



Photo by Dena O'Dell

From left to right: Lesa Heebner, mayor of Solana Beach; Tony Kranz, mayor of Encinitas; U.S. Congressman Mike Levin, 49th Congressional District, California; and Col. Julie Balten, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, celebrate after signing a ceremonial Project Partnership Agreement for the San Diego County (Encinitas and Solana Beach) Shoreline Protection Project during a May 4 press conference at the Fletcher Cove Community Center in Solana Beach, California.

## Corps, cities of Solana Beach-Encinitas sign project partnership agreement for shoreline protection

BY DENA O'DELL, LA DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SOLANA BEACH — Col. Julie Balten, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District commander, joined U.S. Rep. Mike Levin and mayors with the cities of Encinitas and Solana Beach May 4 to celebrate the signing of a partnership agreement to protect both cities' shorelines.

The representatives, which also included Tony Kranz, mayor of Encinitas, and Lesa Heebner, mayor of Solana Beach, signed a ceremonial Project Partnership Agreement for the San Diego County (Encinitas and Solana Beach) Shoreline Protection Project during a press conference at the Fletcher Cove Community Center. The official Project Partnership Agreement was signed by the Corps and both cities in April.

The event celebrated the collaboration between local, state and federal partners on getting the project underway, which includes constructing a 50-foot-wide protective berm along 7,800 feet of shoreline in Encinitas, with renourishment cycles every five years. For Solana Beach, the Corps plans to construct a 150-foot-wide protective berm along 7,200 feet of shoreline, with renourishment cycles every 10 years.

"We really appreciate our commitment and collaboration with the cities, Encinitas and Solana Beach, and the hard work of all of our teams really making this come to fruition," Balten said. "This project is about protecting the people, protecting infrastructure and just creating amazing beaches for people to come and recreate on."

Initial construction is expected to begin this fall and includes placing about 340,000 cubic yards of sand at Encinitas and 700,000 cubic yards of sand at Solana Beach, with construction estimated to last four to six months.

"We're very excited to be at this stage of the Encinitas-Solana Beach Coastal Storm Damage-Reduction project. It's been in the works for just over 20 years," Kranz said. "Over the last two years, we have all noticed more coastal erosion along our shoreline ... For someone who grew up in Encinitas with the sandy beaches we had, while there were occasional winters where a lot of the sand left, it did return. Looking at our beaches and shoreline today, we do have to wonder. This

['SHORELINE' continued on Page 7](#)



Red Rock Canyon partnership



Photos by Robert DeDeaux

Los Angeles District Commander Col. Julie Balten discusses project ideas with Bureau of Land Management representatives at Red Rock Canyon May 2 in Las Vegas. The district plans to renovate several structures at the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area operated by the Bureau of Land Management. Red Rock Canyon State Park features scenic desert cliffs, vegetation and spectacular rock formations.

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Honoring our fallen heroes on Memorial Day; summer safety

Hello, SPL Team!

May 29 is Memorial Day, a time when we can pause and remember the valor and great sacrifices of the military men and women who gave their lives in defense of our nation, its values, our freedoms and our liberties.

On this day of solemn reverence, we remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our nation. This is something all of us who have worn the uniform knew might be asked of us when we raised our right hands, but it's a price only a portion of those serving have paid.

These Americans came from across our country, from every race and religion, from farms and factories to cities and neighborhoods, and every imaginable walk of life. We feel the loss of these brave men and women throughout our nation's history as deeply in our military we



COL. JULIE A. BALTEN  
LA DISTRICT COMMANDER

do in our families and communities across this great nation.

This Memorial Day, I encourage you all to keep in mind the common bond we have with the service members who have gone before us who selflessly served our nation and paid this ultimate price. I call on each of you to honor them by participating in the National Moment of Remembrance,

which gives us time to pause at 3 p.m. local time to reflect on those who died in service to our nation. Those with flags can fly them at half-staff from sunrise until noon, and then raise them briskly to the top of the staff until sunset, in honor of the nation's battle heroes.

Also, if you know a Gold Star or surviving family, this is a wonderful opportunity to let them know you remember their service member and are grateful for their selfless service. Remember: Every fallen hero leaves painful memories

and great sorrow for their families and friends. To remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice, let us never forget to honor their families, for whom the loss is so much more personal.

I'd be remiss if I didn't also take this opportunity to remind you to make and keep safety your priority not only during this long weekend, but throughout the summer and beyond. Memorial Day weekend marks the start of the 101 Critical Days of Summer campaign. Summer brings an uptick of travel and outdoor activities, and with it, an increase in mishaps from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day.

Whether you wear a uniform to work or serve this country as a civilian, we need you back safe and sound — so always keep safety in mind!

As always, thank you all for everything you do!

Sincerely,

Col. Julie A. Balten



U.S. Army photo by Elizabeth Frazier





Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Robert Cloy

**Project partners, including members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, prepare to cut the ribbon May 8 at the Digital Test and Training Range Facility at Edwards Air Force Base, California. The DTTR is specifically designed to meet the unique and complex needs of the Joint Simulation Environment. Equipped with cutting-edge technology, the facility enables Edwards' skilled test professionals to work more effectively and efficiently than ever.**

# LA District joins 412th Electronic Warfare Group to open test facility

## LA DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District joined the 412th Electronic Warfare Group, 445th Test Squadron, in celebrating the opening of the Digital Test and Training Range facility during a May 8 ribbon-cutting ceremony May 8 at Edwards Air Force Base.

The \$34.4 million-dollar, state-of-the-art facility is designed to provide high-end modeling and simulation capabilities for the United States Air Force. Construction on the project, which was managed by the Corps' LA District, started in March 2021.

The project included a 72,000-plus-square-foot, multistory, secure facility and required a significant amount of expertise from engineers at the LA District, including strict adherence to sensitive facility design specifications, said John Stephens, area engineer with the LA District's Construction Division. This included complying with Intelligence Community Directive 705, which establishes standards for Sensitive Compartmented Information Facilities and is required to accredit the facility for use.

Stephens said he's proud of the team for their work on the project, especially working

on such a technical project during the height of COVID-19.

"We got some critical construction completed in a very safe manner in the middle of the pandemic with no major issues," he said.

The Air Force Test Center is the lead Air Force partner supporting Air Force Test and Evaluation, Air Force Training and Readiness, the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, and the Department of the Navy executing the Joint Simulation Environment as a cross-service, government-owned, enterprise solution to develop a virtual battlespace environment.

The DTTR is specifically designed to meet the unique and complex needs of the Joint Simulation Environment. Equipped with cutting-edge technology, the facility enables Edwards' skilled test professionals to work more effectively and efficiently than ever.

"I am grateful to the countless individuals, including leadership from the 412th Test Wing and the Air Force Test Center at Edwards AFB, who have worked tirelessly to advance this state-of-the-art facility," McCarthy said. "This will serve as an invaluable resource to help test weapons systems in realistic environments and better prepare for future missions. Because of these unwavering efforts, our nation's Air

Force will be stronger and better equipped to handle the challenges ahead."

This DTTR instantiates the first-of-its-kind USAF JSE supersite and will pave the way toward digital transformation for experimentation, development, testing, and high-end advanced training of fifth-generation and other advanced weapon systems.

The Air Force rapidly established two DTTR facilities — the first at Edwards AFB, closely followed by a second at Nellis AFB, Nevada, within the following year. Both facilities are enabled by the architecture developed by the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, Naval Air Systems Command, at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, and their continuing partnership between the USAF and USN.

The DTTR represents a robust digital synthetic environment for developing fifth- and sixth-generation platforms and their advanced weapon systems using the principles of digital engineering.

This facility will allow the Test and Evaluation enterprise to execute complex testing and high-end training events in a virtual environ-

[‘TEST FACILITY’ continued on Page 5](#)

[‘TEST FACILITY’ continued from Page 4](#)

ment that can replicate high densities of model-based systems in a closed, secured environment without the traditional limitations of an Open-Air Range.

The facility can execute high-tempo training and mission rehearsal events and provide high-density, multi-threat scenarios in air, land, sea, and soon space and cyber environments. The mission the 445th Test Squadron will begin performing at the DTTR and is anticipated to revolutionize test and training across the electromagnetic spectrum for multi-domain, multi-platform, system-of-systems scenarios, as well as influence the early developmental stages of weapons systems using realistic models in a government-owned, low-cost and low-risk environment.

"Beyond simply its functional characteristics, this new facility represents a tangible expression of our organization's values and mission," said Air Force Lt. Col. James Petersen, the 445th TS commander. "It is a statement that reinforces our commitment to excellence, innovation and service to our nation. And more than that, it represents an investment in the future of the United States Air Force."

*Air Force Tech. Sgt. Robert Cloy, Air Force Test Center Public Affairs, contributed to this story.*



Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Robert Cloy

**Air Force Lt. Col. James Petersen, 445th Test Squadron commander, delivers remarks at the Digital Test and Training Range Facility ribbon-cutting ceremony May 8 at Edwards Air Force Base, California. The mission the 445th TS will begin performing at the DTTR is anticipated to revolutionize test and training across the electromagnetic spectrum for multi-domain, multi-platform, system-of-systems scenarios.**

# Recognition for excellence



Courtesy photo

**Col. Julie Balten, commander of the LA District, presents Craig McCarthy with the South Pacific Division's Department of Veterans Affairs Project Execution Office, with an LA District coin for excellence during a May 17 Senior Advisory Group visit to the San Diego VA Major project at the VA San Diego Medical Center.**



# LA District enters 50-year shoreline-protection agreement with San Clemente

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
STEPHEN BAACK  
LA DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District commander joined U.S. Rep. Mike Levin and San Clemente Mayor Chris Duncan to sign a ceremonial project partnership agreement May 4 to protect the San Clemente shoreline.

Col. Julie Balten joined Levin and Duncan for the press conference and ceremonial signing that celebrates the collaboration between the Corps and the City of San Clemente for the construction of the 50-foot-wide beach nourishment project along a 3,412-foot-long stretch of shoreline using a replenishment of 200,000 cubic yards of compatible sediment every six years on average for the next 50 years.

The initial construction is an estimated \$15 million with a 65/35 cost share between the Corps and the City of San Clemente.

“I want to emphasize how much we value the collaboration we have with the City of San Clemente as we work to reduce shoreline erosion and protect coastal infrastructure from storm-induced waves along the San Clemente shoreline for those who live, work and recreate here, and those who use the rail service between Orange County and San Diego,” Balten said.

“I’m excited as we bring the talent and the experience of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to work side by side with the City of San Clemente in the investment to restore and preserve the shoreline, and to protect community members,” Balten added. “We are in a unique position to make a positive impact and potentially create a better, safer tomorrow for those of us here now and for future residents.”

The loss of shoreline protection reduces recreational beach width and can cause damage to coastal residential and commercial properties from storm-induced waves. This can present a threat to community members, homes, businesses, transportation and those who visit San Clemente State Beach.

The narrowing of the shoreline can subject the public facilities, seaward of the railroad corridor, to wave-induced damage and further reduces recreational space on an already space-

limited area. This includes the nearby Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF), Amtrak and Metrolink commuter rail line that carries more than 100,000 passengers per day.

The project, however, is designed to help address all these issues by reducing the potential for storm damage to facilities located along the coast of San Clemente, including recreational beach facilities and the rail corridor, and helping restore and maintain recreational use along the San Clemente coastal area.

“This is really the core of San Clemente,” Duncan told reporters gathered at the event. “If you know anything about San Clemente, you know the beaches are the fabric where we paint our lives. This is incredibly important to the citizens of San Clemente, to all of our

visitors and to our businesses as well because our beaches are critical to our local economy.

“This project is going to go a long, long way to solidifying this area, protecting it from future erosion, allowing our residents to enjoy it, and continuing to bring people to this area to spend money and support our local economy,” Duncan added. “I’m incredibly proud of all the partnership we’ve got here and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for working on this and seeing it through.”

The signing and press conference were followed by another, similar project-partnership agreement event at Fletcher Cove Community Center in Solana Beach, which included Balten, Levin, and the mayors of Solana Beach and Encinitas.



Col. Julie Balten, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, speaks about the San Clemente shoreline protection project-partnership agreement May 4, while joined by U.S. Rep. Mike Levin, left, and San Clemente Mayor Chris Duncan, right, on the San Clemente Pier.



Photo by Dena O'Dell

Col. Julie Balten, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, speaks about the San Diego County (Encinitas and Solana Beach) Shoreline Protection Project during a May 4 press conference at the Fletcher Cove Community Center in Solana Beach, California.

## ‘SHORELINE’ continued from Page 1

project is in the nick of time, and I appreciate all that’s gone in to bringing it here.”

The Corps received more than \$30 million for the initial construction of both projects in fiscal year 2022 from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The initial construction cost is about \$50 million with a 65/35 cost share between both cities.

“The Encinitas-Solana Beach Coastal Storm Damage Reduction Project has been decades in the making,” Levin said. “It is the result of efforts of local, state and federal part-

ners over a long period of time, and specifically, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which is a huge piece of legislation we passed in Congress last year. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was instrumental in making this a reality, at long last, and I am so proud to have secured \$30.5 million in the law for this project.”

In addition to the initial construction this fall, the project will include 13 beach renourishments over a 50-year period at about \$417 million, with a 50/50 federal-sponsor cost share.

“It’s really wonderful to be here today cel-

ebrating this significant milestone,” Heebner said. “We really appreciate your continuous dedication to this project, which is so important to our recreation, to our beautiful beaches, to public safety, to preserving the infrastructure that is important to all of our daily lives and really improving the quality of life for everyone who comes to visit our beaches. Signing this partnership agreement signifies the many years of dedication to this effort that will result in replenishment of our most vital recreational and environmental resource – our beach.”



Click the links below to find us on social media!





Workers can be seen in the distance constructing the Spinal Cord Injury facility and Community Living Center during a Construction Safety Day May 4 at the VA San Diego Medical Center in San Diego.

## LA District commemorates Construction Safety Week with training, project site tours across district

### LOS ANGELES DISTRICT SAFETY OFFICE

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers commemorated Construction Safety Week during the first couple weeks of May at various project sites and offices across the district. Some of those sites included a Safety Day at the VA San Diego Medical Center project and safety training at the LA District's Base-yard in South El Monte, which also included a site tour at Prado Dam in Corona, California.

In early May, LA District project managers, along with the Corps' contractors and subcontractors took time to provide additional safety training and remind all employees at LA District job sites about the importance of safety.

"As the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' lead project safety officer and the government's designated Authority for Safety on Mega-Major projects, I want to take a moment to express my deep gratitude, as well as the appreciation of the U.S.



Col. Julie Balten, LA District commander, discusses the San Diego VA Spinal Cord Injury facility and Community Living Center with project managers and contractors May 4 during Construction Safety Day at the VA San Diego Medical Center in San Diego.

[‘SAFETY’ continued on Page 9](#)

### [‘SAFETY’ continued from Page 8](#)

Army Corps of Engineers for the efforts on all of our projects to keep workers safe and to send them home to their families safe and sound at the end of each day," said Chris Rainwater, deputy chief of the LA District's Safety Office.

In the last 10 years, more than 10,500 workers have died on construction projects in the U.S., which equates to four workers dying every day on construction sites across America, Rainwater said, adding that slips, trips and falls, especially from heights, continue to be the leading causes of death on construction sites.

"Your efforts, in combination with the exhaustive work of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ensures that our project sites maintain the highest safety standards in the world," he said. "Your commitment to building a strong and lasting safety culture, where superintendents, foreman and workers want to do their best to keep safety as the imperative on the project, make the difference every single day."



Jacob Davis, second from right, special assistant for dam safety with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers's Headquarters, takes time out May 16 to get an up-close look at Prado Dam, learning about recent, ongoing and upcoming modifications to the dam.

Photo by Stephen Baack

## Safety goals: Where do Corps employees find them?

### LOS ANGELES DISTRICT SAFETY OFFICE

Would you believe the Los Angeles District expects you to know what the district's safety goals are? Yes! "But why?" you might ask.

Because the district's safety goals are **YOUR GOALS**, too!!!

We all want to go home safely, but that starts with a shared responsibility of those specific goals. The following six goals have been identified as the Safety Office's fiscal year 2023 priorities:

Goal No. 1: Increase the level of leadership engagement and employee participation.

Goal No. 2: Improve near miss reporting and reduce mishap trends.

Goal No. 3: Improve SOH safety training opportunities and increase safety promotion.

Goal No. 4: Improve safety inspections and assessments.

Goal No. 5: Improve risk management processes and execution.

Goal No. 6: Improve health protection and readiness.

To learn more about each goal and its objectives, start with the "Strategic Plan" button (pictured in this article) on the Safety Office's Sharepoint page, located at: <https://usace.dps.mil/sites/INTRA-SPL/SitePages/Safety-Office.aspx>.

The site also offers a plethora of additional safety information or you can contact any Safety Office representative, including the Safety Office's new chief, Cecy Ordonez, or the Safety Office's deputy chief, Chris Rainwater.

*The Safety and Occupational Health Office's mission is: Through unwavering collaboration and partnership with all employees and stakeholders, develop, implement, promote and execute a Safety Management System that includes everyone, hears all voices and opinions, examines every facet and every possibility, and works in tandem with all to identify, mitigate, abate and overcome risk towards mission success.*

### CO1 LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT & EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

CESOHMS, Champions, Action Plans

Report a Hazard

SOH Policy

OSHA Right & Responsibilities POSTER.pdf

Disciplinary Action Process

Budgeting for SOH.pdf

Safety in DPMAP

Safety Awards

Contractor Oversight

### SURVEY & STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Plan Readiness Scorecard

Strategic Plan

Safety Survey Results



Corps increases water releases at Alamo Dam after heavy rainfall



Pictured is Alamo Lake State Park March 23 in western Arizona. Recent storms and snow melt flooded significant portions of the park. The park is a public recreation facility managed by Arizona State Parks and Arizona Game and Fish Department. Alamo Dam, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-operated dam, began a higher-than-normal water release to alleviate flood effects.



ABOVE: A sign at Alamo Dam State Park is partially submerged in floodwaters March 23.

RIGHT: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dam operator Matthew Ogden reviews flooded areas above Alamo Dam March 23 at the Alamo Lake State Park in western Arizona. Due to heavy rains, the Los Angeles District began a higher-than-normal water release to alleviate flood effects in and around the state park.



Members of the Los Angeles District participate in the 61st Torrance Military Appreciation Parade in Torrance, California.

Photos by John Reese

TORRANCE MILITARY APPRECIATION PARADE



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Col. Julie Balten, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District commander, speaks with a Soldier driving a truck just returning from deployment as elements form up May 20 for the 61st Torrance Military Appreciation Parade in Torrance, California. Balten and the Soldier recognized each other from a recent conversation on a flight to California. The truck, one of many Army vehicles in the event, followed the Corps team in the parade lineup. Next to Balten is LA District Park Ranger Henry Csaposs.

Bobber the Water Safety Dog poses for a photo with some fans May 20 at the Torrance Military Appreciation Parade.

Park Ranger Nick Figueroa is pictured near one of the LA District's utility terrain vehicles at the May 20 Torrance Military Appreciation Parade.





Photos by John Reese

**Brian Kamisato, acting regional business director for the Corps' South Pacific Division, visits the VA Long Beach Healthcare System May 18 to conduct a quarterly review of the LA District's projects at the hospital in Long Beach, California. Kamisato was one of several senior leaders from the Corps' Headquarters, division, both LA and Sacramento districts and the Department of Veterans Affairs on the tour as members of the Senior Advisory Group.**

# Senior leaders receive updates at San Diego, Long Beach VA projects

## LA DISTRICT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CALIFORNIA — Senior leaders from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters, South Pacific Division and the LA and Sacramento Districts, along with the director of the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Construction and Facilities Management, visited both the Department of Veterans Affairs San Diego Major and the VA Long Beach Major projects May 17-18 during a Senior Advisory Group meeting and site tour at both locations.

The quarterly informational briefings and site tours included an update on both projects' progress and status from the Corps' project leadership teams and their contractors.

## SAN DIEGO VA SPINAL CORD INJURY- COMMUNITY LIVING CENTER

During the meeting and tour in San Diego, the group was updated on the progress of the VA Spinal Cord Injury facility, Community Living Center and the parking garage structure the Corps and its contractors are constructing on behalf of the VA and the nation's military warfighters.

[‘UPDATE’ continued on Page 13](#)



**Brian Kamisato, acting regional business director for the Corps' South Pacific Division, joined by Department of Veterans Affairs' CFM-West Regional director Jennifer Williams and LA District commander Col. Julie Balten, receives a briefing about the work the Corps is doing at VA Long Beach from project manager Capt. Cristina Palomino. The group then toured the projects, which include mental health in-patient and out-patient treatment centers, a community living center and a parking structure.**



Photos by Jenn Rivo

**Leaders with the Corps' Senior Advisory Group take a tour of the Spinal Cord Injury and Community Living Center structure during a site tour May 17 at the VA San Diego Medical Center.**

[‘UPDATE’ continued from Page 12](#)

The Corps broke ground on the new Spinal Cord Injury/Community Living Center in June 2021. It is at about 50 percent completion.

Projected to open in December 2024, the new facility, which is replacing the current building at the San Diego VA Medical Center, will be a 197,000-square-foot, four-story standalone structure. The current center is one of 25 spinal cord injury and disorder facilities at VA centers throughout the U.S. The center will provide care to veterans and active-duty personnel with spinal cord injuries and disorders, who live in the San Diego and Imperial counties in California, and in Arizona and southern Nevada.

## LONG BEACH VA MENTAL HEALTH IN-PATIENT/OUTPATIENT FACILITY- COMMUNITY LIVING CENTER

During the meeting and tour at the Long Beach VA Healthcare System, senior leaders were briefed about the Mental Health Inpatient and Outpatient facilities, Community Living Center and a parking structure.

Both two-story, 80,000-plus-square-foot mental health facilities and the three-story, 181,000-thousand-square-foot Community Living Center are getting closer to completion.

The new Community Living Center is designed to facilitate medical care for veterans in need of additional support, particularly aging veterans, and includes a 120-bed facility consisting of 10 patient units with 12 beds each.



**Leaders with the Corps' Senior Advisory Group take a tour of the Spinal Cord Injury and Community Living Center structure during a site tour May 17 at the VA San Diego Medical Center.**





# ADVANCING LEADERS THROUGH OPPORTUNITY

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

KIMBERLY M. MITCHELL



MAY