



— FORT MEADE MEDICAL CENTER  
113 Comanche Road, Fort Meade, SD 57741-1099

— HOT SPRINGS MEDICAL CENTER  
500 North 5th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747-1497

January 20, 2015

ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mr. Jay D. Vogt  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
South Dakota State Historical Society, Cultural Heritage Center  
900 Governors Drive  
Pierre, SD 57501

RE: Adjusted Area of Potential Effects for Proposed Black Hills Health Care System  
Reconfiguration  
Project: 140521004F

Dear Mr. Vogt:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Black Hills Health Care System (VA BHHCS) has proposed improvements to and reconfiguration of health care services within the VA BHHCS service area, which VA has determined to be a federal undertaking under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and a federal action subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). VA has chosen to integrate Section 106 consultation within the overall NEPA framework, following the substitution process of 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 800.8(c). The proposed reconfiguration of VA BHHCS would change where VA health care services are delivered in Hot Springs and Rapid City, South Dakota.

By letter dated October 8, 2014, VA identified the area of potential effects (APE) where the undertaking could alter the character or use of historic properties to be the Hot Springs VA Medical Center campus in Hot Springs. The campus, and thus the APE, included the entire 53 acres of the National Historic Landmark (NHL), "Battle Mountain Sanitarium National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers". VA also acknowledged that compliance with Section 106 for locations yet to be identified for new or renovated facilities in Hot Springs and Rapid City would be addressed during future scoping for and acquisition of property. Based on comments from your office via letter dated November 7, 2014, and comments from other consulting parties received during the Section 106 workshop held November 18-19, 2014, VA is adjusting the APE for the undertaking. The consulting parties had requested VA consider other properties and locations in the APE. Those properties and locations and VA's responses include:

- Hot Springs Historic District: The NHL and the remainder of the VA Medical Center campus are within and contribute to the Hot Springs Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The APE is adjusted to include the Historic District.
- Pumphouse for VA Medical Center Campus: The pumphouse is located along Fall River, outside the medical center campus, NHL, and Historic District.

Because the pumphouse is utilized by VA BHHCS to obtain its water supply for the medical center, the APE is adjusted to include this location.

- Battle Mountain Landform: The medical center campus is in a known Native American traditional area of the Fall River valley surrounding the hot springs, and includes the Battle Mountain landform as an interconnected component. VA will consider the effects of the undertaking to the overall historic character of the traditional hot springs area, including the Battle Mountain landform. The APE is adjusted to include those parts of the Hot springs/Battle Mountain area in the vicinity of the medical center campus.
- State Veterans Home and Cemetery: The home and cemetery are located outside the Historic District boundary and changes to these structure or property are not part of VA's proposed reconfiguration. The APE is therefore not adjusted to include this location.
- Town of Hot Springs: As appropriate, potential environmental, social, and economic impacts to the town of Hot Springs will be evaluated in the EIS. All buildings and features in town, historic or not, would not be subject to changes from VA's proposed reconfiguration and therefore the APE is not adjusted to include the town in its entirety.
- Fort Meade Historic District: In correspondence prior to the publication of the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS, construction of new operating rooms at the Fort Meade VA Hospital was listed as part of the ongoing improvements to improve health care services across the VA BHHCS service area. VA has complied with NEPA and NHPA for this construction action, which was needed because the three existing operating rooms were not large enough to house replacement equipment required for ongoing operation of the hospital. This construction action was independent of the proposed reconfiguration of health care services at Hot Springs or Rapid City. Therefore, the APE is not adjusted to include this location.
- Fall River Hospital: Changes to this recently completed structure are not part of VA's proposed reconfiguration. The APE is not adjusted to include this location.
- Construction and/or Renovation Sites in Hot Springs and Rapid City: The action alternatives propose new construction or renovation at locations yet to be identified in Hot Springs and Rapid City. When identified, proposed construction or renovations at these locations would receive phased review under the Section 106 process per 36 CFR 800.4(b)(2). VA will continue to adhere to Section 106 and guidelines in VA's Cultural Resource Management Procedures ([www.va.gov/vapubs/viewPublication.asp?Pub\\_ID=584&FType2](http://www.va.gov/vapubs/viewPublication.asp?Pub_ID=584&FType2)) during future planning and actions involving acquisition, construction, or renovations of properties. The APE is therefore not adjusted at this time for unknown locations.

In summary, the APE (see attached figure) is adjusted to include VA property and support facilities in Hot Springs, which includes the medical center campus, pumphouse, and the entire NHL; the Hot Springs Historic District, which also includes the medical center campus and NHL; and the Native American traditional areas of the hot springs/Battle Mountain landforms that are within the vicinity of the medical center campus. Should new information or analysis change the rationale for these determinations as the EIS proceeds, VA will consider and consult on additional adjustments to the APE.

We appreciate your continued participation in the integrated NEPA/NHPA process for the reconfiguration proposal. Please direct any comments or questions regarding the APE to Luke Epperson, Administrative Officer to the Office of the Director at [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov) or 605-720-7170.

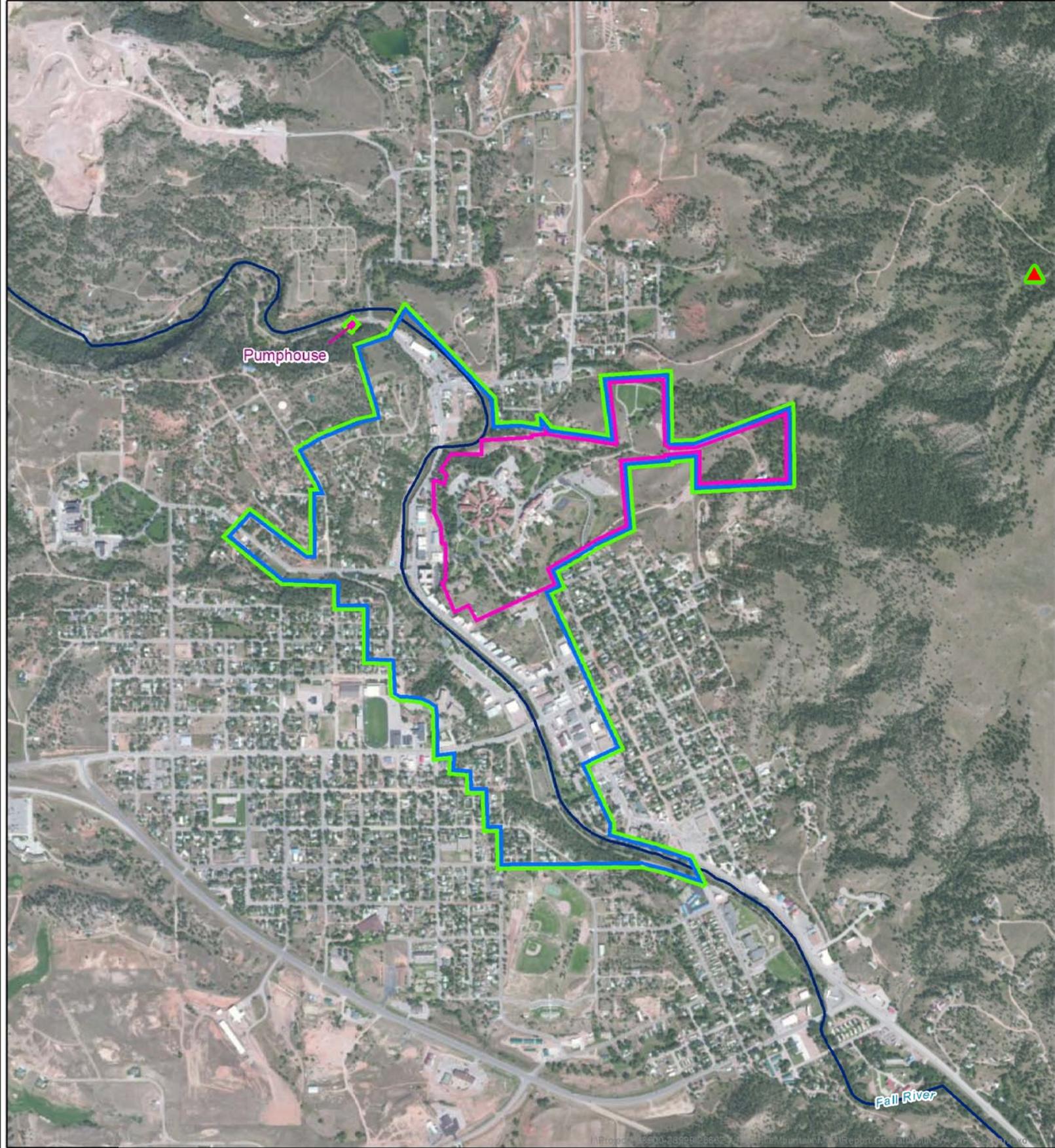
Sincerely,



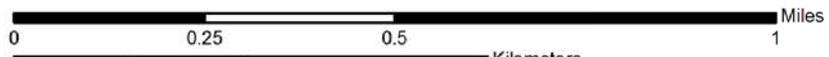
Stephen R. DiStasio  
Director

Attachment: APE Figure

cc: Advisory Council for Historic Preservation (Chris Daniel)  
AFGE Hot Springs Local (Patrick Russell)  
Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes (Darrell Youpee)  
City of Hot Springs (Cindy Donnell)  
Department of the Interior, National Park Service (Dena Sanford)  
Fall River County Commission (Mike Ortner)  
Fall River County Historical Society (Peggy Sanders)  
Hot Springs CLG – Historic Preservation Commission (Brian Powers)  
Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma (Amie Tah-bone)  
National Trust for Historic Preservation (Amy Cole)  
Northern Arapaho Tribe (Darlene Conrad)  
Oglala Sioux Tribe (John Yellow Bird Steele, Mike Catches Enemy)  
Save the VA (Bob Nelson, Patrick Russell)  
Yankton Sioux Tribe (Lana Gravatt)



- Legend**
- ▲ Battle Mountain
  - Fall River
  - Area of Potential Effect (APE)
  - Historic District
  - VA Medical Campus Property Boundary



1:18,000

Base Map: World\_Imagery, Esri Online Service  
 Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community  
 Township 7S Range 5E  
 Fall River County, South Dakota

NAD 1983 UTM Zone 13N  
 1/9/2015

