

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION



The American Legion

National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission
Washington D.C.
February 22, 2016

Ronald E. Walters

Interim Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs

www.cem.va.gov

NCA Budget Overview

Line Item (Dollars in Millions)	FY15 Enacted	FY16 Actual	FY17 Request
Operations and Maintenance	\$256.6	\$271.2	\$286.2
Major Construction	\$10.0	\$155.8	\$137.0
Minor Construction	\$51.2	\$69.1	\$56.9
Veterans Cemetery Program	\$46.0	\$45.0	\$45.0
Sub-Total, Discretionary	\$363.8	\$541.1	\$525.1
Compensation and Pension	\$81.0	\$95.0	\$95.0
Total Resources	\$444.8	\$636.1	\$620.1

Workload Data

Benefits	FY 15 Actual	FY 16 Projection	FY17 Projection
Interments	130,424	132,622	132,093
Headstones/ Markers/ Medallions	364,171	368,309	368,059
Presidential Memorial Certificates	661,064	625,000	635,000

- Perpetual care provided for **4.3 million** Veterans, service members, Reservists and family members in **3.5 million** gravesites
- Manages 8,902 developed acres

FY2016-2021 Long Range Plan

Long Range Plan Goals

- Goal #1: Veterans and eligible family members will have increased access to burial benefits
- Goal #2: More veterans and eligible family members will use VA burial and memorial benefits
- Goal #3: Veterans will be memorialized through enhanced tributes befitting their service and sacrifice to the nation
- Goal #4: Stakeholders will place greater trust in NCA based on enhanced accountability
- Goal #5: Stakeholders will be served more efficiently and effectively by NCA's internal capacity

National Cemeteries

Tallahassee, FL
Cape Canaveral, FL
Omaha, NE
Western New York
Southern Colorado

Urban Initiative

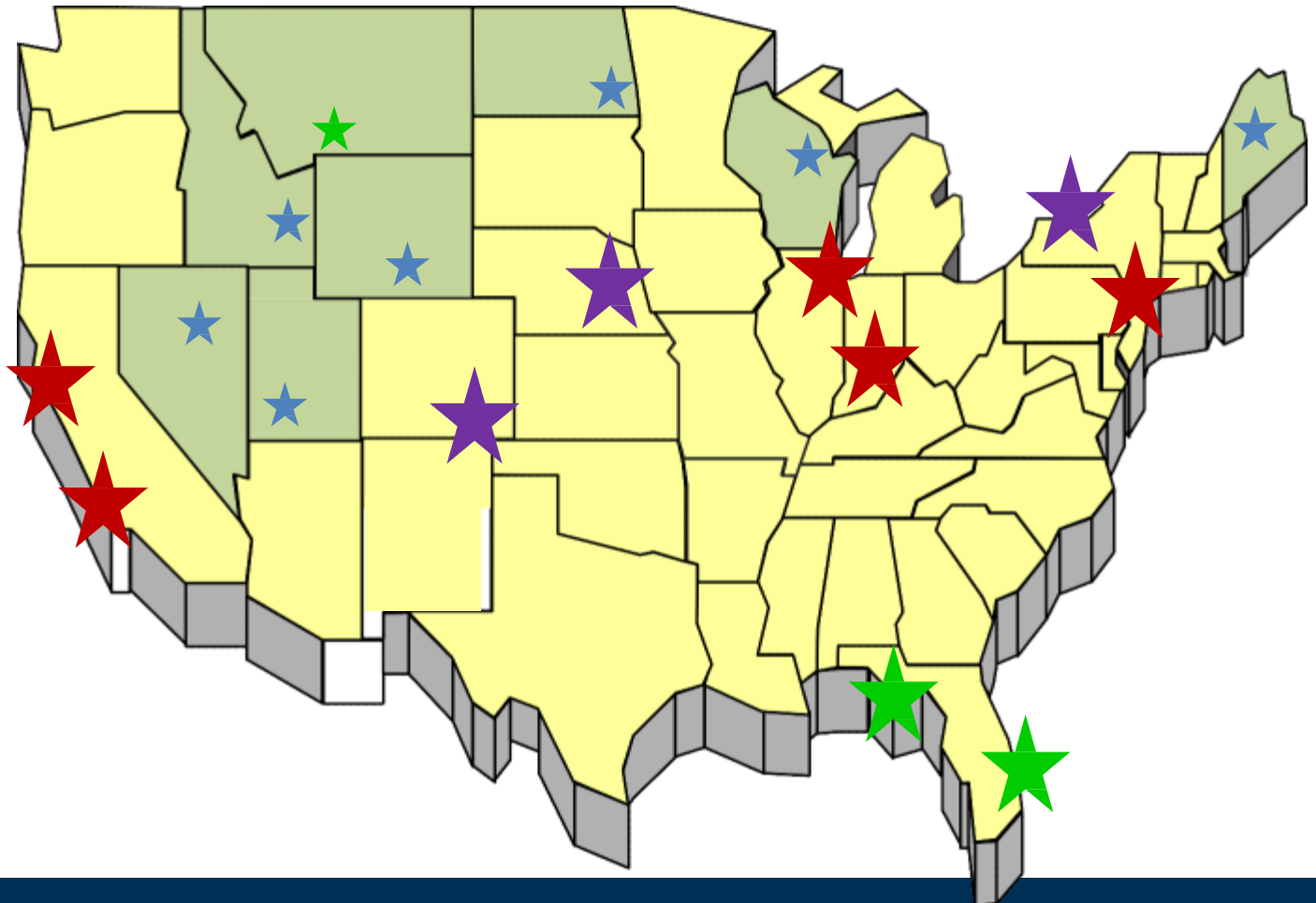
San Francisco
Los Angeles
Chicago
Indianapolis
New York

Rural Initiative

Nevada
Wyoming
Idaho
Montana
North Dakota
Utah
Wisconsin
Maine

Goal # 1: Veterans and eligible family members will have increased access to burial benefits

Opening New National Cemeteries



Status of New National Cemeteries

80,000 Veterans w/in 75-miles

New Cemetery	Status
Tallahassee National Cemetery	Dedication held on May 22, 2015. Cemetery open for burials
Cape Canaveral National Cemetery	Dedication held Nov 20, 2015. Cemetery open for burials
Omaha National Cemetery	The design build process is underway. Funding for construction has been appropriated. Construction started summer 2015. Dedication planned for Spring/Summer 2016.
So. Colorado (name TBD)	Architect/Engineer contract awarded Spring 2015. Cemetery naming process started in Fall 2015 and is expected to be completed in Spring, 2016. Construction funding included in FY17 budget.
Western New York (name TBD)	Architect/Engineer contract awarded Spring, 2015 and design is underway. Cemetery naming process started in January, 2016. Construction funding included in FY17 budget.

Status of New National Cemeteries

Rural Initiative

Rural Initiative	Project Status
Yellowstone National Cemetery	Montana--Open
Twin Falls, Idaho	Due diligence has started on new top-rated sites that were identified in Summer, 2015 after the previously identified top sites were determined non-viable.
Fargo, North Dakota	Due diligence is underway with plans to acquire property in Spring, 2016
Rhineland, Wisconsin	Site was acquired in September, 2015. Cemetery design work planned to be underway during 2016.
Cheyenne, Wyoming	Due diligence is underway at the top rated sites with plans to acquire property in Spring, 2016.
Elko, Nevada	Due diligence on hold at top rated site owned by BLM. BLM has no authority to permanently transfer land to VA (land must revert to BLM after 20 years).
Cedar City, Utah	New site search is underway after the previously identified top rated sites were determined non-viable.
Machias, Maine	Due diligence is underway with plans to acquire property in Spring, 2016.

Status of New National Cemeteries *Urban Initiative*

Urban Initiative	Project Status
Chicago	Two new sites are under preliminary evaluation after previously identified top rated sites were deemed non-viable
Indianapolis	Land was acquired from a private cemetery in September 2015. Cemetery design work is underway.
Los Angeles	Project fully funded. Intra-agency transfer moving forward and targeted for Spring 2016.
New York City	Land at St. Albans VAMC will transfer to NCA. Stakeholder meeting held in Spring 2015. Intra-agency transfer moving forward and targeted for Spring 2016.
San Francisco	VA targeting to award construction contract in Spring /Summer 2017.

Veterans Cemetery Grants Program (VGCP)

- VA provides 100% of development costs
- 97 operational state and tribal cemeteries in 45 states, Guam and Saipan
- Over \$640 million in grants awarded since 1978
- 32,000 burials in FY2015
- Anticipate 100th Cemetery Grant to be awarded in 2016



**Administrative Building Sicangu Akicita Owicahé
(Rosebud Sioux Tribe Veteran Cemetery)
White River, SD**

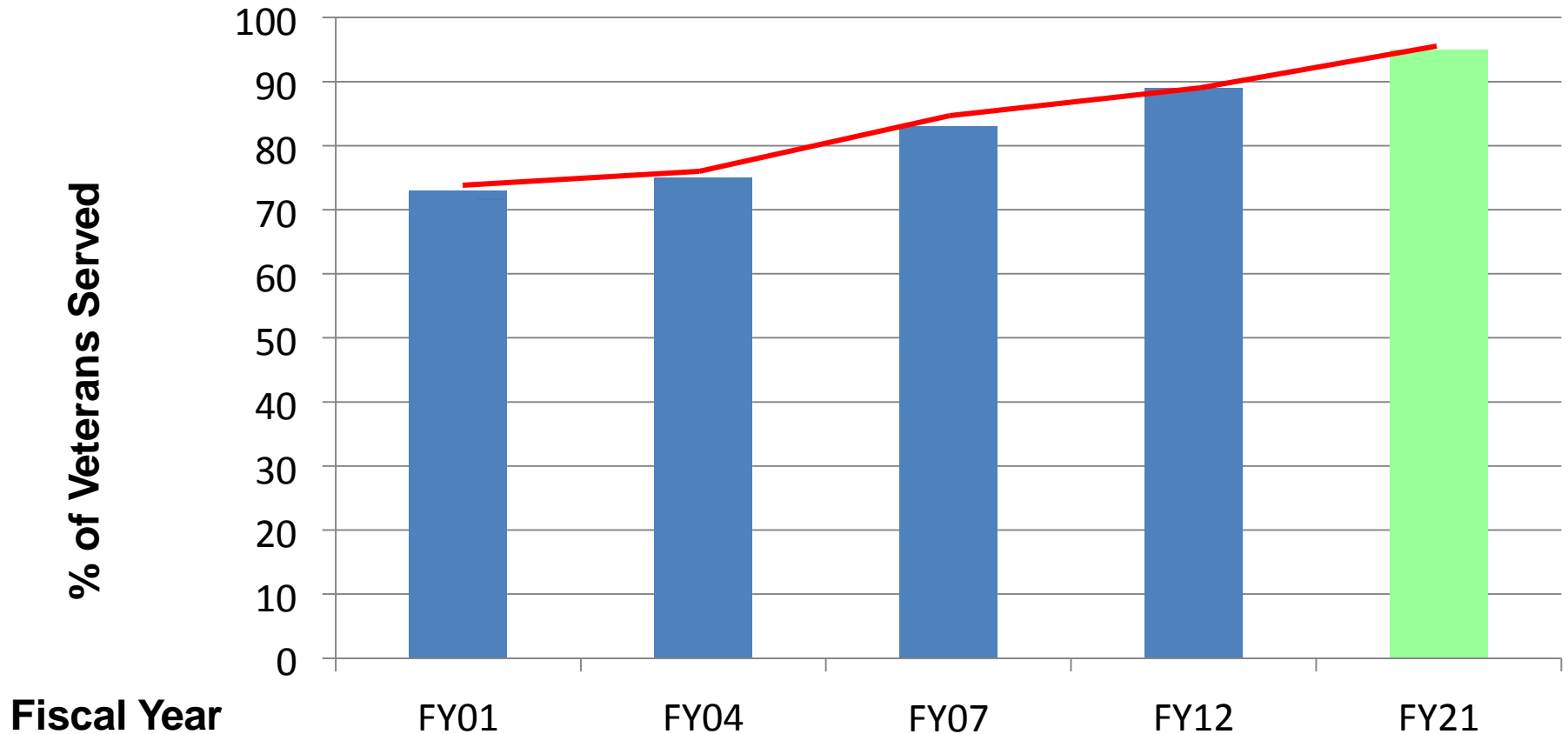


**Grant Award Presentation November 2012
BG William C. Doyle Veterans
Memorial Cemetery, Wrightstown, N.J.,**

VCGP FY16 Operations Plan

Projects	States	In Millions
New Cemeteries (5)	MN, SD, TN, KY, ME	\$23.75
Expansions (10)	MD, TN, NH, VA, RI, DE, DE, WA, TX	\$25.32
Improvements (1)	NC	\$5.0
Total		\$54.07

Percentage of Vets Served*



*By 2021, 95% of Veterans (over 20 million) will have access to an open national, state or tribal Veterans cemetery within 75 miles of home

Goal #2: More veterans and eligible family members will use VA burial and memorial benefits

Pre-Need Eligibility Determination

NCA is developing procedures to provide initial pre-need eligibility determinations to Veterans who make requests through their elected representatives or directly to NCA.

- Pre-need eligibility determinations assist Veteran with funeral decisions in advance of need.
- Pre-Need eligibility verification is subject to a final eligibility verification at time of need.
- Pre-Need eligibility does not guarantee burial in a specific cemetery or reserve a gravesite until time of need.
- If Veteran is not eligible during the Pre-Need determination, the Veteran will be entitled to VA Appeals Rights.

Goal #3: Veterans will be memorialized through enhanced tributes befitting their service and sacrifice to the nation

Veterans Legacy Program

- The Veterans Legacy Program will utilize online educational products to share stories of Veterans service and sacrifice found throughout VA national cemeteries, soldier's lots and monument sites. These products include:
 - Lesson Plans
 - Interactive Maps
 - Video Vignettes
 - Workshops and Seminars
 - New Research Opportunities
- Pilot sites: Beaufort National Cemetery and Riverside National Cemetery
- VA Partnerships with ABMC and Library of Congress
- National announcement at Riverside NC Memorial Day program on May 30, 2016
 - SECVA and ABMC Secretary will serve as keynote speakers



Goal #4: Stakeholders will place greater trust in NCA based on enhanced accountability

Implement Use of GIS technology

- A total of \$4.9 million has been allocated to the Geographical Information System (GIS) initiative to capture geographical data for 898,505 gravesites.
- NCA's 2017 budget request will provide an additional \$4.7 million to continue implementation of the GIS Initiative that will capture detailed geographical location and gravesite information for an additional 590,000 gravesites at 32 national cemeteries.

Goal #5: Stakeholders will be served more efficiently and effectively by NCA's internal capacity

NCA Regulatory Updates

➤ Casket and Urn Reimbursement

- Establishes reimbursement of casket and urn purchase for indigent, unclaimed Veterans
- Required by the “Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012”, Public Law 112-260
- **Effective May 13, 2015**
- NCA contacted over 30,000 shareholders via GovDelivery to share information claims process for reimbursement

➤ Memorialization Benefit Applicants

- Expands the types of individuals who may request headstones and markers on behalf of decedents
- Public comment period closed December 1, 2014
- NCA reviewed 385 comments and expects to publish the final rule in the 3rd Quarter of FY 2016.

The American Legion 2015 Resolution

Resolution #7 from 2015

Black Hills National Cemetery Expansion

- Black Hills National Cemetery is projected to deplete its casketed and in-ground cremation gravesites by 2031.
- A transfer of jurisdiction of land from BLM would allow VA to continue to provide an in-ground burial option for the next 100+ years.
- In 2015, after an extensive legal review, BLM advised that their agency does not have authority to permanently transfer land to VA.
- Office of General Counsel has advised that a permanent land transfer from BLM to VA can only be accomplished via legislative action providing specific statutory authority for BLM to do so.
- The legislative proposal, and the two congressional bills, would establish direct statutory authority for the transfers of jurisdiction of land between BLM and VA, thereby creating a permanent land transfer to accommodate the future expansion of Black Hills National Cemetery.
- VA's FY 2017 budget submission includes a legislative proposal concept that would provide the necessary statutory authority to move forward with this transfer.
- The proposal is supported by BLM and legislation has been proposed.

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION



Questions?

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