



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
P.O. BOX 1509
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36102-1509
TELEPHONE (334) 242-5077
FAX (334) 242-5102



Rear Admiral W. Clyde Marsh, USN, (Ret)
Commissioner

News Release

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Contact: Robert Horton,
Public Information Officer
(334) 242-5084

VA Approves Grant for Alabama State Veterans Cemetery

MONTGOMERY – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki has announced the award of a \$7 million grant to establish the Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Spanish Fort.

“Today our nation has honored our state veterans with the award of this grant,” said Clyde Marsh, commissioner of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs. “Alabama can now build its first State Veterans Cemetery that will be a shrine and fitting resting place for our veterans in southwest Alabama.

The cemetery will be built on a 103 acre site near Spanish Fort on Ala. 225 and across from Fort Blakeley State Park. The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs acquired ownership of the property from the Baldwin County Commission in May.

“We owe our gratitude to our veterans for their service and sacrifice for our country,” said Governor Robert Bentley. “This project affords our veterans the dignity and respect they deserve in recognition of their service to this state and nation.”

Walcott Adams Verneuille Architects of Fairhope completed the cemetery’s design in June. Marsh said the state VA will immediately move forward with the bidding process for the cemetery’s construction.

The grant will fund 100 percent of the design, construction and equipment costs associated with developing the cemetery. The project includes the development of the property to include traditional in-ground burial sites, in-ground cremation sites, columbarium niches, combined administration and maintenance building, and a committal service shelter.

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The Veterans Cemetery Grants Program is designed to complement VA's 131 national cemeteries across the country. Since 1980, the program has awarded grants totaling more than \$438 million to establish, expand or improve 80 state veterans cemeteries in 41 states or territories.

Marsh said the cemetery will serve some 71,000 veterans and family members who live in the region over the next 100 years. Construction is expected to begin in the fall.

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