

Kern Council of Governments

News & Events

December 2019/January 2020



Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake Secures \$1.15 Billion for Recovery

House Minority Leader, Kevin McCarthy, announced recently that \$1.15 billion in funding has been secured for projects to rebuild China Lake following the earthquakes in July. The announcement was made in accordance with the release of the conference report accompanying the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). “This matches the full authorization amount requested by the Navy for earthquake recovery-related construction projects,” said McCarthy. The bill also authorizes an additional \$64.5 million for runway and taxi extensions at the base.

McCarthy said that after he learned the full scope of the damages, “It became my mission to ensure this year’s NDAA would authorize the necessary funds to make repairs to China Lake so the base is rebuilt even stronger.” In early December, McCarthy, Representative Paul Cook, and Senators Feinstein and Kamala Harris sent a letter to ranking members and chairs of the House and Senate Appropriations committees expressing bipartisan support for the Navy’s funding request.

Final 2020 Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) Restores \$32 million to SR 46 and SR 99

In the Draft 2020 ITIP issued in October, Caltrans’ recommendation to the California Transportation Commission the diversion of \$32 million in ITIP funding to an uncommitted reserve to fund light rail and other projects connected to climate change goals established by Governor Newsom. Of the \$32 million, \$15.5 million would be diverted from a project that would widen a dangerous stretch of SR 46 known as the Antelope Grade between the Kern County line and the Cholame “Y” intersection. In addition, \$17 million would be diverted from two critical projects on SR 99 in Madera and Tulare counties. Both projects would ensure safety and congestion relief in the south valley with capacity enhancements that eliminate dangerous gaps on the SR 99 system.



After three public hearings in Modesto, Santa Ana and Fresno, numerous letters and emails from elected officials, affected Councils of Government, stakeholders and the public, Caltrans, in the Final 2020 ITIP has restored the \$32 million dollars for the projects on SR 46 and SR 99 in Tulare and Madera counties. The Final 2020 ITIP will go before the California Transportation Commission during the first quarter of 2020.

Department of Transportation Awards \$8 million grant for the Mojave Air and Space Port



Congressman McCarthy announced that the Department of Transportation through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) approved an \$8 million grant for the Mojave Air and Space Port. The AIP grant will help make much needed repairs to existing infrastructure issues—like pavement cracks—to enhance airport safety. Congressman McCarthy stated: From Stratolaunch to Virgin Orbit, Mojave Air and Space Port is leading the way in civilian aeronautics and commercial spaceflight, but in order to continue to take the next steps towards even greater innovation in the industry, it is vital that Mojave air and space Port’s infrastructure is revitalized”.

The banner features a central image of a vast, flat landscape under a blue sky, possibly a solar farm or agricultural field. The text "Kern Council of Governments" is written in a large, yellow, cursive font at the top, and "News & Events" is written in a smaller, yellow, cursive font below it. The banner is flanked by two blue vertical bars with white curved lines at the bottom.

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Massive Solar Project Debuts in Eastern Kern

Eastern Kern County's vast renewable-energy potential shined brightly In mid-November as corporate and government leaders celebrated the completion of an eight-year, 1400-acre photovoltaic project designed to generate enough electricity to power more than 150,000 homes in the Los Angeles area. The projects developer, LA based 8minute Solar Energy's three-phase Springbok project in Cantil has put the area's otherwise underused real estate to use creating some 850 construction and maintenance positions, as well as 1,100 indirect jobs. "The Springbok cluster is the first place in the country where solar beat the price of fossil fuels," 8minute Solar spokesman Jeff McKay said by email. County Supervisor, Zack Scrivner, stated: "I support appropriately located renewable energy projects that hire locally and contribute to the organizations and needs of the community". The project's 448-megawatt-dc of electricity is being sold to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and the City of Glendale.

Upcoming Events

January 17, 2020 - San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council/Multi Agency Working Group Meeting

January 22, 2020 - Regional Transportation Plan Stakeholder Roundtable Meeting

January 29 & 30, 2020 - California Transportation Commission Meeting in Sacramento

February 12, 2020 - LCTOP Workshop at Kern COG

March 10 & 11, 2020 - Valley Vice Trip to Sacramento

March 25 & 26 - California Transportation Commission Meeting in Santa Barbara

April 29, 2020 - Joint CTC/CARB Meeting in Sacramento