



**2011 LEGISLATIVE REPORT**  
**MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES**

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### Legislative Charge

2010 Minn. Law Ch. 333, art. 2 Sec. 23

### PLANNING NEW VETERANS CEMETERIES.

The commissioner of Veterans affairs shall determine a suitable site and plan for three new state Veterans cemeteries, one to be located in northeastern Minnesota, one to be located in southeastern Minnesota, and one to be located in southwestern Minnesota. In determining the site for a cemetery, the commissioner shall consider available public land options and shall seek proposals for donated land from interested counties, local communities, civic organizations, Veterans service organizations, and individuals.

The commissioner's planning process for a state Veterans cemetery must include, at a minimum, the following actions:

- (1) determining the need for the cemetery;
  - (2) investigating the availability of suitable land for the cemetery;
  - (3) assessment of impacts of the cemetery;
  - (4) encouragement of support from Veteran service organizations and local governments; and
  - (5) preparation and submission of a preapplication for a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for commitment of funding for establishing the cemetery.
- By January 15, 2011, the commissioner shall report to the chair and ranking minority member of the House of Representatives and senate committees having responsibility for Veterans affairs with a report of the commissioner's progress in implementing this section.

### Estimated Cost of Preparing this Report (*as required by Minn. Stat. 3.197*)

Staff time:	\$281.00
<u>Copies:</u>	<u>\$9.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$300.00

## **MISSION**

The Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery honors Veterans with a final resting place that commemorates their sacrifice and service given to our great nation.

## **SUMMARY**

The following progress report, submitted to the Minnesota Legislature and prepared by the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, provides an update on the State Veterans Cemetery, located in Little Falls, for the period of July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. The report reflects the cemetery's continued growth and increasing demand, as well as the department's efforts in establishing new cemeteries in the northeastern, southwestern and southeastern regions of the State.

## **PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND GROWTH**

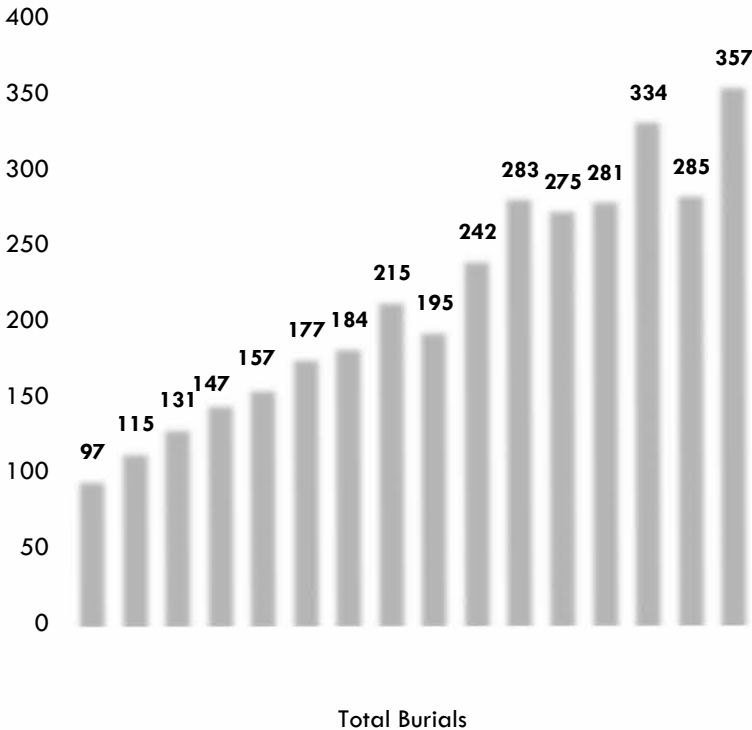
The Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery, located 7 miles north of Little Falls, was opened in June of 1994. The cemetery was originally established through the efforts of many individuals and Veteran organizations. Today the cemetery is operated by the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Burial is open to all Veterans discharged from active military service under conditions other than dishonorable. Their spouses, minor children, and under certain conditions, unmarried adult children are also eligible for burial. Also eligible for burial are members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces, the National Guard, and the Reserve Officer Training Corps who die while on active duty for training or performing service, or who have 20 years of service in reserve components of the Armed Forces creditable for retired pay.

The Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery and other state Veterans cemeteries are a compliment to the National Cemetery Administration. The National Cemetery Administration provides support to state cemeteries in the form of grants that can be used for development, expansion, and/or improvement.

Currently the cemetery has five full-time employees that are responsible for all the work that is required for administration and operation of the cemetery.

## GROWTH OF THE STATE VETERANS CEMETERY



The State Veterans Cemetery has grown steadily since opening in June 1994. This greater than 375% increase in annual burials since 1994 not only represents an dramatic increase in burial workload, but also a substantial annual increase in the number of occupied gravesites that must be maintained to a level of national shrine status that the families we serve have come to expect.

### FY 2010 HIGHLIGHTS

During FY 2010, the State Veterans Cemetery provided more burials than any other previous fiscal year period. The following annual events were held during FY 2010.

1. Our annual Memorial Service was held on May 30, 2010 and was again attended by over 1000 people. Our annual service consists of instrumental/vocal music, parade of flags, guest speakers, a rifle salute, and taps. This year we were honored to have Rear Admiral Henry C. McKinney, USN (Ret.) provide the keynote address.
2. On December 11, 2010 we participated in the Wreaths Across America observance. During the ceremony 7 ceremonial wreaths were dedicated for the US Army, US Marine Corps, US Navy, US Air Force, US Coast Guard, US Merchant Mariners, and POW/MIAs. Following the ceremony the Civil Air Patrol, MN Patriot Guard and other volunteers placed over 1700 wreaths on the gravesites of those buried at the cemetery.
3. In September, a representative from the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) was on site to complete a triennial review of the cemetery operation and facilities. The results of this review have not been received at the time of this report however results will be reviewed and shared upon receipt. Triennial reviews are conducted to assist states in compliance with the operational standards and measures of the NCA.

## FY 2010 BURIAL DETAILS

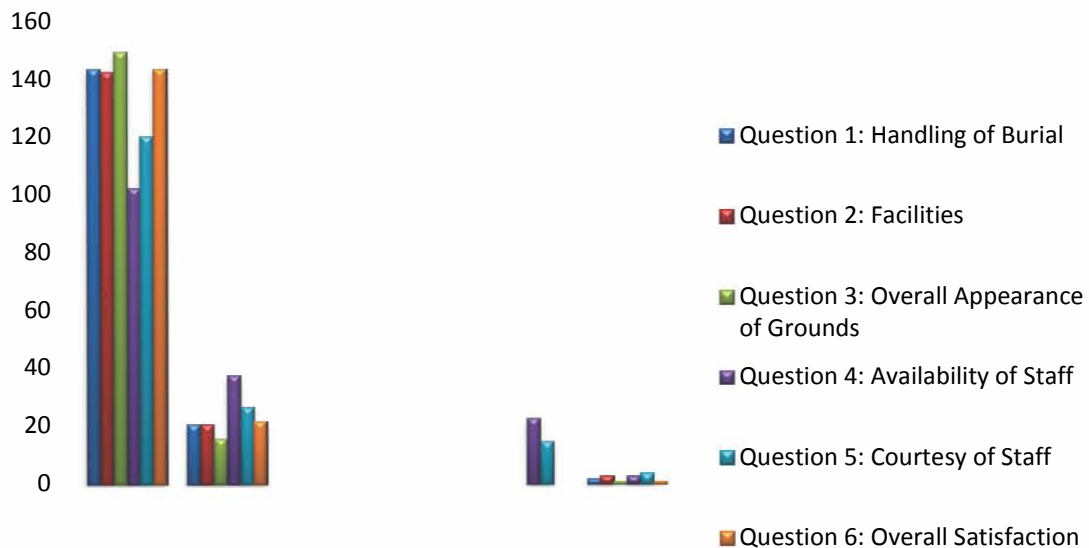
The following represents detail of burials provided during FY 2010.

<b>Burials FY 2010</b>			
	<b>Veteran</b>	<b>Dependent</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Number of Casketed Burials Completed This Fiscal Year</b>	105	56	161
<b>Number of In-Ground Cremation Burials Completed This Fiscal Year</b>	84	38	122
<b>Number of Columbarium Inurnments Filled This Fiscal Year</b>	49	25	74
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>357</b>

## FY 2010 CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY

The State Veterans Cemetery mails a survey to each next-of-kin who had a loved one buried at the cemetery. Surveys are mailed 6 months after the burial to allow individuals a clear opportunity to reflect on their experience at the cemetery. During FY 2010, 167 surveys were returned and the results of the six question survey follow.

### FY 2010 CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY RESULTS



## **PHASE 2 BURIAL AREA DEVELOPMENT**

It has been estimated that the cemetery will exhaust all developed casket burial sites during 2014 and all developed in-ground cremation sites during 2017. The NCA State Cemetery Grants Service (SCGS) will provide the necessary funding for construction of this required gravesite expansion, however the State will be responsible for funding the design effort required to produce construction documents for the project. Expended design funds are eligible for reimbursement by SCGS upon review and approval of construction documents by NCA. The anticipated cost of phase 2 design is being determined, but is expected to be less than \$100,000.

## **CEMETERY ART PROJECT**

The *Veterans Educational Historic Project* is a series of five 8 x 10-foot paintings that depict the history of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard. Contributions of Merchant Mariners during WWII also will be incorporated throughout the works. Beyond being a memorial to our nation's fighting men and women, the paintings will serve as an educational tool to help future generations understand our history and the vital role our military has played in the creation and preservation of our democracy. The paintings will hang in the committal hall of the administration building at the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery to honor all who served and commemorate their sacrifices in all wars.

The project was conceived of and commissioned by the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery Memorial Association. The Memorial Association is a private, nonprofit organization that formed initially to support the establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery in central Minnesota. The Association realized its dream when the State Veterans Cemetery opened in 1994 just north of Little Falls. Since that time, the Association has worked to support and enhance the cemetery operations including sponsoring the annual Memorial Day ceremony on the grounds. By commissioning this project, the Association seeks to honor those who pass through the committal hall on their way to their final resting place.

A variety of private sources to fund the project including donations from Veterans Service Organizations, corporations, foundations, and individuals are being sought. Working effectively with the many posts and auxiliaries throughout the State of Minnesota is a goal of our grassroots effort.

More information regarding this exciting project is available at:  
<http://www.buonfresco.com/Veterans/index.html>

## NEW STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES

As part of the Nation's commitment to taking care of our heroes, the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) has developed a strategic goal to provide Veterans across the country with a burial option in a State or National Cemetery within 75 miles of their home. NCA, through the State Cemetery Grants Office, provides States grant opportunities for the construction, plus initial basic equipment needed for operation. The State is responsible for the initial cost of complete design of the cemetery; however these costs are reimbursed back to the State upon award of a construction contract. The State does have a long-term obligation in providing for annual operational costs of the cemetery. The State is also responsible for obtaining land for any potential cemetery. The cost of land is not reimbursable through the grant.

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs received legislative authority to begin researching suitable sites for future State Veteran Cemeteries in the northeast, southwest and southeast regions of Minnesota. MDVA is currently working to determine whether or not the proposed sites are suitable for construction of a State Veterans Cemetery according to the guidelines of the National Cemetery Administration.

During the 2009 legislative session, \$1.5M was appropriated for the design of two new State Veterans Cemeteries. A design contract was executed for this effort in January of 2010.

### SF 2737 – 86<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE SESSION – SECTION 23

*REQUIRES PLANNING NEW VETERANS CEMETERIES BY THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:*

#### **Determine Need**

- Analyze existing service provided by national cemeteries and other state cemeteries.
- Consider service life of existing cemeteries.
- Provide data on Veteran population.
  - Completed as part of pre-application process (**see attachment #1**).
  - Anticipated demographic analysis was confirmed by NCA as part of pre-application approval process.
  - Underserved Veteran populations as indicated on FY 2011 Priority List of State Cemetery Construction Project (**see attachment #2**):
    - NE MN (22,570)
    - SW MN (17,248)
    - SE MN (39,752)
      - It should be noted that over ½ of the population estimate for this project are residents of either SW Wisconsin or NE Iowa.
      - Non-residents are eligible for burial in our current State Veterans Cemetery.
      - NCA discourages States from having residency requirements.

## Investigate Availability of Suitable Land

- Current focus of potential site locations is within a 25 mile radius from identified locations of Duluth, Redwood Falls and Stewartville.
- Suitable land should be easily accessed by road, free of limitations such as rock, steep slopes and wetlands, uncompromised by incompatible land uses nearby, and appropriate for cemetery use. Land already owned by the state, county or municipality is usually the best choice. The state must have title to the land.
- Site selection criteria (**see attachment #3**) as required by NCA is the basis for reviewing and analyzing potential cemetery sites. Initial review includes site location on web maps (Google Earth, etc.), soils review using Websoil Survey and site visits for visual analysis of potential properties.
  - **REGIONAL SITE VISITS/ANALYSIS**
  - **NE Minnesota**
    - 29 sites identified for site visits
    - 5 sites analyzed by consultant
    - 1 site remains under consideration, significant concerns identified
  - **SW Minnesota**
    - 4 sites identified for site visits
    - 1 site analyzed
    - 0 sites remain under consideration
  - **SE Minnesota**
    - 2 sites identified for site visits
    - 1 site analyzed
    - 1 site remains under consideration, no significant concerns currently identified

## Assess Impacts

- Analyze possible negative environmental and historic preservation impacts the cemetery location may have.
- Potential sites that appear to meet NCA site selection criteria based on visual inspection are then visited and analyzed by our contracted consultant.
  - 7 statewide visits performed (details above)
- The consultant provides general analysis and research of recorded environmental and cultural impacts.
- Known negative impacts are reviewed and a future course of action is determined.



## **Encourage Support**

- Veterans Service Organizations and local governments should be informed of the project and be in support of an effort to establish a state Veterans cemetery.
  - Veterans, Veterans Service Organizations, county commissioners and other stakeholders informed via direct written communication (**see attachment #4**), press releases to local media and
  - Attendance by department staff at outreach events and county board meetings.
  - Site visits by various county board members to current cemetery in Little Falls.
- The state legislature must pass necessary legislation authorizing the state cemetery.
  - M.S. 197.236
- The state legislature must appropriate funds for design.
  - 2009 Appropriation for Northeast MN and Redwood County.
- The state legislature must appropriate funds for operation and maintenance.

## **Complete Pre-Application**

- Pre-applications submitted and approved for three new State Veterans Cemeteries, as included on the FY 2011 Priority List of State Veterans Cemetery Construction Projects. (**see attachment #2**)

## ATTACHMENT 1:

### **Potential for New State Veterans Cemeteries in Southern Minnesota (2009)**

**By David P. Swantek, Cemetery Director  
MN State Veterans Cemetery, Little Falls MN**

#### Introduction

The following document was produced in response to a request during the 2008 MN Legislative Session to determine any potential for new State Veterans Cemeteries in southern Minnesota. The State of Minnesota currently operates a Veterans cemetery located in central Minnesota near Little Falls. Fort Snelling National Cemetery, located in the metropolitan area of Minneapolis/St. Paul, provides burial for Veterans and is operated by the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs. A second State Veterans Cemetery has been proposed in the Duluth area, and a feasibility study is under way for a proposed site near Wrenshall to determine whether or not the site is suitable for construction of a Veterans cemetery according to guidelines of the National Cemetery Administration.

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA), through the State Cemetery Grants Office, provides State grant opportunities for the construction of new State Veterans Cemeteries. These grants provide for 100% of the cost of construction, plus initial basic equipment needed for operation. The State is responsible for the upfront cost of complete design of the cemetery; however these costs are reimbursed to the State upon award of a construction contract. The State does have a long-term obligation in providing for annual operational costs of the cemetery. The State is also responsible for obtaining land for any potential cemetery. The cost of land is not reimbursable through the grant.

#### Why NE Minnesota (Duluth Area)?

During a triennial review by the NCA of the State's current facility in Little Falls, representatives from the State Cemetery Grants Office were asked if any other areas in Minnesota would support an additional State Veterans Cemetery. Demographics provided by NCA showed support for the NE area of Minnesota, because of the large Veteran population in St. Louis County. Outside the seven county metro area, St. Louis County has the largest Veteran population in the State. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) demographics show 21,000 Veterans as being "underserved" by a National or State Veterans Cemetery in the NE Minnesota area. Based upon this NCA recommendation, NE Minnesota became the focus for an additional cemetery.

#### NCA Demographics

The NCA determines the area of service for a Veterans cemetery, whether National or State, to be a 75 mile radius. Exhibit 1 shows the service areas, as defined by NCA, for Ft. Snelling National Cemetery, the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery near Little Falls, and the proposed new cemetery near Duluth. All counties reached by the 75 mile radius are highlighted. The remaining MN counties shown in white are considered "underserved".

## “Actual” Demographic Trends

Previous demographic study indicates that over 80 percent of burials come from within a 50 mile radius of the cemetery. When a Veterans cemetery option is further than 50 miles away, the majority of families chose a more local option; typically a church or city cemetery. A brief review of over 14 years of burial records at the MN State Veterans Cemetery near Little Falls indicates a great majority of burials completed at Little Falls are from a radius extending from the St. Cloud area to the Brainerd Lakes area. These findings would support the 50 mile radius theory.

## “Underserved” areas in Southern MN

In studying the “underserved” counties, as defined by NCA, in southern Minnesota, these counties were further split into a SW Minnesota region and a SE Minnesota region. Exhibit 2 shows the “underserved” SW MN Counties in orange. Exhibit 3 shows the “underserved” SE MN Counties in green.

In all exhibits, counties were not split, but rather assigned based upon major population concentrations. Please note that population estimates are provided by the USDVA and are for 9/30/2010.

## Findings

Both NCA demographics and “actual” demographic trends were used to determine 1) if the Veteran population of the “underserved” counties might support a NCA grant for construction of additional State Veterans Cemeteries, 2) what counties and their Veteran population would be served within the smaller 50 mile service area of potential new State Veterans Cemeteries, and 3) the ideal location for serving the largest number of Veterans within a 50 mile service area.

### SW Minnesota (Redwood Falls area)

In the 17 “underserved” counties of SW MN the estimated Veteran population by 9/2010 will be 18,081. Placing a new State Veterans Cemetery in the Redwood Falls area would place the major Veteran population concentrations of 14 counties within a 50 mile radius and provide a Veterans cemetery option to an estimated 22,789 Veterans. See Exhibit 4.

### SE Minnesota (Stewartville area)

In the 6 “underserved” counties of SE MN the estimated Veteran population by 9/2010 will be 14,393. Placing a new State Veterans Cemetery in the Stewartville area would place the major Veteran population concentrations of 9 counties within a 50 mile radius and provide a Veterans cemetery option to an estimated 28,989 Veterans. See Exhibit 5.

It should be noted that the NCA would also consider the populations of at least 2 Wisconsin Counties and 9 Iowa Counties whose major Veteran population concentrations fall within the 75 mile radius service area used by the NCA. Currently these out-of-state

counties are not served by a National or State Veterans Cemetery. Exhibit 6 highlights this entire service area.

### Conclusion

Both areas identified above in southern Minnesota have Veteran populations similar to the Veteran populations within the 50 mile service areas of both Little Falls (29,190) and Duluth (22,772).

On the FY09 Priority List of Pending State Cemetery Grant Preapplications, 16 of the 24 projects for the establishment of new State Veterans Cemeteries have smaller Veteran population estimates than both of the areas identified in southern Minnesota.

Based on the information gathered for this study, the MN Department of Veterans Affairs believes that if the State of Minnesota has interest in moving these projects forward, support through the State Cemetery Grants Office would be justifiable.

### Sources

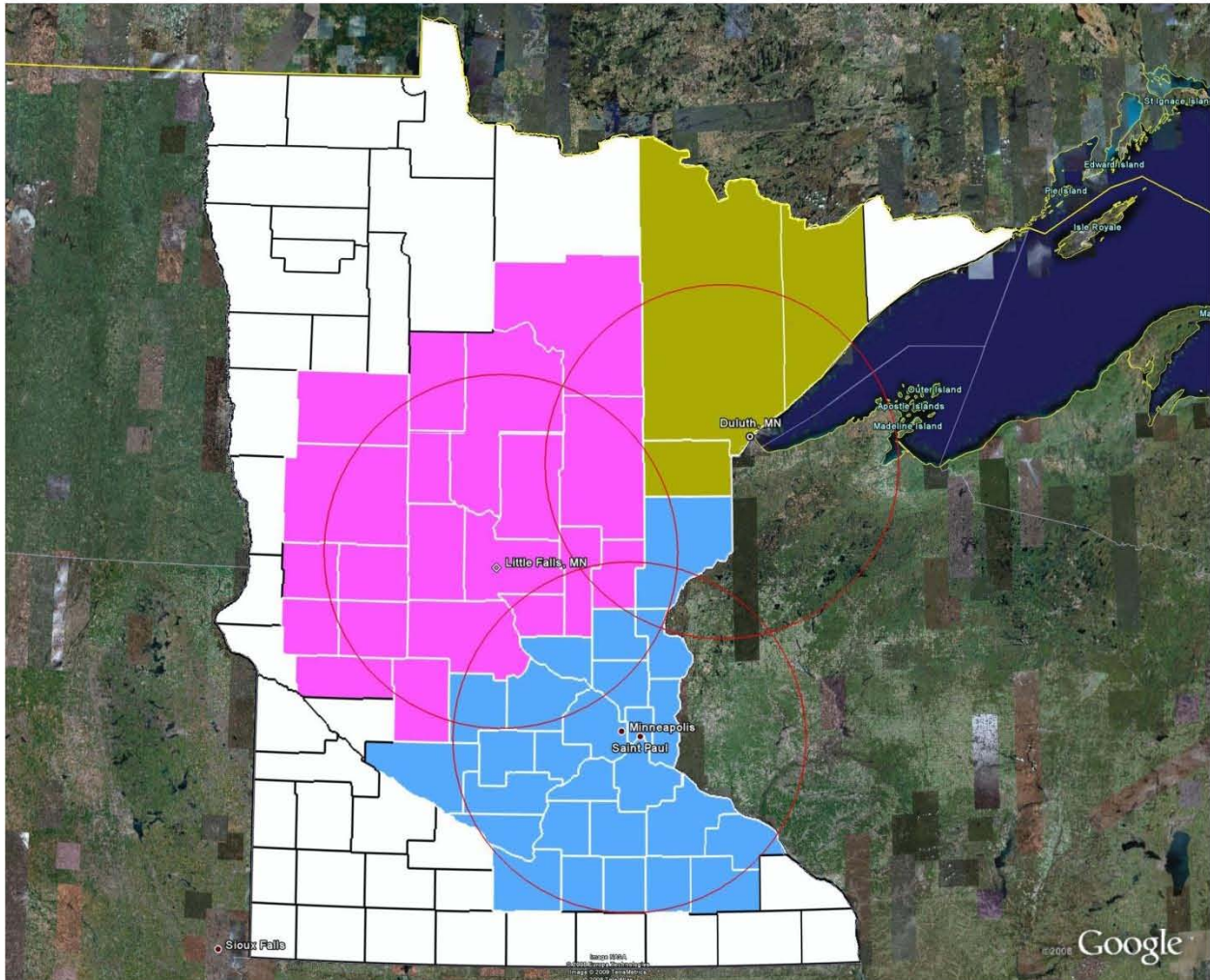
William J. Craig, *Market Potential for a State Veterans Cemetery at Camp Ripley*, ~1991.

Veterans Affairs, U.S. Department of, "County-Level Veteran Populations by State, 2000-2030" September 2006.

Minnesota Atlas Next Generation, "2000 Census, Living Veterans Age 18+" January 2001.

Veterans Affairs, U.S. Department of, "FY2009 Priority List of Pending State and Tribal Government Cemetery Construction Grant Preapplications", September 2008.

## Exhibit 1

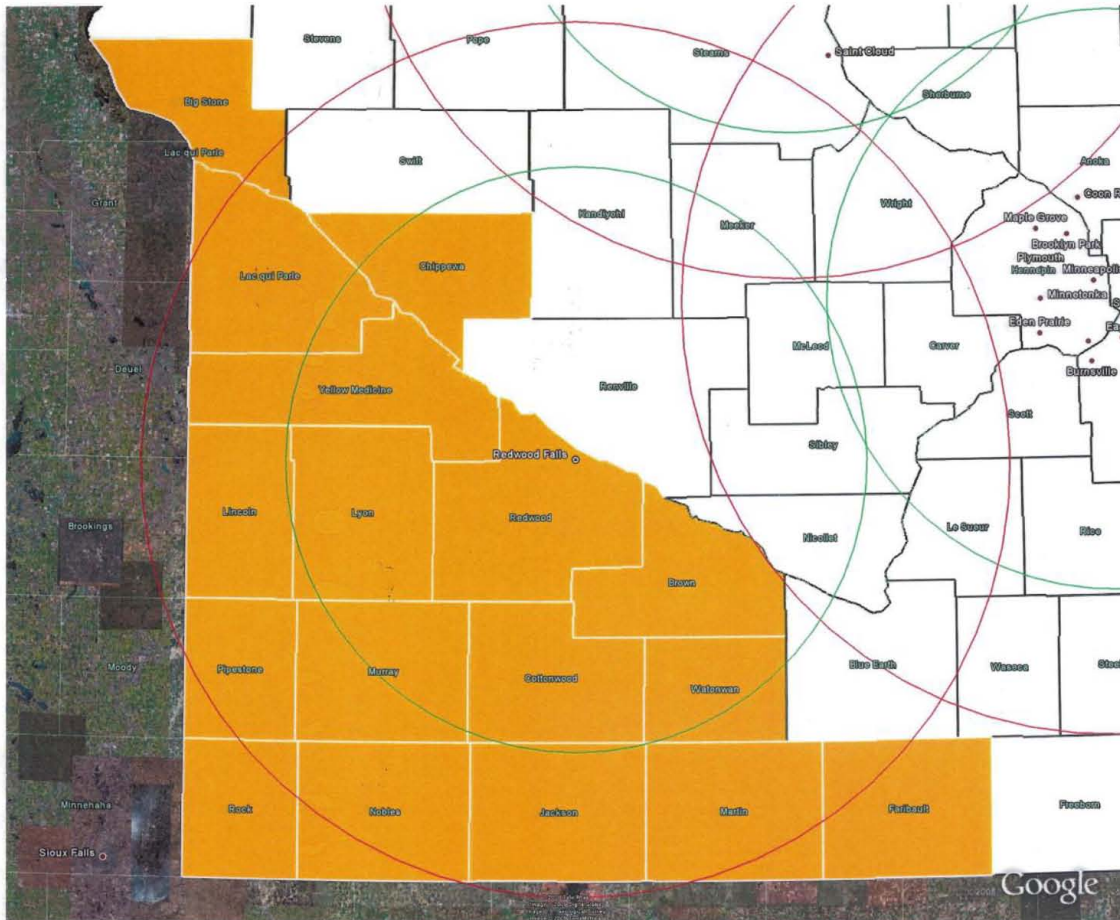


Counties not reached by the NCA defined service area of 75 miles are shown in white. These counties are considered to be “underserved”.

The “underserved” counties in southern Minnesota are:

Big Stone	Lincoln	Murray
Brown	Lyon	Nobles
Chippewa	Martin	Pipestone
Cottonwood	Mower	Redwood
Faribault		Rock
Fillmore		Watonwan
Freeborn		Winona
Houston		Yellow Medicine

Exhibit 2



“Underserved” counties of SW MN are shown in orange.

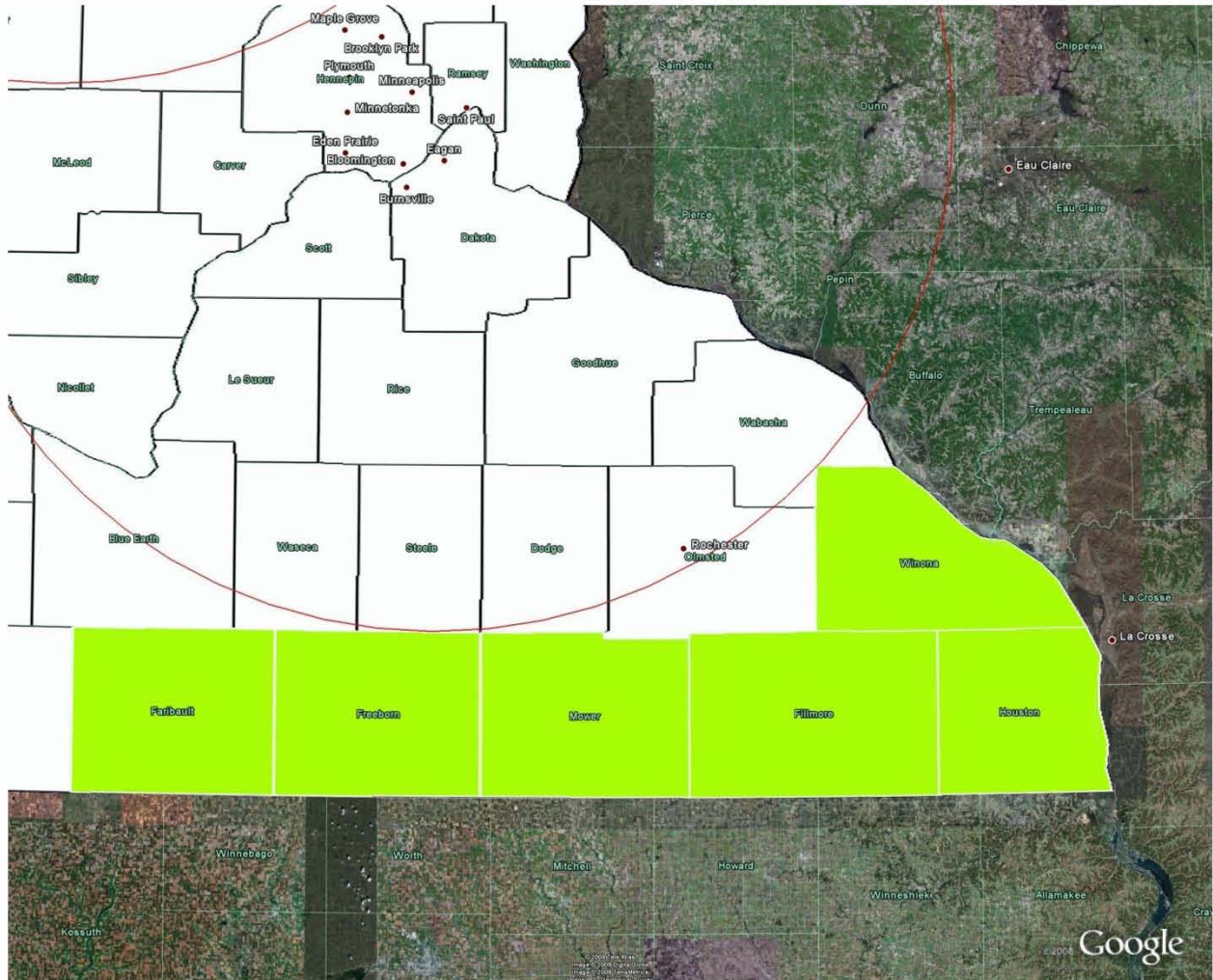
The Veteran populations for these counties as of 9/2010 are estimated to be as follows:

Big Stone	443	Redwood	1,353
Brown	2,286	Rock	684
Chippewa	1,010	Watonwan	794
Cottonwood	952	Yellow Medicine	773
Faribault	1,320		
Jackson	993		
Lac qui Parle	613	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,081</b>
Lincoln	459		
Lyon	1,692		
Martin	1,822		
Murray	747		

Nobles  
Pipestone

1,466  
674

Exhibit 3

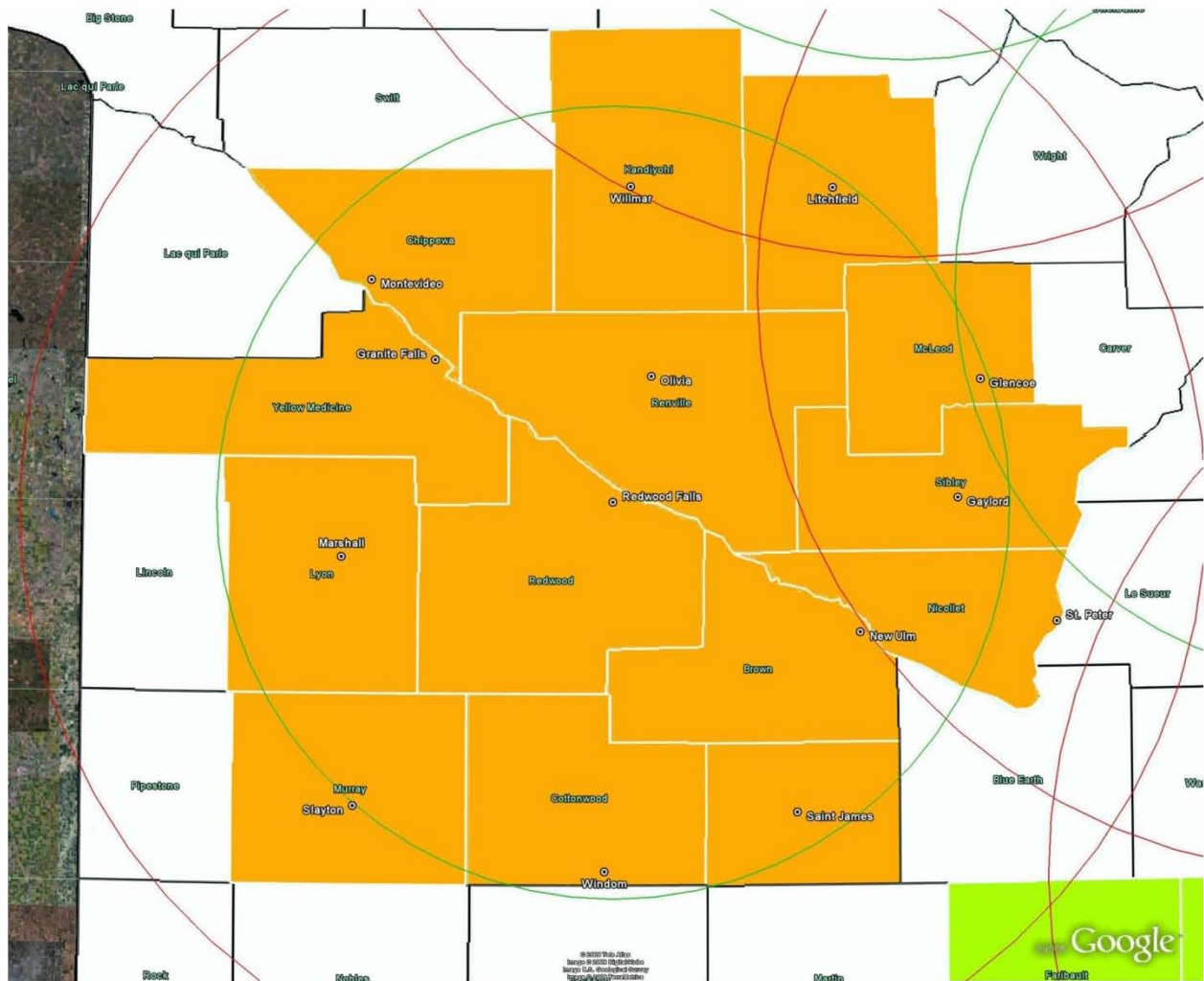


“Underserved” counties of SE MN are shown in green.

The Veteran populations for these counties as of 9/2010 are estimated to be as follows:

Faribault	1,320
Fillmore	1,590
Freeborn	2,649
Houston	1,851
Mower	3,382
Winona	3,601
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,393</b>

### Exhibit 4



Counties in SW Minnesota within the 50 mile service area around the Redwood Falls area.

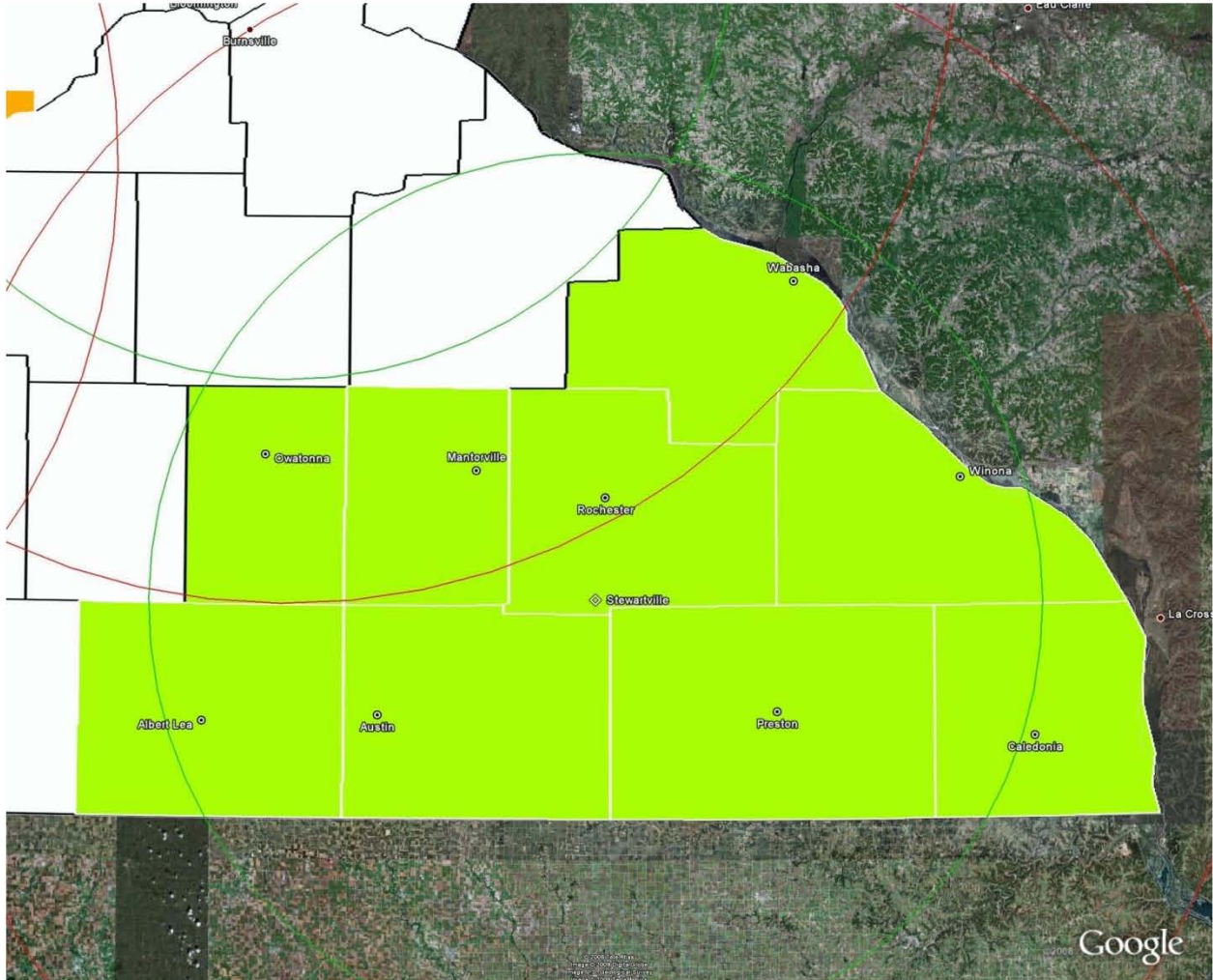
Veteran populations of orange highlighted counties are as follows:

Brown	2,286	Watonwan	794
Chippewa	1,010	Yellow Medicine	773
Cottonwood	952		
Kandiyohi	3,119		
Lyon	1,692	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,789</b>
McLeod	3,040		
Meeker	2,106		
Murray	747		
Nicollet	2,193		
Redwood	1,353		



Renville	1,425
Sibley	1,299

Exhibit 5



Counties in SE Minnesota within the 50 mile service area around the Stewartville area.

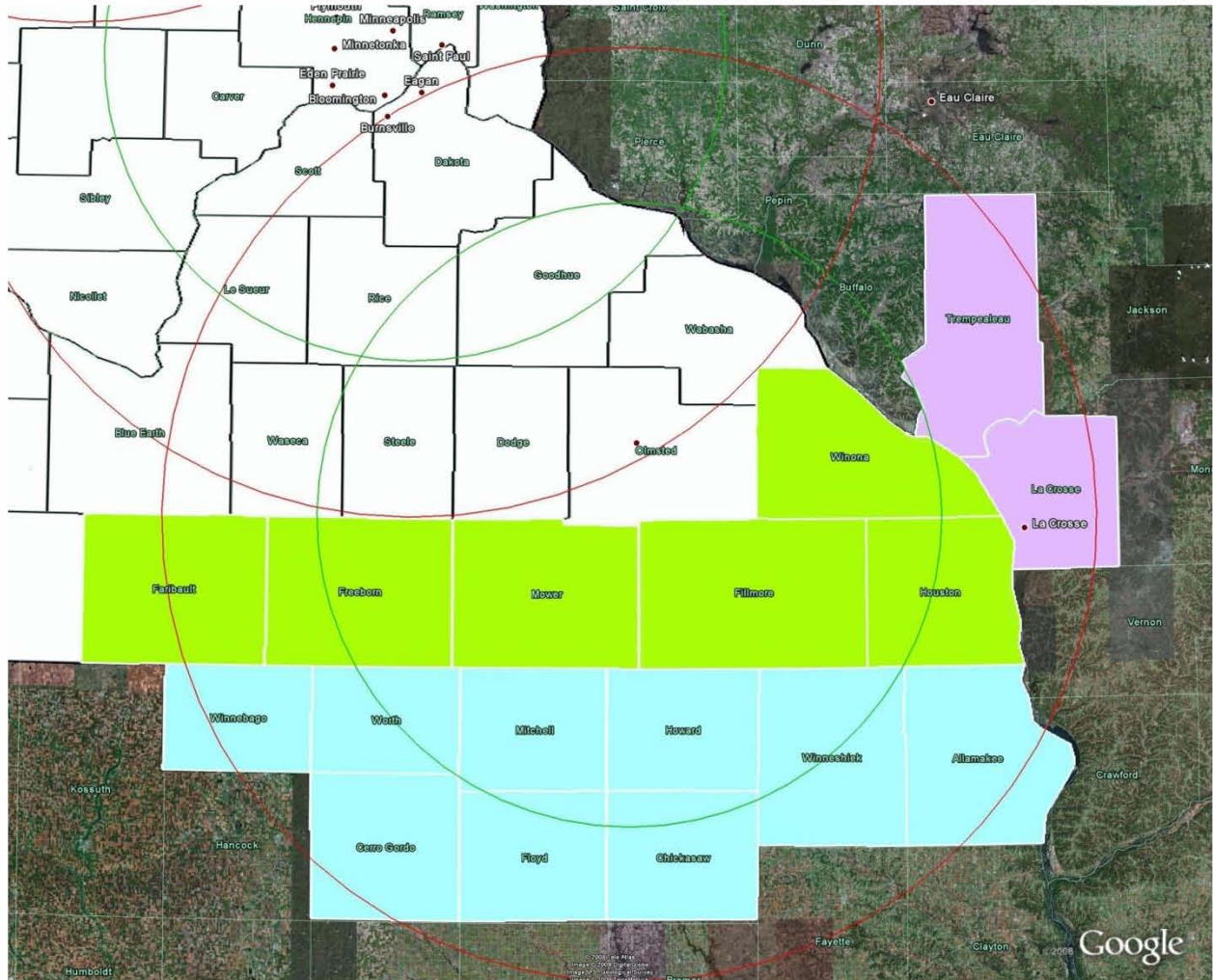
Veteran populations of green highlighted counties are as follows:

Dodge	1,459	
Fillmore	1,590	
Freeborn	2,649	
Houston	1,851	
Mower	3,382	
Olmsted	9,854	
Steele	2,785	
Wabasha	1,818	
Winona		3,601

TOTAL

28,989

Exhibit 6



The Veteran populations of the highlighted counties would be used by the NCA to determine priority for a grant opportunity in SE Minnesota. The Veteran populations of the highlighted counties are as follows:

<b>MN Counties</b>	<b>14,393</b>
Faribault	1,320
Fillmore	1,590
Freeborn	2,649
Houston	1,851
Mower	3,382
Winona	3,601

**Total Veteran Population 38,414  
(Highlighted MN, IA, WI Counties)**

Iowa Counties 12,466

**ATTACHMENT 2: FY 2011 PRIORITY LIST OF STATE CEMETERY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

The FY 2011 Priority List consists of 101 total projects subject to 38 CFR 39. The current estimated value of the 101 projects is approximately \$275 million. Included on the FY 2011 Priority List are eight pending grant awards (noted w/ \*) that were approved after August 15, 2010. There are 56 ranked projects where the states or Tribal Governments have certified as meeting the requirement for certification of State or Tribal Government matching architectural and engineering (A&E) funds for group 1 status. A&E funds are necessary to fully develop a proposed project in a timely manner. Following grant award, the states or Tribal Governments will be fully reimbursed for all allowable A&E expenses associated with the project. The current estimated value of the 56 projects is approximately \$139 million. Note: In this group are six pre-applications from a Tribal Government (Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Yurok Tribe, Pascua Yaqui Tribe, Coeur d' Alene Tribe – Kootenai County, Coeur d' Alene Tribe – Benewah County) and are ranked numbers 16, 18, 19, 22, 23 and 24, respectively.

Additionally, there are 45 ranked projects in group 2, where the states or Tribal Governments have not met the requirement for certification of State or Tribal Government matching A&E funds. Note: Included in group 2 are 4 additional Tribal Government pre-applications. The estimated value of the group 2 projects is approximately \$131 million, which are not eligible for funding consideration in FY 2011. New this year, states submitted 34 operations and maintenance pre-applications for improvement of the appearance of their cemeteries. The estimated value of the operations and maintenance pre-applications is approximately \$18 million.

All pending and new preapplications will be reevaluated on August 15, 2011, and again ranked for the FY 2012 Priority List, in accordance with 38 CFR 39.

Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki approved the FY 2011 Priority List on 9/25/10.

**FY 2011 Priority List of Pending State and Tribal Government Cemetery  
Construction Grant Pre-Applications**

FY 2011 List Rank	FAI No.	State (Location)	Description	State Match (Y/N)	Priority Group (PG) Ranking	Unservd Veteran Population	Est. VA Grant Cost (000)
Applications For Which the State or Tribal Government Has Matching A&E Funds - Group1							
1	DE-09-18	DE (Bear) *	Expansion - Columbarium	Y	PG-1		1,614
2	GA-09-03	GA (Milledgeville) *	Expansion and Improvement	Y	PG-1		1,792
3	MO-08-09	MO (Higginsville) *	Expansion and Improvement	Y	PG-1		1,297
4	CA-08-04	CA (Igo)	Expansion - Columbarium	Y	PG-1		1,174
5	TN-06-10	TN (Knoxville) *	Expansion and Improvement	Y	PG-1		4,600
6	MO-09-10	MO (Springfield) *	Expansion and Improvement	Y	PG-1		831
7	NV-08-10	NV (Boulder City)	Expansion - In-ground cremains	Y	PG-1		6,300
8	HI-09-15	HI (Statewide)	Expansion and Improvement - Columbarium	Y	PG-1		2,155
9	MD-05-19	MD (Garrison Forest)	Expansion and Improvement - Cremains, Maint and Admin Bldg	Y	PG-1		5,700
10	WV-08-01	WV (Charleston) *	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	60,000	14,119
11	LA-99-02	LA (Leesville) *	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	40,000	6,135
12	MN-08-03	MN (Duluth)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	22,570	8,350
13	MN-09-04	MN (Redwood County)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	17,248	7,900
14	AK-09-01	AK (Fairbanks)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	13,611	6,468
15	AR-07-02	AR (Birdeye) *	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	5,500	7,139
16	SD-08-01	SD (Todd County)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	4,036	5,320
17	PR-01-02	PR (Aguadilla)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	5,239	5,900
18	SD-09-02	SD (Pine Ridge)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	4,000	6,000
19	CA-08-03	CA (Humboldt County)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	2,589	1,717
20	AL-09-01	AL (Mobile)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	1,948	7,599
21	KY-99-03	KY (So. Eastern)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	1,340	7,255
22	AZ-08-03	AZ (Tucson)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	188	150
23	ID-08-02	ID (Desmet)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	80	42
24	ID-08-03	ID (Worley)	Establish New Cemetery	Y	PG-2	80	43
25	ME-09-13	ME (Springvale)	Further Establishment - Admin Building & Columbarium	Y	PG-2	-	451

**FY 2011 Priority List of Pending State and Tribal Government Cemetery  
Construction Grant Pre-Applications**

FY 2011 List Rank	FAI No.	State (Location)	Description	State Match (Y/N)	Priority Group (PG) Ranking	Unserved Veteran Population	Est. VA Grant Cost (000)
Applications For Which the State or Tribal Government Has Matching A&E Funds - Continued - Group 1							
26	MD-05-17	MD (Eastern Shore)	Expansion and Improvement - Columbarium	Y	PG-3		265
27	MD-05-18	MD (Rocky Gap)	Expansion and Improvement - Columbarium	Y	PG-3		555
28	VA-09-05	VA (Suffolk)	Expansion and Improvement - Full Casket Crypts	Y	PG-3		4,173
29	VA-09-06	VA (Amelia)	Expansion and Improvement - Full Casket Crypts	Y	PG-3		1,670
30	IN-10-03	IN (West Lafayette)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		275
31	ND-10-02	ND (Mandan)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		234
32	MD-10-23	MD (Cheltenham)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		1,750
33	RI-10-07	RI (Exeter)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		2,064
34	TN-10-12	TN (Nashville)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		307
35	AR-10-03	AR (North Little Rock)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		754
36	ME-10-14	ME (Augusta - Civic Center)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		424
37	UT-10-03	UT (Bluffdale)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		256
38	NJ-08-18	NJ (Wrightstown)	Improvement - Committal Shelter	Y	PG-4		800
39	UT-07-02	UT (Bluffdale)	Expansion and Improvement - Columbarium, Maintenance Bldg.	Y	PG-4		4,200
40	KY-10-08	KY (Hopkinsville)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		149
41	MD-10-20	MD (Garrison Forest)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		2,500
42	MI-10-01	MI (Grand Rapids)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		100
43	WI-10-10	WI (Union Grove)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		374
44	OH-09-01	OH (Sandusky)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		690
45	MD-10-22	MD (Rocky Gap)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		1,250
46	MD-10-24	MD (Crownsville)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		1,630
47	MT-04-09	MT (Helena)	Improvement - Columbarium	Y	PG-4		1,050
48	HI-09-16	HI (Kauai)	Improvement - Maintenance Bldg.	Y	PG-4		1,033
49	NJ-02-14	NJ (Wrightstown)	Improvement - Public Information Center	Y	PG-4		3,400

**FY 2011 Priority List of Pending State and Tribal Government Cemetery  
Construction Grant Pre-Applications**

FY 2011 List Rank	FAI No.	State (Location)	Description	State Match (Y/N)	Priority Group (PG) Ranking	Unservd Veteran Population	Est. VA Grant Cost (000)
<b>Applications For Which the State or Tribal Government Has Matching A&amp;E Funds - Continued - Group 1</b>							
50	DE-10-19	DE (Millsboro)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		74
51	DE-10-20	DE (Bear)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		495
52	GA-10-04	GA (Milledgeville)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		77
53	LA-10-06	LA (Keithville)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		750
54	MD-10-21	MD (Eastern Shore)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		1,250
55	MO-10-12	MO (Bloomfield)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		54
56	NV-10-13	NV (Boulder City)	Operations and Maintenance	Y	PG-4		1,402
<b>Subtotal All Preapplications That Have State Matching Funds:</b>							<b>139,353</b>

FY 2011 List Rank	FAI No.	State (Location)	Description	State Match (Y/N)	Priority Group (PG) Ranking	Unservd Veteran Population	Est. VA Grant Cost (000)
<b>Applications For Which the State or Tribal Government Does Not Have Matching A&amp;E Funds - Group 2</b>							
57	AR-10-04	AR (North Little Rock)	Expansion - Columbarium	N	PG-1		600
58	AZ-10-09	AZ (Sierra Vista)	Expansion - Columbarium & Full Casket	N	PG-1		1,300
59	ID-10-04	ID (Boise)	Expansion - Columbarium & Full Casket	N	PG-1		5,000
60	MN-10-05	MN (South East)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	39,752	7,900
61	AZ -09-04	AZ (Flagstaff)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	38,468	7,450
62	LA-07-05	LA (Jennings)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	32,821	6,800
63	AZ -09-08	AZ (Northern Tucson)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	32,107	5,300
64	AZ -09-05	AZ (Yuma)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	27,729	6,800
65	LA-07-03	LA (Rayville)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	26,000	6,800
66	LA-07-04	LA (Covington)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	24,500	6,800
67	NE-01-01	NE (Grand Island)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	24,284	5,102
68	NM-01-01	NM (Ft. Stanton)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	10,000	3,500

**FY 2011 Priority List of Pending State and Tribal Government Cemetery  
Construction Grant Pre-Applications**

FY 2011 List Rank	FAI No.	State (Location)	Description	State Match (Y/N)	Priority Group (PG) Ranking	Unservd Veteran Population	Est. VA Grant Cost (000)
Applications For Which the State or Tribal Government Does Not Have Matching A&E Funds - Continued - Group 2							
69	AZ -09-06	AZ (Kingman)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	7,577	6,800
70	AZ -09-07	AZ (Chinle)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	7,496	9,600
71	CA-09-05	CA (Monterey)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	6,726	15,945
72	OK-08-01	OK (Pawnee)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	2,110	1,950
73	VI-01-01	VI (St. Thomas)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	2,098	1,200
74	VI-01-02	VI (St. Croix)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	2,098	1,200
75	NV-09-12	NV (Fallon)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	150	1,250
76	CA-08-02	CA (Rancheria)	Establish New Cemetery	N	PG-2	25	57
77	IN-10-02	IN (West Lafayette)	Expansion - In-ground cremains	N	PG-3		100
78	NV-10-14	NV (Boulder City)	Expansion - Full Casket	N	PG-3		6,702
79	VT-05-04	VT (Montpelier)	Expansion and Improvement - Columbarium and Full Casket	N	PG-3		2,750
80	NJ-10-19	NJ (Wrightstown)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		702
81	CA-09-06	CA (Yountville)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		4,696
82	HI-10-24	HI (Kaneohe)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		3,093
83	HI-10-18	HI (Hilo 2)	Improvement - Maintenance Facility & Flagpole	N	PG-4		312
84	HI-10-29	HI (Hilo 2)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		2,830
85	HI-10-19	HI (Maui)	Improvement - Flagpole & Entranceway	N	PG-4		547
86	HI-10-27	HI (Maui)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		1,120
87	HI-10-21	HI (Kauai)	Improvement - Entranceway, Sign & Flagpole	N	PG-4		1,477
88	HI-10-23	HI (Kauai)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		27
89	HI-10-20	HI (Lanai)	Improvement - Entranceway Sign, Water Tower & Flagpole	N	PG-4		88
90	HI-10-25	HI (Lanai)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		43

**FY 2011 Priority List of Pending State and Tribal Government Cemetery  
Construction Grant Pre-Applications**

FY 2011 List Rank	FAI No.	State (Location)	Description	State Match (Y/N)	Priority Group (PG) Ranking	Unservd Veteran Population	Est. VA Grant Cost (000)
Applications For Which the State or Tribal Government Does Not Have Matching A&E Funds - Continued - Group 2							
91	HI-10-22	HI (Molokai)	Improvement - Existing Bldg. Sign & Flagpole	N	PG-4		438
92	HI-10-26	HI (Molokai)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		98
93	HI-10-28	HI (Hilo)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		563
94	ME-08-10	ME (Augusta)	Improvement - Columbarium	N	PG-4		375
95	MT-10-11	MT (Columbia Falls)	Improvement - NH Cemetery Expansion and Improvement - Columbarium, Electrical, Sewer	N	PG-4		100
96	WY-06-07	WY (Evansville)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		1,100
97	WY-10-08	WY (Evansville)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		217
98	TN-10-11	TN (Knoxville)	Operations and Maintenance	N	PG-4		439
99	TN-10-13	TN (Memphis)	Operations and Maintenance Improvement - Restrooms & Conference Room	N	PG-4		368
100	HI-10-17	HI (Kaneohe)	Improvement - NH Cemetery	N	PG-4		1,234
101	MO-10-11	MO (St. James)	Improvement - NH Cemetery	N	PG-4		368
<b>Subtotal All Preapplications That Do Not Have State Matching Funds:</b>							<b>131,141</b>
<b>Total All Pending Applications:</b>							<b>270,494</b>

\* These projects were awarded a grant after August 15, 2010.

Applications will be funded by VA once they meet all requirements, provided sufficient funds are available. In determining whether sufficient funds are available, VA will consider the project's priority ranking, the total amount of funds available for the current fiscal year, and the estimated date at which higher ranking projects will meet all requirements for funding.

Approved  
  
 Eric K. Shinseki  
 Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs

25 Sep 2010  
 Date



### **ATTACHMENT 3: SITE SELECTION STANDARDS FOR A STATE CEMETERY:**

- **Proximity** - Locate the site as close as possible to the most densely populated location in the area under consideration. Not only actual distance, but travel time to the site must be considered.
- **Size** - Site acreage is sufficient to provide at least 20-40 years of gravesites based on state projected burial rate. More acreage is encouraged. The acreage required will depend on the burial method, gravesite yield, projected burial rates based on the state's estimated needs for at least 20 years, and the project site's proximity to other national and state cemeteries.
- **Shape** - Uniform boundaries, undivided by roads or easements, with generally square or rectangular shapes are desired. Irregularly shaped sites are more difficult to access and less efficient to design and develop.
- **Accessibility** - Site accessible by highway. Public transportation service is desirable but not required. Road quality of access streets should also be considered.
- **Utilities & Water** - Availability of public utilities (electricity, water, sewer, gas) is important. However, on-site septic systems and on-site potable water wells or ponds are acceptable. An adequate water supply for irrigation is of primary importance. Consider the availability of on-site or off-site recyclable water. The grant program does not fund off-site improvements such as water line extensions.
- **Surrounding Land Use** - Surrounding land should be free from noise or adverse environmental impact(s) (nuisance, landfills or hazardous waste sites). Consider the attractiveness and compatibility of adjacent land. Sites adjacent to visually objectionable, loud noise, high traffic, or other nuisance elements should be avoided. Both current and future projected land use are considered.
- **Soils** - Soils should be of a quality which will provide adequate topsoil for growing turf. The soil should have adequate stability for constructing roads and buildings and should be free from shallow-depth groundwater. The water table must be lower than the maximum proposed depth of burial. There should be no sub-surface obstructions or hazardous waste present. Site soil information is available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture ([www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)).
- **Topography** - Land should be relatively level to rolling terrain for areas to be developed. The grade of the site should be in the two to ten percent range. There should be sufficient slope to enable proper drainage of the site. Ravines, wetlands, lakes, streams, floodplains and sinkholes cannot be developed. If hilly land is used, access must not be cost prohibitive.

- **Aesthetics** - Existing site amenities such as pleasant views and quality vegetative cover are favorable.
- **Restrictions to Development** - The presence of elements such as cultural/historic/archaeological elements, utility easements, rights-of-way or mineral rights can hamper or legally prevent development. Presence of endangered species limits land development. Potential flood hazards must be avoided.
- **Site Suitability and Acceptability** - Consider the following tests and items to determine site suitability and acceptability: 1) Soil Borings and Test Pits, Perk Test (Septic Field Requirements), Soil Sample Analysis; 2) Well, Aquifer Level, Underground Water Quality Testing; 3) Historic and Archaeological Land Use Review; 4) Cultural Resources; 5) Flood Plains, Wetlands, and Endangered Species; 6) Land Use and Public Access; 7) Utilities; 8) Hazardous Waste; 9) Corrective Action Agreement.

**ATTACHMENT 4: INFORMATION LETTER TO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**



## STATE OF MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

20 West 12th Street, 2nd Floor • St. Paul, MN 55155 • Phone: 651-296-2562 • Fax: 651-296-3954  
www.mdva.state.mn.us • 1-888-LinkVet

October 28, 2010

Minnesota County Commissioner;

There are approximately 400,000 Veterans in Minnesota, and the U.S. VA estimates that only 40 percent ever come forward to claim their earned benefits. In many cases, military burial is the only benefit Veterans ever claim. As part of the nation's commitment to taking care of our heroes, the National Cemetery Association (NCA) launched an initiative to provide Veterans across the country with a military burial option within 75 miles of their home.

Through this initiative states are eligible for federal grants that cover 100 percent of the construction costs of new State Veterans Cemeteries, plus initial basic equipment needed for operation. The state is responsible for obtaining land (approved by NCA) for any potential cemetery. The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs received legislative authority to begin researching suitable sites for future State Veteran Cemeteries in the southwest, southeast and northeast regions of Minnesota (there is currently one State Veterans Cemetery located in Little Falls). Because the cost of land is not reimbursable through the grant, the focus has been on donated parcels of land, or land available at a greatly reduced price.

Many of your communities around the state have stepped forward with generous land donation options; we truly appreciate the commitment to Minnesota Veterans that this demonstrates. Please make sure your county knows that while we are considering all suitable locations, the vetting process is taking some time due to the number of factors that need to be considered, including cost, proximity to large Veteran populations, size, shape, accessibility, utilities and water, surrounding land use, soil, topography and future development opportunities.

The two attachments included in this packet outline the site selection standards from the National Cemetery Association, as well as geographic and Veteran population overviews that factor into site selection. If your community has land being considered for donation, please use this informational packet as a resource to help us pre-screen locations and determine suitability.

We have sent a similar informational packet to your County Veterans Service Office as well. Questions should be addressed directly to David Swantek, Little Falls State Veterans Cemetery director. He can be reached at (320) 616-2527 or via email at [dswantek@integra.net](mailto:dswantek@integra.net).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. Pugliese".

Michael Pugliese, Commissioner  
Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

An Equal Opportunity Employer

This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529

### ATTACHMENT 5: MN STATE VETERANS CEMETERY CONTACT INFORMATION

**Cemetery Office:**

MN State Veterans Cemetery  
15550 Hwy 115  
Little Falls MN 56345

**David P. Swantek, Cemetery Director**

[dswantek@integra.net](mailto:dswantek@integra.net)

320-616-2527 Office

Legislative Director

Mike McElhiney

Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

(651) 757-1530

[mike.mcelhiney@state.mn.us](mailto:mike.mcelhiney@state.mn.us)