NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Final Site-Specific Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the
Construction and Operation of the Phase 4 Expansion
Massachusetts National Cemetery
Bourne, Barnstable County, Massachusetts

The U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemetery Administration (NCA) hereby gives Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Final Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the VA’s Proposed Action to implement the proposed 2018 Master Plan for the Phase 4 expansion at the Massachusetts National Cemetery (MNC), located at Connery Avenue, Bourne, Barnstable County, Massachusetts, 02532. The Phase 4 expansion would be constructed in an approximately 50-acre area within the existing 750-acre MNC property and provide approximately 12,000 new interment areas, including 4,000 pre-placed double depth crypts, 300 over-sized pre-placed crypts, 200 traditional full casket crypts, 6,000 in-ground cremation sites, and 1,500 columbarium niches. Additionally, the Phase 4 expansion would provide new roadways, a new maintenance outbuilding, and associated improvements to existing infrastructure. The Phase 4 expansion would extend the longevity of the MNC for approximately 10 years.

Prior to issuing the Final SEA, VA completed a Draft SEA to document the potential environmental impacts associated with implementing the Proposed Action. The Draft SEA identified avoidance and management measures incorporated into the Proposed Action that would ensure potential minor adverse impacts would not increase to a significant adverse level during construction and operation. A Notice of Availability (NOA) announcing the start of a 30-day review and comment period for the Draft SEA was published in the Cape Cod Times, Barnstable Patriot, and Bourne Courier on July 21 and 23, 2019. Additionally, VA mailed the NOA to selected federal, state, and local regulatory agencies and Native American Tribes, notifying them of the 30-day review period. The NOA also announced and invited the public to attend a public meeting to discuss the Proposed Action and the NEPA process, held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Plymouth, MA on August 1, 2019. No comments from the public, Tribes, or state and local agencies were received. One federal agency (USEPA) responded that they had no opposition to the Proposed Action.

Upon review of the Final SEA, VA concluded that implementing the Proposed Action would not constitute a major federal action that would have a significant adverse impact on the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 ([NEPA]; 42 United States Code 4321 et seq.). Accordingly, VA has signed a FONSI, which incorporates the Final SEA by reference in its entirety, and concludes that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

The Draft and Final SEA and FONSI were prepared according to NEPA, the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), and VA's Implementing Regulations (38 CFR Part 26).

The Final SEA and FONSI are available for review in print at the MNC Public Information Center/Administration building; the Jonathan Bourne Library, 19 Sandwich Road, Bourne, MA 02532; and the North Falmouth Library, 6 Chester Street, North Falmouth, MA 02556; and may be electronically downloaded at http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/EA.asp.

For additional information, contact: Mr. Fernando Fernández, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Construction & Facilities Management Office, 425 I (eye) Street, NW, Room 6W317d, Washington, D.C., 20001; by email at fernando.fernandez@va.gov; or by telephone at (202) 632-5529. Please reference “Massachusetts National Cemetery” in all correspondence.