Casey Cai

Casey Cai received the Commander’s Eagle Award, which recognizes a district employee who exemplifies the motto of the LA district, “building strong and taking care of people,” through his or her efforts in going the extra mile for district customers, stakeholders and team members. Casey is recognized for resolving a complex issue with a credit on a government purchase card which was causing accounting discrepancies, displaying patience, technical expertise and dedication to customer service.

Compass: Patricia Bonilla

Patricia Bonilla was the recipient of the Compass Award, which recognizes an employee who provides experience-based advice to help show the way to other employees

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and navigate through unfamiliar terrain. Patricia is recognized for mentoring four contract specialists and one contracting officer as she successfully managed over sixty contracts totaling more than \$100 million. She borrows from more than forty-years of experience in government contracting.

H2O Helping Hands for Others: Tracey Eccles and Marilyn Sheehan

Tracey Eccles and Marilyn Sheehan both received the H2O Helping Hands Award, which recognizes individuals who demonstrated the best example of selfless service on which the individual voluntarily took initiative to assist others making an impact on the district’s community. Tracey is recognized for her distinguished reputation among her peers for always being willing to assist in challenges and being a reliable subject matter expert in contract administration. Marilyn is recognized for her outstanding service as a regulatory assistant, where she was deployed on an emergency basis to aid in the recovery efforts for the Eaton and Palisades wildfires.

Outstanding PDT Member: Andrew McLarty

Andrew McLarty was the recipient of the Outstanding PDT Member

Award, which recognizes a model member having demonstrated a significant positive influence on the project delivery team. Andrew is recognized for his exceptional leadership as the technical lead for the San Luis Rey River project and ability to communicate technical information about levee repair efforts to technical and non-technical staff.

Outstanding PDT: Los Angeles Post-Wildfire Flood Hazard Assessment

The Outstanding PDT Award went to the Los Angeles Post-Wildfire Flood Hazard Assessment. The award reflects the best example of a team in which the members took individual responsibility, communicated well, worked hard, had fun and efficiently achieved an important accomplishment. The Los Angeles Post-Wildfire Flood Hazard Assessment team is recognized for their development of advanced hydrology and hydraulic debris flow models, mitigating short-term flood risks and directly aided in the decision-making praxis of impacted communities. This demonstrated excellent inter-agency collaboration and involved the Hydraulic Engineering Center, California Department of Water Resources, Los Angeles County Public Works, California Institute of Technology and the California Geological Survey.

Other awards presented:

Civilian Service Commendation Medal: Craig McCarthy, Joyanne Brill, Patricia Vasquez, Raymond Schmid

Civilian Service Achievement Medal: Joshua Keever, Edgard Soto, Lesly Pineda, Shane Bush, Glen Tucker

Meritorious Civilian Service Medal: Eleanor Encinas

Certificate of Achievement: Araceli Duran, Kevin Kenworthy, Lisa Kinn, Nevin Heitner, Renae Gonzales, Rose Deese, Vonda Bel-lante, Joseph Devincenzi

2025 Excellence in Contracting Awards Program District of the Year:

Abegail Banaga, Brett Young, Dominic Pebenito, Dominic Porchia, James Elsberry, James Piersa, John Oshima (posthumous), John Stephens, Master Sgt. Courtney Brock, Neil-Richard Tugaoen II, Richard Fontanilla, Roger Minami, Rubyann Prout, Shaun Frost, Stephanie Parra. The award recognizes the exceptional performance, commitment and collaboration exhibited by the recipients.

Year End Award Superheroes Honorary:

Joseph Devincenzi, Capt. Jeff Yin, Jonathon Thorpe, Margie Tizon, Maricris Lee, Michael Robinson and Vincent Andrada. The award recognizes

employees who have displayed extraordinary skills and abilities in successfully completing and closing a contract or adhering to a firm deadline.

Year-End Award Heroes:

Aaron Cruz, Adriana Kiesling, Alphonso, J. Dunston, Amanda Wagner, Anna Alvarez, Aurelia Sigsbury, Bilqis Ali, Brandon Durham, Carmen Lara, Casie Cai, Clarence Mangalang, Cynthia Wong, Fany Anderson, Guadalupe Guerrero, Hap Pho, Hassan Harirchi, Hector Herrera, Helen Sanchez, James Piersa, Janice Opperman, Jeffrey Luong, John Lee, Joyanne Brill, Julio Cuadra, Julio Ramos, Kelly Howard, Kevin Yu, Keyle Sawyer, Kristen Steinmann, Leonard Williams, Mark Cooke, Mary Carmona, Mary Connor, Mary Wrightson, Megan Craig, Michael Lawton, Milthon Galindo, Mylene Guron, Nhat Mach, Olufunke Ojuri, Pamela Kostka, Patricia Bonilla, Patrick Klein, Portia Pham, Raj Cooper, Robert Kwan, Ryan Rivas, Sandra Estrada, Santiago Munoz, Stephanie Dang, Susan Yarbrough, Thomas Luu, Tracey Eccles, Trevor Synder, Veronica Gonzalez and Vincent Andrada. The award recognizes significant contributions to the successful implementation of high-priority, extensive end-of-year activities for the Los Angeles District.



Photo by Shawn Davis

Col. Andrew Baker, Los Angeles District commander, center, joins awardees for photos Oct. 16 at the district headquarters in downtown LA. Baker highlighted several of the district’s projects that were completed in the fiscal year, including USACE’s response to the LA County Wildfire Debris Mission, in which the district supported the mission with more than \$1.8 billion in contract actions. Other notable projects included the completion of the VA Long Beach Healthcare System’s mental health in-patient and out-patient facilities and groundbreaking crucial water infrastructure improvement projects for Yavapai-Apache Nation near Camp Verde, Arizona under the Section 595 Environmental Infrastructure Program.



Photo by Stephen Baack

Brig. Gen. John Lloyd, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Pacific Division commander, right, speaks with leaders and subject-matter experts with the Port of Long Beach and USACE during a boat tour of the port Dec. 2 in Long Beach, California.

South Pacific Division commander visits LA District to highlight teamwork, priorities

LA DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

LOS ANGELES — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Pacific Division commander visited several key locations in the Los Angeles District’s area of operations Dec. 2–3 in Southern California to receive updates on projects and highlight partnerships and teamwork across the region.

Brig. Gen. John Lloyd met with project-delivery teams and nonfederal partners and toured projects, including Whittier Narrows Dam in South El Monte, the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, and the Jennifer Moreno Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center campus in San Diego. The visit provided an opportunity for Lloyd to gain situational awareness of district missions, while engaging

directly with teams and partners responsible for delivering them.

During his Dec. 2 visit to the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles — the nation’s two busiest container ports — Lloyd met with nonfederal port partners to discuss shared priorities related to navigation and long-term coordination. The ports play a vital role in the regional and national economy, and USACE works closely with port partners to help maintain safe and efficient navigation, while supporting infrastructure that enables commerce to move reliably through Southern California. The discussions underscored the importance of sustained coordination between federal and nonfederal partners to support the long-term operational needs of the port complex.

“We’re on the same team,”

Lloyd said. “USACE wants the port to succeed. Navigation is a priority. This may be hard work, but they’re easy wins.”

On Dec. 3, Lloyd toured Whittier Narrows Dam, one of the most urban and high-consequence dams in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ portfolio. The visit highlighted ongoing flood-risk-management and maintenance work conducted in coordination with local partner agencies. Whittier Narrows Dam spans multiple communities and plays a critical role in managing flood risk during major storm events, making collaboration and readiness essential to its mission.

Lloyd also met with Department of Veterans Affairs leaders and Los Angeles District project-delivery teams at the Jennifer Moreno VA Medical Center campus in San

Diego. There, he toured the nearly complete San Diego VA Healthcare System Spinal Cord Injury/Community Living Center, a six-story facility designed to support specialized care for veterans and active-duty service members with spinal cord injuries and disorders. USACE is overseeing construction of the facility on behalf of the VA. The project reflects the long-standing partnership between USACE and the VA to deliver complex medical facilities that support veterans’ health and recovery.

The visit allowed Lloyd to engage directly with teams involved in the final stages of the project and to underscore the importance of teamwork, quality and execution as

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the facility approaches completion. Throughout the two-day visit, Lloyd emphasized the value of collaboration across the district’s diverse mission sets, from navigation and flood-risk management to facilities supporting veterans. He praised the remarkable military and civilian teammates, who continue to engineer solutions to the region’s toughest challenges with vision, determination and skill.



Photo by Stephen Baack

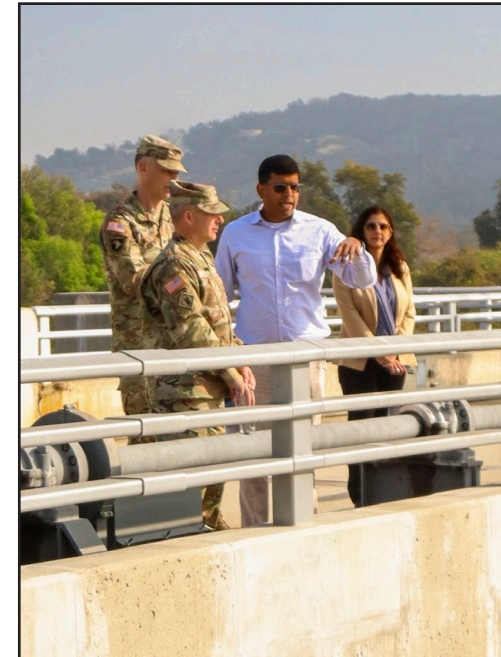


Photo by Shawn Davis



Photo by Stephen Baack



Photo by Shawn Davis

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:

Brig. Gen. John Lloyd, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Pacific Division commander, fourth from right, joins Col. Andrew Baker, USACE LA District commander, fourth from left, and other USACE teammates in a group photo with leaders from the Port of Los Angeles outside the port’s headquarters in San Pedro, California.

Brig. Gen. John Lloyd, SPD commander, second from right, talks with USACE Los Angeles District project-delivery team members and Department of Veterans Affairs project partners Dec. 3 at the Jennifer Moreno VA Medical Center campus in San Diego.

Brig. Gen. John Lloyd, SPD commander, left, and Col. Andrew Baker, LA District commander, attend a briefing led by Cmdr. Geoffrey Deedrick, LA County Sheriff’s Department.

Brig. Gen. John Lloyd, SPD commander, second from left, looks over Whittier Narrows Dam as he stands next to George Sunny, project manager for the Whittier Narrows Dam Safety Modification Project, second from right, as they discuss the ongoing maintenance and flood-risk management projects occurring for the dam.

BE READY! FLOODS

DURING

Unplug appliances to prevent electrical shock when power comes back on.

Do NOT drive or walk across flooded roads. Cars and people can be swept away.

Gather emergency supplies and follow local radio or TV updates.

WEATHER ALERT!

RECOGNIZE FLOOD RISK



- Identify flood-prone or landslide-prone areas near you.
- Know your community's warning signals, evacuation routes, and emergency shelter locations.
- Know flood evacuation routes near you.

When power lines are down, water is in your home, or before you evacuate, **TURN OFF** gas, power, and water.

Tie down or bring outdoor items inside.

Throw away items that cannot be disinfected, like wall coverings, cloth, rugs, and drywall.

PRACTICE SAFE HYGIENE



Wash hands with soap and water to help prevent germs.



Listen for information from your local officials on how to safely use water to drink, cook, or clean.

AFTER

Use fans, air conditioning units, and dehumidifiers for drying.

For cleanup, wear rubber boots and plastic gloves.

Clean walls, hard floors, and other surfaces with soap and water. Use a mixture of 1 cup bleach and 1 gallon water to disinfect.

Caution! Flood water may contain trash.



For more information visit <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/>