



Alaska Natural Burial

Alaska Natural Burial is establishing a conservation cemetery in Anchorage. Conservation cemeteries provide communities with cemetery infrastructure while engaging in sustainable land stewardship practices. Anchorage is in critical need of cemetery infrastructure – the Municipality of Anchorage has one municipal cemetery which will reach capacity in approximately three years. Heritage Land Bank has helped identify HLB Parcel #2-156 as an ideal site for the future home of Alaska Natural Burial.

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions:

What is natural burial?

Natural burial means people are laid to rest in a manner that does not negatively affect the existing ecosystem. Only readily biodegradable materials are buried, like natural fiber caskets or fiber shrouds.

Will natural burial pollute the groundwater or soil?

No – culprits of pollution in cemeteries include casket leachate and runoff from pesticides and fertilizers, none of which will be present at Alaska Natural Burial.

What do you mean by “sustainable land stewardship”?

Sustainable land stewardship practices, especially for HLB Parcel #2-156, are likely to include activities which preserve the biodiverse ecosystem and maintain the wildlife corridor between the Chugach Mountains and Potter Marsh. It is also vital that the land continue to serve the community as a multipurpose space – Alaska Natural Burial will encourage the community to continue using the trails for recreational purposes.

Will bears be attracted to the site? Will bears dig up graves?

No – bodies will be buried beneath at least 4 feet of soil. Scientific literature and anecdotal accounts from natural burial cemeteries throughout the country show this soil barrier is more than sufficient to not attract bears.

Will the Municipality be fiscally responsible for the operations or ongoing maintenance of this cemetery?

No – Alaska Natural Burial is responsible for development, operations, and ongoing maintenance expenses. A separate fund will be established to maintain the property beyond its lifespan as an active cemetery, to ensure that its perpetual care never becomes the responsibility of the Municipality. With MOA's only municipal cemetery reaching capacity, establishing Alaska Natural Burial will preclude the Municipality's need to construct a new cemetery, at an estimated project cost of over \$5 million.

www.alaskanaturalburial.org

Rachel@alaskanaturalburial.org

Heritage Land Bank Parcel #2-156:

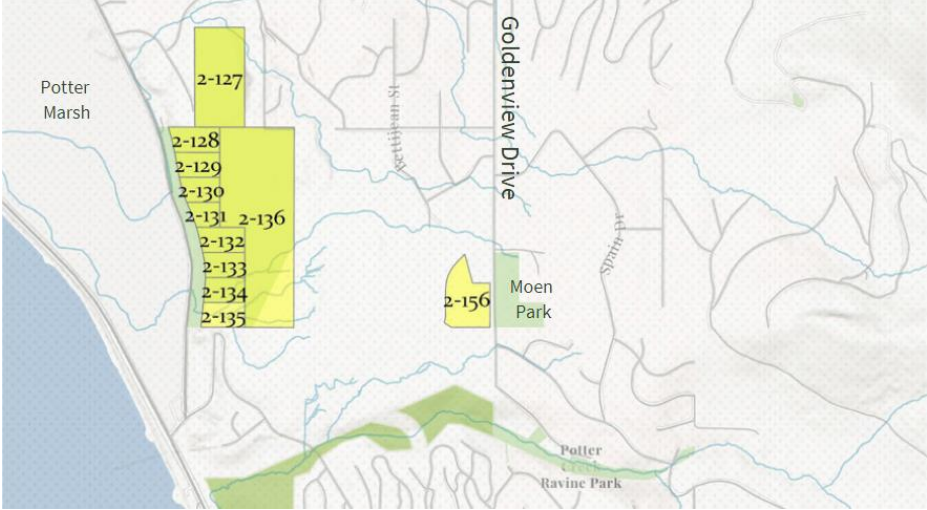


Image from HLB 2022 Draft Work Plan

Site aesthetics – examples from other conservation cemeteries:



Trail at Ramsey Creek Preserve



Natural burial at Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery