

Area of concern:	Conservation cemeteries that bury cremated remains:	Memorial forests:	What to look for:
General Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bury cremated remains, but offer natural burial as a choice for human body disposition Offer educational, recreational, life cycle events, routinely engaging the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bury/scatter cremated remains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotional materials that clearly explain the practices employed on the property Ask about community uses for the land
Organization and Intent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are organized as for-profit and nonprofit May rarely have more than one location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be operating as a syndicate May be organized for profit May create their own conservation entity with board officers and staff who actively engage the public as a land trust May invest ownership of the land to a mortgaging company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about scope of ownership/entities/locations Search organizing documents Search for conservation corporations Search deeds for controlling owner
Financials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept cremated remains for cemetery burial from \$650 - \$4,000, depending on opening and closing fees, GPS marking May charge conservation fees that pay for the existing land management and go to land trust partners for further land acquisition as part of the one-time perpetual care contribution Charges are based on local grave plot market and conservation value Incorporate perpetual care fees into initial fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May charge prices for cremation scattering that are otherwise free in National or State Parks and Forests, or on private land with the owner's permission anywhere in the US May charge prices that exceed those for local cemetery plots or conservation burial ground May charge conservation fees to support restoration or further other conservation goals on the property May charge annual maintenance fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about price ranges and how they compare to local public cemetery plot pricing Research pricing for nearby natural burial cemeteries that bury cremated remains Ask how much and how the conservation portion of the overall fees are handled Ask if there is a maintenance fee structure and how those fees are collected and used Ask for a transparent list of donors and funders

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually funded by local donors and others with personal ties to the land and/or affiliated organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily supported by uninvolved investors providing startup capital that will be returned; client payments Property may change hands within the company(ies), changing value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask for a list of investors and the payout return schedule and percentage Search deed records for changes in property ownership that indicate value fluctuations Ask if the entity is licensed for pre-need sales Ask if financial documents are open to the public, as well as meetings of the Board Ask if there are any mortgages or liens on the property Ask about insurance
Protections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are licensed as a cemetery with the protections afforded by law in perpetuity; the land cannot be sold for other purposes Partner with a land trust entity for monitoring and land management in perpetuity; the land cannot be sold for other purposes Deed record burial plots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are required to be a cemetery if disposing of human remains for a fee May have exit clauses in the deed that enable selling and dividing of the land in the future May or may not have language that protects the cremated remains or the land in perpetuity May deed record burial plots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search through the Secretary of State or State Mortuary and Cemetery Board for proof of licensing Research the deed and/or mortgage agreement for indications of how the land may be sold, divided, or protected Ask about intentions to protect the cremated remains forever and maintain access for family members in the future (legacy protection) Ask what deed mechanism is in place and what it entitles beneficiaries to in the future
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All public records are readily available through the state and local offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some public records may be available while others are not; may require fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search for public records

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study promotional materials for exact locations, pricing, and other consumer right-to-know information
Conservation Compatibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct Integrated Pest Management Plans (IPMs), Ecological Impact Assessments (EiAs), Natural Resource Inventories (NRIs) for planning and protection purposes • Have conservation plans that include proof of boundary line markers, elevation maps, zoning maps with flood zones and aquifers, wildlife and wetlands data checks, forestry plans detailing what the current woodlands are comprised of, survey maps, parking and signage plans, utilities expansion plans, planting plans, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have conservation plans that include proof of boundary line markers, elevation maps, zoning maps with flood zones and aquifers, wildlife and wetlands data checks, forestry plans detailing what the current woodlands are comprised of, survey maps, parking and signage plans, planting plans, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask to see Integrated Pest Management Plans (IPMs), Ecological Impact Assessments (EiAs), Natural Resource Inventories (NRIs) • Ask to see conservation plans, proof of boundary line markers, elevation maps, zoning maps with flood zones and aquifers, wildlife and wetlands data checks, forestry plans detailing what the current woodlands are comprised of, survey maps, parking and signage plans, utility expansion plans, planting plans, etc. • Ask what documents purchasers are required to sign
Licensing, Certification, Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed as a cemetery • Qualify for Green Burial Council certification at the highest level • May choose to qualify for pre need and/or at-need purchase status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May or may not be licensed as a cemetery • Are not eligible for Green Burial Council certification at any level unless organized as a cemetery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search through the Secretary of State, Vital Statistics, or State Mortuary and Cemetery Board for proof of licensing • Ask for verification of conservation certification from the Green Burial Council • Search Secretary of State, Vital Statistics, or State Mortuary and Cemetery Board for level of sales allowed
Burial Tech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bury in specific zones and areas in keeping with recommended burial density requirements • Bury cremated remains using proven soil amendments that neutralize high 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May bury in specific zones and areas • May bury or scatter on or under tree roots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the science of cremation • Ask for their conservation plan, forest and land management plan

	<p>pH levels that are toxic to plants and roots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require approved containers that have been proven to biodegrade at the optimum time to make nutrients available • Bury at the appropriate depth while protecting root channels mechanically • Do not scatter cremated remains on fragile forest floor vegetation • Follow their conservation planting plan to ensure proper forestation and protection of endangered species and communities • Allow memorialization through native plantings and installations according to the cemetery plan; may employ plant biologists, foresters or arborists to manage or advise • Minimize soil disturbances • Maximize trail development to manage traffic • Enlist the advice of state Departments of Environmental Science, Agriculture, Plants, Forestry, and others, plus University Extension Services, in assisting with plans and execution • File plot locations, maps with the State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May promise or imply ownership of trees on the property • May bury with proven soil amendments or use techniques that protect tree roots • May regulate containers, biodegradable or otherwise • May regulate traffic • May regulate soil disturbance methods • May have data check tools, map completed • May have tree replacement plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask how they plan to address burial density issues • Ask for proven amendment profiles if they are used • Ask about other methods of root protection, scattering or burial processes • Ask about containers allowed • Ask for names and contact information of experts who have been consulted • Ask about specific processes used to minimize soil disturbance • Ask about trail development, traffic management, and signage plans • Ask what officials and experts have assisted with making plans • Ask what data check tools have been completed • Ask for maps • Ask about tree replacement plans, if they sell trees
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