



NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OICC CHINA LAKE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 2, 2021

[02.21]

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NAVFAC Officer in Charge of Construction China Lake Hosts Groundbreakings on Final Two FY2020 Earthquake Recovery Projects to Rebuild/Repair Earthquake Damaged Research Facilities

CHINA LAKE – Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) Officer in Charge of Construction (OICC) China Lake hosted a pair of ceremonial groundbreakings April 1, achieving the important milestone of beginning active construction on all Military Construction (MILCON) and Restoration and Modernization (RM) projects awarded in FY2020 for the repair and construction of research facilities at Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) China Lake.

These groundbreakings are part of the China Lake Earthquake Recovery program which include \$2.3 billion in MILCON and \$400 million RM projects resulting from damage caused by two massive earthquakes in July 2019. These projects mark the ninth MILCON project and the first RM project to start in the last six months.

OICC China Lake Executive Officer Cmdr. Timothy Kaber served as the master of ceremonies for both events and provided welcoming remarks.

The first to break ground was the \$96 million MILCON project for the Mission Systems Integration Laboratory (MSIL).

“Getting to this point 20 months after the July 2019 earthquake would not have been possible without the strong support and advocacy from local, regional and state leaders and the dedication and sense of urgency from NAVFAC Southwest, Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division (NAWCWD), NAWS China Lake Public Works Department and Jacobs A/E in building the earthquake recovery program in record time,” said OICC China Lake Commanding Officer (CO) Capt. Laurie Scott.

When constructed, the MSIL will be one of the jewels of the NAWCWD mission as a Center of Excellence for critical mission systems integration.

“There is no facility more important in the RDT&E community than this one,” said Capt. Scott. “We have partnered with the best of the best in Harper Construction to build this one-of-a-kind, state-of-the-art research

laboratory that is essential to ensuring that our warfighting capabilities remain ahead of any adversary that wish to test our resolve.”

Guest speakers included NAWCWD Executive Director Daniel Carreño, Harper Construction Company President Jeff Harper and closing remarks by OICC China Lake CO Capt. Laurie Scott.

Mr. Carreño praised the hard work of all involved in bringing this project to this point and added, “Once this project is complete, it will ensure that NAWCWD will be capable of delivering state of the art support to our warfighters.”

“Harper Construction is excited to be a part of this amazing construction effort and committed, that we (Harper Construction) would strive for excellence as we safely deliver this project to the Navy and NAWCWD with quality and on time,” said Mr. Harper

The second project to break ground was the \$78 million restoration and modernization project to seismically upgrade and modernize the interior and exterior of the historic Michelson Laboratory’s main spine and four of its ancillary wings.

Michelson Laboratory was constructed in the 1940’s in response to World War II and the Navy’s need for Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation capabilities (RDT&E). Since then, Michelson Laboratory has been a source of cutting edge research and development technologies as part of the NAWCWD mission.

Guest speakers at this event included NAWCWD Executive Director Daniel Carreño, RQ Construction Regional Business Leader/Project Executive Kevin Kurz, with OICC China Lake CO Capt. Laurie Scott providing closing remarks.

Mr. Carreño shared his personal experience of working in this historical facility and added it is certainly time for the restoration and modernization project to occur, again praising all the hard work that was required to get us to this point.

“The OICC team recognize the task ahead and we are fortunate to have the professionals of RQ Construction onboard,” said Capt. Scott. “RQ is a proven performer constructing many great facilities across the Southwest. I look forward to our partnership in completing this critical repair project on time.”

“RQ is committed to the team represented here today, to diligently work together, serve and support one another, and to deliver a world class facility with the Michelson lab repair project,” said Mr. Kurz.

In a unique move the ceremony participants, started the demolition process by ceremonially using sledge hammers to make the first breaks into a wall that is to be removed.

These RM and MILCON projects are part of a group of three major contracts that have been developed to bring the Michelson Laboratory mission back to full capability. The remaining contract will be awarded later in 2021.

NAWS China Lake is located in the Western Mojave Desert region of California, approximately 150 miles north of Los Angeles. China Lake’s mission is to support the Navy's RDT&E missions to provide cutting-edge weapons systems to the warfighter. The installation is the Navy's largest single landholding. In total, its two ranges and main site cover more than 1.1 million acres, an area larger than the state of Rhode Island.

OICC China Lake was established in August 2020 to provide engineering, acquisition, and execution oversight for military construction and repair projects caused by the devastating damage from the 6.4 and 7.1 magnitude earthquakes that occurred on July 4 and 5, 2019.

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