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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 11, 2004

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Governor's Office of Emergency Services Recognizes Assemblywoman Ellen Corbett and the City of Redlands

SACRAMENTO – The Governor's Office of Emergency Services presented awards of recognition to Assemblywoman Ellen Corbett, D-San Leandro, and the city of Redlands for their commitment to increasing the safety of California residents and businesses in natural disasters.

The awards were presented Wednesday at the fourth annual Disaster Resistant California (DRC) conference, which is sponsored jointly by OES and San Jose State University's Collaborative for Disaster Mitigation.

"It is with great pride and humility that we present this Special DRC Recognition Award to our friend, the most honorable, Ellen Corbett," said OES Director Henry Renteria.

Corbett established the Assembly Select Committee on Earthquake Preparedness and authored laws to establish a seismic safety inventory of public schools, the California Disaster Assistance Act, the hospital seismic safety program, the streamlining of state disaster funding.

During the eight years she was mayor and city council member of the City of San Leandro in Alameda County, she advocated for a stronger city role for disaster mitigation and emergency management.

"She stimulated an interest in this profession at the highest levels in her city and was instrumental in establishing a full-time, permanent emergency manager position for the city," said Director Renteria. "Under her leadership, Corbett established a model Disaster Preparedness Program and earthquake retrofit program that is being applied by numerous communities across the nation. "

Her efforts also forged a new understanding and awareness at the state and national levels on landslides in urban areas. She brought national attention to the plight of communities across the nation inspiring the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to produce hazard survey maps for urban landslide areas. Her actions set the bar for local government leadership in disaster management.

For 10 years, the City of Redlands has identified vulnerabilities and taken steps to protect Redlands residents from disasters through the federal Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. In that time, the has city successfully completed three hazard mitigation programs and initiated the Redlands Local Mitigation Plan, required for completion by November 1 to remain eligible for future federal mitigation grants.

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"The city of Redlands began mitigation projects at a time when the concept of mitigation was still in its infancy," said Director Renteria.

Mary Petite, Redlands Cost Recovery Administrator and Local Mitigation Officer, accepted the award.

"Mary has embraced the program, the whole concept of mitigation, she is one of our mitigation champions in the local government area," said Director Renteria.

The three projects are as follows:

- Redlands Fire Safe 2000 project was a grant the city passed through to homeowners to help them develop defensible space in the urban wildland interface areas of the city. The \$150,000 HMGP grant was dispersed to 50 households at \$3,000 each, with the requirement of a 50 percent matching funds from the homeowners.
- The city built the Fire Safety Demonstration Garden to show residents how to apply fire resistant landscaping to their homes in the urban wildland interface areas. It also demonstrated the use of fire resistant products on their homes. It was built with a \$60,000 grant within the HMGP. When combined with matching funds from the city and local businesses, the city was able to construct a \$200,000 garden.
- Redlands multi-hazard mitigation grant funded community education programs in which the Redlands Fire Department held family multi-hazard disaster mitigation workshops in neighborhoods, elementary schools, assisted living facilities and other parts of the city. It also funded the construction of a Fire Safety Demonstration trailer that simulates a home fire with actual smoke to teach children to crawl along the floor and feel the doors for heat in a fire. The program, with a \$92,000 HMGP grant and with matching city funds, along with corporate donations came to approximately \$130,000.

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency. The grants are made available to local governments, special districts and certain nonprofit organizations through the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. To learn more about HMGP grants, visit www.oes.ca.gov

The Disaster Resistant California Conference was held May 3-5 in Sacramento. The annual conference brings together emergency managers, businesses, nonprofit organizations and elected officials at all levels to exchange ideas on making California resistant against disasters. This year the conference featured more than 65 presentations and attracted more than 400 attendees. The conference is sponsored by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and San Jose State University's Collaborative for Disaster Mitigation. To learn more about the conference visit www.drc.ca.gov.

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