

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Arlington National Cemetery to share design for Millennium expansion project**



*The current proposed design of the Millennium expansion project at Arlington National Cemetery. This design is estimated to add close to 30,000 burial and niche spaces to the cemetery.*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Millennium Project at Arlington National Cemetery started in the late 1990s when Congress realized that Arlington National Cemetery was near capacity. Expansion areas were limited, but through law, Congress directed a land transfer from Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall and the National Park Service; paired with existing Arlington property, the Millennium Project was born.

The initial 2006 design for the Millennium Project called for removing the vast majority of the vegetation and trees in the project area, as well as filling in the stream that runs through the project to the Ord and Weitzel Drive. There was significant public opposition to this proposal. Alternate designs were developed between 2006 and 2010.

On June 10, 2010, the Secretary of the Army installed new leadership at Arlington National Cemetery. This leadership team made sweeping changes to Arlington's operations, including instituting environmentally friendly practices ranging from sustainable landscape design, to permeable sidewalks, and eco-friendly vehicles and smaller turf-utility vehicles.

Arlington leadership also asked the Army Corps of Engineers Norfolk District to develop a more environmentally friendly-design that incorporates the area's natural beauty and historic nature. The current design, which is 65-percent complete, includes restoring the stream and preserving the trees within 50-to-100 feet of the stream, as well as the other areas where possible.

The area commonly known as "Arlington Woods," belongs to the National Park Service and is adjacent to the Millennium Project footprint. **No native trees will be removed from this National Park Service property.** There will be improvements to the condition of the existing stream in the Arlington Woods area. Arlington Woods does contain trees estimated at up to 235 years old. The trees identified for removal as part of the Millennium Project are all in areas that were clear cut during the Civil War. The impacted trees are a maximum of 145 years old; the majority are between 50-100 years old.

Arlington National Cemetery has been consulting with local, state, and federal agencies and organizations as the current design is developed. Based on the comments received, the designers are modifying proposed plans to save as many trees as possible. Arlington is also incorporating several hundred native trees and shrubs into the Millennium landscape design, since some of the existing vegetation is invasive.

The Millennium Project is estimated to add close to 30,000 additional burial and niche spaces to Arlington National Cemetery. The Army is committed to maintaining Arlington National Cemetery as an active cemetery for as long as possible for our Nation's military heroes and their families.

Arlington National Cemetery is interested in sharing information about the new design and obtaining public feedback about the project, and has scheduled an open house and site visit on Saturday, March 16 from 1 to 4 p.m. The open house will begin with a briefing at the Women In Military Service for America Memorial (WIMSA) and then transition to a site visit of three areas associated with the Millennium Project.

Representatives from Arlington National Cemetery's engineering and horticulture offices, as well as representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Norfolk District, will narrate the visit and be available to answer questions.

The activity is three hours in length, begins at WIMSA, and will involve some walking. The event is free-of-charge, but reservations are required.

Call (703) 614-0062 for reservations, or e-mail: [ArlingtonCemetery.pao@mail.mil](mailto:ArlingtonCemetery.pao@mail.mil). WIMSA is accessible via the Blue Line on the Metro. Parking is available for a fee at Arlington's Welcome Center parking lot.

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Editor's note: A graphic of the current proposed design of the Millennium Project is available at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/arlingtoncemetery/8519172636/in/photostream>