

Media Statement

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), National Cemetery Administration (NCA) has a legacy of serving Veterans at Crown Hill National Cemetery, the final resting place of over 2,000 Veterans dating from 1866. Currently, Indianapolis Veterans and their families must travel to Marion National Cemetery, about 60 miles north of Indianapolis to use their VA burial benefits. To remedy this, in September 2015, NCA acquired a 14.75 acre wooded site from Crown Hill Cemetery, Inc. that builds on NCA's legacy of serving Veterans locally.

We take seriously the concerns of local community members and groups regarding the preservation of trees at the Crown Hill site for the planned columbarium-only national cemetery in Indianapolis. In response to what we learned through the public engagement process, NCA instructed the Army Corps of Engineers to revise the site plan to preserve as many mature trees as possible while permitting VA to meet the burial needs of over 250,000 Veterans and families who reside in the Indianapolis metropolitan area.

The Corps was able to revise the plan to retain groves of mature trees, and the revisions will not delay our schedule for the delivery of this burial option for Indianapolis Veterans.

Specifically, this revised plan will retain and incorporate all mature trees measuring 40 inches in caliper (diameter) or greater. Additionally, the plan now retains 73 percent of 30-39 inch caliper trees, a 27 percent increase from the original design. This is in addition to the retention of wetlands areas and an extensive woodland buffer around all areas of planned development.

These groves of retained trees, along with the planting of over 200 new trees, will enhance the project which, when complete, will be a national shrine. NCA is committed to honoring and memorializing the service and sacrifice of Veterans while providing burial options for them, their spouses and other eligible family members.

The schematics provide renderings of the completed site.



