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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VA Purchases Land for a New National Cemetery in Colorado

WASHINGTON -- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has purchased land in Colorado for a new national cemetery in the southeast portion of Colorado Springs.

“We are pleased to expand burial service to Veterans and their families in southern Colorado,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Acquiring the land is a key step forward in the process.”

VA plans to construct the cemetery in the southeast portion of Colorado Springs. The facility will serve approximately 95,000 Veterans and family members who are not within 75 miles of an open national, state or tribal Veterans cemetery. The closest national cemetery is Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver, about 85 miles away.

VA completed acquisition of 374 acres of land on January 21, 2014, from CS 2005 Investments LLC. The property, known as the Rolling Hills Ranch, is located east of Marksheffel Road between Bradley and Drennan Roads.

When VA receives construction funding, it will proceed with the initial phase of construction, which includes development of cemetery roads, an entrance, administration and public information center, committal shelters and a maintenance facility. This infrastructure will support approximately 10 years of initial burial capacity for casket gravesites, cremation sites and columbarium niches.

This will be the third VA national cemetery in Colorado. The other two are Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver and Fort Lyon National Cemetery in Las Animas.

In addition to the two VA national cemeteries in Colorado, there are two state-run cemeteries: the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado in Grand Junction which was funded by a VA construction grant, and the Colorado State Veterans Center at Homelake in Monte Vista.

Veterans with a qualifying discharge, their spouses and eligible dependent children may be buried in a VA national cemetery. Also eligible are military personnel who die on active duty, their spouses and eligible dependents.

Other burial benefits available for all eligible Veterans, regardless of whether they are buried in a national cemetery or a private cemetery, include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a government headstone or marker.

In the midst of the largest expansion since the Civil War, VA operates 131 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico and 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites. More than 3.8 million Americans, including Veterans of every war and conflict, are buried in VA's national cemeteries.

Information on VA burial benefits can be obtained from national cemetery offices, at www.cem.va.gov, or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 800-827-1000.

To make burial arrangements at any VA national cemetery at the time of need, call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117.

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