



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Office of Construction & Facilities Management
Washington DC 20420

October 27, 2022

Sent via email

**SUBJECT: Scoping Notice for the Proposed Albuquerque National Cemetery Draft
Environmental Assessment located at the Southwest Corner of Atrisco Vista
Boulevard and Shooting Range Access Road, Bernalillo County, New Mexico**

Dear Valued Stakeholder:

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is preparing a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action to acquire, construct, and operate a new National Cemetery on approximately 230 acres of land located at the southwest corner of Atrisco Vista Boulevard and Shooting Range Access Road in Bernalillo County, New Mexico (Site). The Site is currently unimproved and mostly grassy pastureland. The location of the Site is shown on Figures 1 and 2. The Site features are depicted on Figure 3.

The cemetery would include a gated entrance and perimeter fencing, an administration building and public information building, an assembly area, a memorial wall, committal shelters, a loop road through the cemetery, casket gravesites, columbarium niches, and a maintenance facility. The cemetery would be developed in phases, with the first phase (approximately 40 to 60 acres) including the buildings and infrastructure needed to support the first 15-years of burial capacity. The first phase of cemetery development would begin following site acquisition.

The **purpose** of the Proposed Action is to establish a new National Cemetery of sufficient size and capacity to serve the projected burial needs of Veterans in central New Mexico. The Proposed Action is **needed** to address the depletion of National Cemetery burial space in central New Mexico.

This scoping notice will also be published in the Albuquerque Journal to inform and solicit input from the public. The notice is also available on the VA website at <https://www.cfm.va.gov/environmental>.

VA will prepare the Draft EA according to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S. Code 4321-4370h), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508), and VA Implementing Regulations (38 CFR Part 26).

VA recognizes that you as an identified Stakeholder and/or your organization may have comments on the scope of issues for analysis or information relevant to the Proposed Action for consideration in the Draft EA. Please submit your comments/information via email within 30-days following receipt of this notice to vacoenvironment@va.gov with the subject line “Albuquerque National Cemetery EA Scoping”.

Through this notice, VA is also providing the public with information about the undertaking and seeking public comment and input about the undertaking’s effects on historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, (54 USC § 306108), and its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800 – Protection of Historic Properties). VA is using its procedures for public involvement under NEPA in lieu of public involvement requirements in subpart B of the Section 106 regulations per 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). This notice does not serve as an invitation to consult under Section 106, it is solely to seek and consider the views of the public. VA will initiate its Section 106 review and send invitations to consulting parties separately.

VA will address and incorporate relevant comments in the Draft EA. Once VA completes the Draft EA, it will be published and made available for a 30-day public review and comment period. VA will announce the start of this review period by publishing a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EA in the Albuquerque Journal. VA will concurrently notify stakeholders via email and mail including include instructions on how to submit comments.

For additional information or questions, please contact Fernando Fernandez at Fernando.fernandez@va.gov with the subject line “Albuquerque National Cemetery EA Scoping”.

Respectfully,

Glenn Elliott
Director, Environmental Program Office
Office of Construction and Facilities Management

Figure 1: Site Location Map

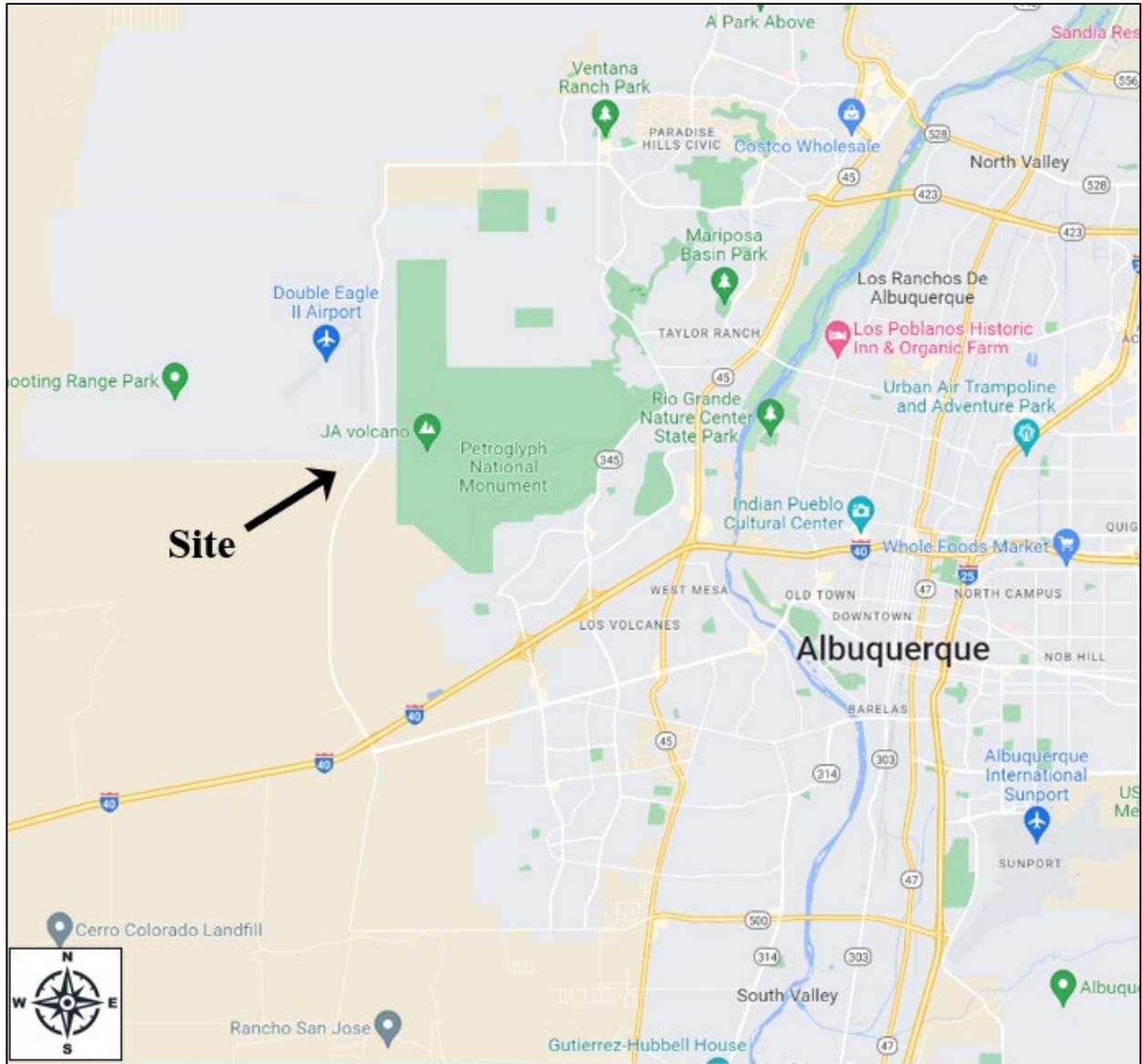


Figure 2: Topographic Site Location Map

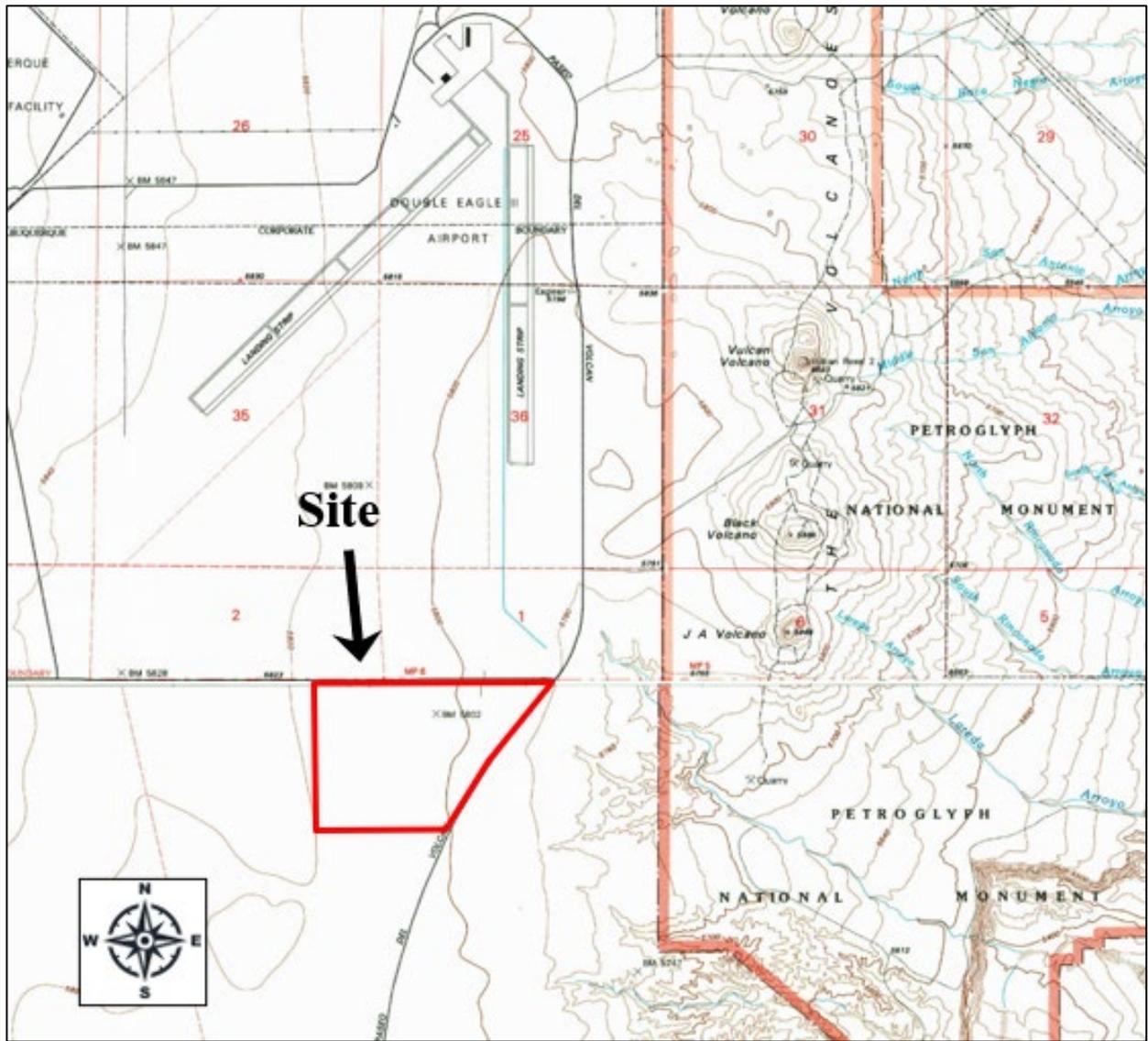


Figure 3: Site Aerial Photograph

