

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
(FONSI)**

Northern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery  
Environmental Assessment  
Bellemont, Coconino County, Arizona

Approved: Homer F. Rodgers  
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Date: April 30, 2013

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and based on the analysis presented in the attached final *Northern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery Environmental Assessment*, the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services (ADVS) has determined that the approval of a federal grant, allowing the construction and operation of a cemetery on 60 acres of undeveloped land, deeded from the Department of Defense to ADVS, will not result in a significant impact on the human environment.

## BACKGROUND

The Arizona Department of Veterans' Services (ADVS), acting with deference from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is responsible for the future construction and operation of a veterans' cemetery on 60 acres of federally owned property, to be deeded from the Department of Defense to the State of Arizona in Bellemont, Coconino County, Arizona. In order to construct the project, federal grant funding is needed. Pursuant to 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 39.6 and 39.9, ADVS is authorizing a federal grant made available by the VA's National Cemetery Association (NCA) Veterans Cemetery Grants Service, and will oversee the project's master planning process. Funding and construction of this proposed cemetery constitute the proposed action reviewed in this document.

The facility would be located on the existing Camp Navajo National Guard facility, approximately 12 miles west of Flagstaff, Arizona, south of Interstate 40. The NCA grant will allow for the master plan to be realized. The master plan process will determine the maximum internment capacity of this site as well as all other features of this site, including but not limited to: entry features, roads, utilities and parking infrastructure, an avenue of flags, an assembly area, full-casket gravesites in pre-placed crypts, committal service shelter, columbarium niches and in-ground cremain burial sites, memorial walk, administration and public information buildings, public restroom, maintenance building and service yard, irrigation system, and carillon tower. The master plan shall determine appropriate quantities sufficient enough to support a 10-year projection of burial needs.

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide additional burial facilities to eligible veterans in the Northern Arizona area. The need is generated by the current population of veterans in Northern Arizona and projected death rates through 2063, and the need to accommodate the average annual number of veterans who choose to be buried in a veterans' cemetery. By establishing a new facility, this will allow the ADVS to continue to meet the needs of Northern Arizona veterans for many decades.

Public involvement for the EA included scoping letters to various local, state, and federal agencies, adjacent landowners, and several tribal officials to announce the EA undertaking. Subsequent public involvement included public notices in the *Arizona Daily Sun* to announce the drafting of the EA. Public notices were also posted at the Camp Navajo National Guard base and ADVS headquarters.

A 30-day public scoping comment period began on March 6, 2013, and ended on April 5, 2013. Four comments were received. Some clarification was made to project description, water supply, land use/zoning, and public health and safety; responses to comments are included in the Final EA. None of the comments were considered substantive to warrant further public involvement, pursuant to NEPA statutory requirements. The final EA represents changes recommended by ADVS.

## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ADVS has determined that the approval of a VA grant, allowing the construction of the proposed cemetery, will not significantly impact the environment and that preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted. This decision is based upon the following considerations:

1. Minor, short-term effects to air quality will occur as a result of construction activities associated with the development. These emissions would be controlled using standard construction best management practices. Additional traffic control measures (signage for construction vehicles, reduced speeds) may be implemented during construction.
2. No adverse impacts to populations defined under Environmental Justice regulations would occur. The project is expected to generate a small net positive economic benefit. The proposed action would result a number of temporary (construction) and a small number of permanent (facility maintenance) jobs.
3. No jurisdictional waters of the U.S. as defined under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, would be impacted by the project. Additionally, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be developed to minimize sediment and other pollutant runoff during construction.
4. The majority of the Camp Navajo facility, including the project area, was surveyed for cultural resources in 1995, 1996, and 1999; in 2005 and 2006 all accessible National Register of Historic Places–eligible sites within Camp Navajo were visited (Tremblay et al. 2008). A historic building survey of all standing buildings and structures within the Camp Navajo depot has also been conducted. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with a determination of "no historic properties affected" for the current undertaking on May 11, 2012 (Appendix B), only with respect to the 60 acres for the proposed action. All construction activities, temporary easements, and staging areas will be limited to within the 60-acre boundary. No further cultural resources investigations are recommended. However, in the event that cultural resources are encountered during construction and earth-moving for the proposed action, all ground-disturbing activities should cease, and the person in charge should immediately contact ADVS for further evaluation.
5. To ensure compliance with the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, any nests of protected species found within the project area will be relocated prior to construction activities. No federally listed endangered, threatened, candidate, or proposed species are located within the project area. Several special-status species are known to occur in the area, although special-status species do not receive federal protection. Regardless, the project is not expected to significantly impact any of these species.
6. To prevent the introduction of invasive species seeds, all earth-moving and hauling equipment shall be washed at the contractor's storage facility prior to entering the construction site.
7. No impacts to public health and safety are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed action.
8. No significant impacts to visual resources are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed action.