

**Appendix D**  
**Summary of Public Scoping**

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BHHCS	Black Hills Health Care System
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHL	National Historic Landmark
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
Project	Proposed Reconfiguration of the VA Black Hills Health Care System
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office(r)
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs
U.S.	United States
U.S.C.	United States Code

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The United States (U.S.) Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proposes to reconfigure health care services in Hot Springs and Rapid City, South Dakota, to expand points of access to health care within the VA Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS) service area. The purpose for the reconfiguration is to better serve the health care needs and distribution of Veterans over the next 20 to 30 years. Alternate ways to implement the reconfiguration could include construction of new facilities, modifications to existing facilities, and additional options to receive health care services provided by non-VA facilities.

The reconfiguration proposal (Project) is a federal action subject to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 et seq.). VA is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on this Project in accordance with NEPA, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) “Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA” (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508), VA NEPA regulations “Environmental Effects of the Department of Veterans Affairs Actions” (38 CFR Part 26), and VA guidance “NEPA Interim Guidance for Projects” (September 2010).

The Project is also a federal undertaking subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C 470f) and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) regulations implementing Section 106 (36 CFR 800). VA has chosen to integrate Section 106 consultation and compliance within the overall NEPA framework, following the substitution process of 36 CFR 800.8(c).

This summary documents the results of the public scoping process for the EIS for the Project.

## 2.0 SCOPING PROCESS

“Scoping” is the term used in the CEQ regulations implementing NEPA to define the process for determining the scope of issues to address during the environmental analysis of a proposed action or project. Scoping provides an avenue to involve the public with identifying potentially significant issues and concerns of public importance related to a project, and possible alternatives to that project. Scoping also helps identify any issues that are not significant or not related to a project, or alternatives that are not feasible, and thereby eliminating these issues or alternatives from detailed analysis.

The scoping process for the Project involved the activities described in the following sections.

### 2.1 Notice of Intent

The Notice of Intent (NOI) is the legal forum notifying the public of the federal agency’s intent to prepare an EIS for a major federal action. The NOI invites the participation of affected and interested agencies, organizations, elected officials, Veterans, and members of the public (all commonly referred to as “stakeholders”) in determining the scope and significant issues to be

addressed and analyzed in the EIS. The NOI to prepare an EIS for VA’s proposal to reconfigure health care services within the VA BHHCS service area was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 79, No. 95) on May 16, 2014. The close of the scoping period was 30 days later on June 16, 2014; however, VA chose to extend the scoping period an additional 60 days to August 16, 2014, in response to public request and the unavailability of the *regulations.gov* website for submitting public comments. The second NOI extending the comment period was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 79, No. 114) on June 13, 2014. The NOIs are included in Appendix A.

## 2.2 Scoping Notice

A scoping notice announcing the Project and the schedule for public scoping meetings was published in newspapers covering communities in the VA BHHCS service area in South Dakota, Nebraska, and Wyoming. The newspapers are listed in Table 2-1. A second notice was published announcing additional public scoping meetings and the extended public comment period. The locations of the additional meetings listed in the notice varied by the circulation area of the newspaper, with the Rapid City Journal publication including all meeting locations. The number of days the notice was published was based on whether the newspaper was a daily or weekly publication. The two scoping notices were paid publications and appeared in the public notice or legal section of the newspapers. The notices and the newspaper affidavits of publication are included in Appendix B.

**Table 2-1. Newspaper Publications of Scoping Notice**

Newspaper	Publication Dates <sup>1</sup>	Newspaper	Publication Dates <sup>1</sup>
Rapid City Journal (SD)	May 23, 24, 28 June 15	Hot Springs Star (SD)	May 27 June 17
Black Hills Pioneer (SD)	May 23, 24, 27	Meade County Times (SD)	June 4
Capital Journal (SD)	May 23, 27, 28 June 16, 17, 18	Native Sun News (SD)	May 28 June 19
Custer County Chronicle (SD)	May 28	West River Eagle (SD)	June 19
Lakota Country Times (SD)	May 28 June 19	Chadron Record (NE)	May 28 June 18
Alliance Times-Herald (NE)	May 22, 23, 24 June 13, 14, 16	Scottsbluff Star Herald (NE)	May 23, 24, 25 June 13, 14, 16
Gering Courier (NE)	May 29 June 19	Newcastle News Letter Journal (WY)	May 29 June 19
Weston County Gazette (WY)	May 29		

<sup>1</sup> All publication dates were 2014

## 2.3 News Release

VA BHHCS prepared a news release dated May 19, 2014, announcing the publication of the NOI in the Federal Register and the start of the public scoping and comment period. A second news release dated May 21, 2014, announced the schedule and locations for public scoping meetings, and a third

news release dated June 10, 2014, announced the extension of the public comment period and the schedule and locations of additional public scoping meetings. The three news releases included the methods for submitting public comments. The Public Affairs Office distributed the news releases to the broadcast and print media outlets throughout the VA BHHCS service area listed in Table 2-2. The news releases are included in Appendix C.

**Table 2-2. Media Outlets**

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Radio</b>
Rapid City Journal	KDSJ – Deadwood
Hot Springs Star	KBHB – Sturgis
Edgemont Herald Tribune	KFXS – Rapid City
Native Sun News	KLMP – Rapid City
Custer Chronicle	KTPT – Rapid City
Winner Advocate	KOTA – Rapid City
Meade County Times-Tribune	KJBI – Fort Pierre
Pierre Capital Journal	KGFX – Pierre
Black Hills Pioneer	KCCR – Pierre
Butte County Post	KLXS – Pierre
Lakota Country Times	KPLO – Reliance
Hill City Prevailer	KMLO – Lawry
Gregory News	KOLY – Mobridge
New Underwood Post	KABD – Aberdeen
Faith Independent	KBHU – Black Hills State University
Scottsbluff Star Herald	KCMI – Scottsbluff
Lemmon Leader	SDPB – South Dakota Public Broadcasting
West River Eagle	American Ag Network
Kadoka Press	
Corson/Sioux County News Messenger	
Bennett County Booster	
Todd County Tribune	
Isabel Dakotan	
<b>Television</b>	<b>Other</b>
KEVN/Fox – Rapid City	Associated Press
KOTA/ABC – Rapid City	SD Department of Veterans Affairs Newsletter
KNBN/NBC – Rapid City	VFW Newsletter
KELO/CBS – Sioux Falls	American Legion Newsletter
OAHE TV – Pierre	Meade County Town Hall (Facebook)
SDPB – South Dakota Public Broadcasting	Freelance Writers

## 2.4 Website

VA BHHCS Public Affairs Office maintains a webpage ([www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture](http://www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture)) to keep the public informed about the Project. Scoping information that has been posted to the webpage includes the NOI, scoping notices, news releases, and materials presented during the public scoping meetings.

## 2.5 Scoping Meetings

VA BHHCS hosted 10 scoping meetings in 9 different communities throughout the service area. The scoping meetings offered the public an opportunity to learn about and provide comments on the Project. The dates, locations, and estimated attendance of those meetings are listed in Table 2-3.

**Table 2-3. Public Scoping Meetings**

Location	Date <sup>1</sup>	Attendance <sup>2</sup>
Hot Springs, SD	June 11 (afternoon)	105
	June 11 (evening)	115
Rapid City, SD	June 12	35
Pine Ridge, SD	June 24	25
Chadron, NE	June 24	91
Alliance, NE	June 25	51
Gering/Scottsbluff, NE	June 25	53
Mission, SD	June 26	3
Pierre, SD	June 26	20
Newcastle, WY	June 27	5
<sup>1</sup> All meeting dates were 2014		<sup>2</sup> Estimated

Scoping meeting attendees were invited to add their name to a mailing list and to view display boards prior to the start of each meeting. The display boards included information on NEPA and the scoping process, integrating the NHPA into the NEPA process, purpose and need for the Project, alternatives for implementing the Project, and the environmental resources to be analyzed in the EIS. The attendees were also provided two handouts – an information sheet on the Project and NEPA process, and a comment form.

Each meeting started with a PowerPoint® presentation explaining the purpose of public scoping, the NEPA process, and the public’s role in contributing to the NEPA process. The purpose and need for the Project, alternatives for implementing the Project, and the integration of the NHPA process with the EIS were presented. Upon completion of the presentation, the attendees were invited to provide verbal comments. The presentation and verbal comments at each meeting were transcribed by a registered professional court reporter.

The display boards, handouts, and presentation are included in Appendix D.

## 2.6 Identify Consulting Parties

As defined by the Section 106 implementing regulation 36 CFR 800.2(c), consulting parties include the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO); Indian tribes; representatives of local governments; and individuals and organizations with a demonstrated interest in the undertaking due to the nature

of their legal or economic relation to the undertaking or affected historic properties, or their concern with the undertaking’s effects on historic properties.

VA BHHCS identified consulting parties from numerous stakeholders who were notified by letter dated May 13, 2014, of the intent to prepare an EIS that integrates the Section 106 consultation requirements of the NHPA within the framework of the NEPA process. Attendees at the public scoping meetings were invited to submit written requests to VA BHHCS to be considered as a consulting party. By letter dated October 20, 2014, the stakeholders were notified of the preliminary list of identified consulting parties. Table 2-4 lists the consulting parties identified as of October 20, 2014. Additional consulting parties may be identified as the integrated NEPA and Section 106 process continues. Letters pertaining to identifying consulting parties are included in Appendix E.

**Table 2-4. Identified Consulting Parties**

Consulting Party <sup>1</sup>
Advisory Council for Historic Preservation
City of Hot Springs
Department of the Interior: National Park Service
Fall River County Commission Office
Fall River County Historical Society
Fort Peck Tribes of Assiniboine and Sioux
Hot Springs Certified Local Government–Historic Preservation Commission
Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Northern Arapaho Tribe
Oglala Sioux Tribe of the Pine Ridge Reservation
Save the VA
South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office
Yankton Sioux Tribe
<sup>1</sup> Includes all consulting parties identified as of October 20, 2014

### 3.0 SCOPING SUMMARY

The scoping period was open for 90 days from May 16 through August 16, 2014. The scoping process provided sufficient opportunity for the public to express their comments and provide meaningful input to the integrated NEPA/NHPA process for the Project. VA BHHCS provided adequate notice of the public scoping meetings and offered different methods for the public to provide their input. Verbal and written comments were received at the scoping meetings, and written comments were also received via:

1. email to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov)
2. online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), Docket VA-2014-VACO-0001 and -0002

3. online at [www.blackhillseis.com](http://www.blackhillseis.com) (EIS contractor website)
4. mail to Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health Care System, 113 Comanche Road, Fort Meade, SD 57741

Comments were received from Veterans, individuals, organizations, businesses, and agencies. There were 386 written comments received, 159 verbal comments made during the scoping meetings, and a form letter submitted by 138 individuals. Excerpts from the written comments and the scoping meeting transcripts are available upon request for public review during regular business hours at the Public Affairs Office in Building 116 at the VA BHHCS Fort Meade location and the Administration Office in Building 1 on the VA Hot Springs campus.

### 3.1 Comment Categories

The written comments and scoping meeting transcripts were read to identify substantive issues and to define issues and comments by the categories listed in Table 3-1. These categories generally represent the content of the EIS, and are used to verify that the comments and issues identified during the scoping process are appropriately addressed in the EIS or during the completion of the NEPA process. The categories applicable to or mentioned in the comments that were received are indicated in the table by a checkmark (✓). Some comments were applicable to more than one category.

**Table 3-1. Comment Categories**

Category		Category	
Purpose and Need	✓	Geology and Soils	
Alternatives	✓	Hydrology and Water Quality	✓
Aesthetics	✓	Land Use	✓
Air Quality	✓	Noise	
Community Services	✓	Socioeconomics	✓
Cultural Resources / Historic Properties	✓	Solid and Hazardous Materials	✓
Cumulative Impacts	✓	Transportation and Parking	✓
Environmental Justice	✓	Utilities	✓
Floodplains and Wetlands		Wildlife and Habitat	
NEPA Process	✓	NEPA / NHPA Integration	✓
Outside Scope of NEPA and EIS	✓		
✓ Category applicable to or mentioned in a comment			

### 3.2 Summary of Comments

Scoping is not a vote-counting process; the emphasis is on content of the comments rather than the number of times a particular comment was stated. All comments are given equal weight regardless of whether they were mentioned once or mentioned several times.

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The comments are summarized in this section by the assigned categories and are repeated when applicable to more than one category. Repeated comments are shown in *italics*. The comments in each category are not listed in any priority but are only numbered for convenience for the reader.

### 3.2.1 Purpose and Need

1. *Quality of and access to health care for Veterans should be the major considerations.*
2. *Factual basis of and discrepancies with data used for purpose and need.*
3. Travel distance to receive health care may discourage (or encourage) Veterans from seeking care, or make it more (or less) difficult to access care (depends on location of Veteran in relation to location of VA health service provider).
4. Travel distance affects both reimbursable and non-reimbursable travel expenses.
5. *Expand Tele-Med services to reduce time and expense for traveling to receive care.*
6. *Provide more doctors and nurses to expand and continue health care services in Hot Springs.*
7. Provide more funding to hire more staff; pay higher salaries.
8. *Lengthy time period for making a decision on the reconfiguration proposal causes uncertainty for VA employees (current and future).*
9. VA's recruitment, hiring, and retention practices contribute to loss and lack of qualified staff; part-time versus full-time positions.
10. *Modern and new medical facilities would attract and retain more qualified staff.*
11. Provide access to local, private health care services (non-VA care) purchased by VA.
12. Increased use of non-VA care from local providers who may already be operating at capacity.
13. *Increased occupancy at State Veterans Home would increase demand for in-patient services at VA Hot Springs hospital.*
14. *More employment, housing, and education opportunities for Veterans in urban settings.*
15. Larger network of community partners to support Veterans in urban settings.
16. *Cost comparison to build new facilities or renovate existing facilities.*
17. *Provide Veterans in work therapy and rehabilitation treatment programs with training to maintain and preserve historic buildings.*
18. Reconfiguration purpose should benefit Veterans, not maintain facilities for the benefit of the community.
19. Funding police, fire, and maintenance staff to continue acute care/inpatient services at VA Hot Springs is not good stewardship of public money.
20. State-of-the-art health care facilities to provide quality, safe care should be located where most Veterans live.
21. Slopes of interior ramps in domiciliary building do not comply with building codes or accessibility standards.
22. *Historic buildings can be renovated to comply with requirements of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).*
23. Renovations of historic buildings for ADA compliance and modern uses would (or would not) be costly.

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24. Rephrase purpose statement to address issues associated with ADA compliance instead of assuming non-compliant buildings have to be replaced, which essentially forecloses rehabilitation/renovation as an alternative.
  25. Medical accreditation inspections indicate VA Hot Springs provides safe, quality health care.
  26. Maintaining 100+ old buildings for medical facilities is unacceptable for any Veteran.

### 3.2.2 Alternatives

1. *Quality of and access to health care for Veterans should be the major considerations.*
2. *Factual basis of and discrepancies with data used to develop alternatives.*
3. List which health care services would be provided by each alternative.
4. Consider an alternative that restores the health care services previously offered at the VA Hot Springs campus.
5. Consider an alternative that expands and enhances VA health care and work therapy services at the VA Hot Springs campus (Alternative E–Save the VA).
6. *Provide Veterans in work therapy and rehabilitation treatment programs with training to maintain and preserve historic buildings.*
7. Consider an alternative that includes some (or excludes some) components from the other alternatives.
8. Consider an alternative that incorporates a teaching hospital associated with VA Hot Springs for rural health care providers and students in training.
9. Consider an alternative that includes opening VA community-based outpatient clinics in other communities.
10. Consider an alternative that closes the VA Fort Meade facilities and transfer services to VA Hot Springs.
11. Consider an alternative that closes the VA hospitals in Hot Springs and Fort Meade and that consolidates services in Rapid City.
12. *Modern and new medical facilities would attract and retain more qualified staff.*
13. *Expand Tele-Med services to reduce time and expense for traveling to receive care.*
14. *Provide more doctors and nurses to expand and continue health care services in Hot Springs.*
15. Establish partnerships with local health care service providers for Veterans care.
16. Increase access to and capacity of RRTP services, including for single-parent and handicapped Veterans.
17. Renovate housing rented to VA staff on VA Hot Springs campus to increase capacity for single-parent and handicapped Veterans in treatment programs.
18. Co-locate primary and specialty care with RRTP.
19. Allow Veterans to use available domiciliary space as overnight accommodations when traveling to receive care.
20. *Increased occupancy at State Veterans Home would increase demand for in-patient services at VA Hot Springs hospital.*
21. *Cost comparison to build new facilities or renovate existing facilities.*

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22. *VA Directive 0066 instructs the agency to give priority to locations in “rural town centers to strengthen the vitality and livability of the communities in which federal facilities are located.”*
  23. Use the buildings on the VA Hot Springs campus as a museum or to house homeless Veterans if VA relocates health care services.
  24. The No Action Alternative does not represent an objective baseline but partial implementation of the reconfiguration proposal; the alternative should represent a fully functioning facility.
  25. VA has not responded to the Save the VA organization’s proposed alternative.
  26. Establish a Veterans National Recovery Center at VA Hot Springs campus through an enhanced-use lease.
  27. *Incorporation of comments from initial town hall meetings from 2011 into developing alternatives.*
  28. *List of alternatives is biased, incomplete, and not responsive to public comments.*
  29. *Majority of Veterans and the public do not want the VA Hot Springs campus closed.*

### **3.2.3 Aesthetics**

1. The architecture of the buildings and setting of the VA Hot Springs campus are beautiful.
2. *Façade of historic buildings on NHL add to the visual appearance and ambience of the City of Hot Springs.*

### **3.2.4 Air Quality**

1. Longer travel distances to receive care increases gas consumption and vehicle emissions that affect air quality.

### **3.2.5 Community Services**

Community services are provided for the benefit of the public and generally include law enforcement, fire protection, emergency response, education, medical services, and parks and recreation.

1. Qualifications and capacity of Fall River Hospital to provide health care services to Veterans and State Veterans Home residents.
2. Qualifications and capacity of private health care providers to provide health care services to Veterans.
3. Continued collaboration between State Veterans Home and VA BHHCS to provide health care services.
4. Operational status of State Veterans Home should VA Hot Springs change services or close.
5. Access to dialysis services should VA Hot Springs change services or close.
6. Loss of VA fire department services that support Hot Springs and rural volunteer fire departments.
7. Loss of VA fire department would change protection class rating and increase homeowners insurance.
8. Decline in population could decrease the pool of volunteers for firefighters, emergency personnel, and other community services and activities.

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9. Less employment opportunities, loss of jobs, and vacant homes and businesses in Hot Springs could increase crime, which burdens law enforcement services.
  10. Decrease in school enrollment in Hot Springs because of loss of jobs and relocations.
  11. Decrease in school enrollment in Hot Springs would affect school funding.
  12. Decrease in school enrollment in Hot Springs would affect the number of teaching positions.
  13. Funding affects school quality and offered programs, and ability to attract teachers and families with school-aged children.
  14. Revenue from sales taxes and property taxes to maintain community services would change.
  15. *Renewed interest in community improvements and new business ventures in Hot Springs with reuse of VA campus.*

### **3.2.6 Cultural Resources / Historic Properties**

1. Requirement to maintain VA Hot Springs campus because of its National Historic Landmark (NHL) status.
2. Identify agency responsible for maintenance of NHL.
3. Importance of NHL designation in addition to National Register of Historic Places listing.
4. Financial cost to VA to maintain the historic condition of the NHL buildings if the VA Hot Springs campus is vacated.
5. *Incorporation of and compliance with relevant federal historic preservation laws and executive orders during the planning process for the undertaking.*
6. VA compliance with its Cultural Resources Management Procedures, Handbook 7545.
7. Maximize the reuse of existing historic properties in accordance with VA's Sustainable Locations Program.
8. NHL status requires VA minimize harm to the landmark to the maximum extent practicable.
9. Facilitate continued or compatible new uses of the NHL through VA's Enhanced-use Lease authority and the Building Utilization Review and Repurposing Initiative to address Veterans homelessness.
10. Historic and traditional views of healing powers of thermal springs in the Hot Springs area.
11. *Access to sweat lodge on VA Hot Springs campus for use by Native Americans.*
12. *Changes to City of Hot Springs revenues, employment, and businesses could affect Historic District.*
13. Deterioration, disrepair, and demolition of historic buildings should VA vacate the Hot Springs campus.
14. NHL listed as an endangered historic place by National Trust for Historic Preservation.
15. Relocating health care services from the NHL would change the historic use of the buildings and NHL.
16. Historic architectural assessment indicates historic buildings on NHL are in good condition and can be renovated for modern needs.
17. *Historic buildings can be renovated to comply with requirements of the ADA.*
18. *Façade of historic buildings on NHL add to the visual appearance and ambience of the City of Hot Springs.*

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19. Donate (move) the unused greenhouse (conservatory) located on Hot Springs VA campus to State Veterans Home.
  20. NEPA and historic preservation laws require the historic buildings remain occupied to prevent deterioration.
  21. *Provide Veterans in work therapy and rehabilitation treatment programs with training to maintain and preserve historic buildings.*
  22. Continued funding and maintenance of the National Cemetery should VA vacate its Hot Springs campus.

### **3.2.7 Cumulative Impacts**

1. National Guard using Fort Meade campus as a training complex should a multi-specialty outpatient clinic in Rapid City result in the future closure of VA facilities at Fort Meade.
2. Address VA's actions for the BHHCS since 1995.
3. Consider cumulative impacts of past VA actions of closing parts of the NHL.
4. Consider adverse cumulative impacts of all alternatives.

### **3.2.8 Environmental Justice**

1. Effect of closing Hot Springs VA on the availability of health care services for Native American Veterans.
2. Travel distance and availability of transportation for Native American Veterans to receive services at VA Hot Springs or at other locations should VA Hot Springs close.
3. *Access to sweat lodge on VA Hot Springs campus for use by Native Americans.*

### **3.2.9 Hydrology and Water Quality**

1. Construction of new and larger facilities increases storm water runoff into creeks and ponds.

### **3.2.10 Land Use**

1. Address applicability of 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty to future use of Hot Springs VA campus.
2. Available land on VA Hot Springs campus can accommodate construction of new buildings instead of acquiring land elsewhere.

### **3.2.11 Socioeconomics**

Socioeconomics focuses on economic activity based on population, employment, income, tax revenue, and housing.

1. As Hot Springs' largest employer, closing the VA campus would decrease employment opportunities.
2. Less employment opportunities and loss of jobs in Hot Springs would result in relocations and a declining population.
3. Less employment opportunities and loss of jobs in Hot Springs would increase dependence on government assistance programs.

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4. Enhancing VA services would also enhance rural economic development (Alternative E– Save the VA).
  5. *More employment opportunities for Veterans in urban settings.*
  6. Time and cost for VA Hot Springs employees to commute to work at other VA locations.
  7. Reduction in Veteran’s work days and salary to travel for health care.
  8. Veterans would not relocate to or would relocate from Hot Springs because of no access to health care services.
  9. Relocations and a declining population in Hot Springs would affect the real estate market (home prices, days on market, inventory).
  10. Loss of equity on home sales affects income.
  11. Declining population in Hot Springs would deter establishment of new businesses.
  12. Closing the VA Hot Springs campus would result in an estimated loss of \$21 million in annual revenue for the City of Hot Springs and Fall River County.
  13. Decrease in annual revenue attributed to VA operations could increase property taxes in Hot Springs and Fall River County.
  14. Property tax increases would increase rental costs and vacancies in Hot Springs and Fall River County.
  15. Changes to City of Hot Springs revenues and employment could affect property values.
  16. *Changes to City of Hot Springs revenues, employment, and businesses could affect Historic District.*
  17. Loss of Veterans and VA employees in Hot Springs would decrease customer base and revenue for local businesses, which could cause some businesses to close or decrease resale value.
  18. Loss of a customer based for local businesses would decrease sales tax revenue for the City of Hot Springs and Fall River County.
  19. Loss of local businesses would cause residents to travel further for goods and services.
  20. Closed businesses and closure of VA campus would deter tourists from stopping in Hot Springs.
  21. Length of time for economy of City of Hot Springs to recover without VA operations.
  22. *Renewed interest in community improvements and new business ventures in Hot Springs with reuse of VA campus.*
  23. Presence of VA fire department in Hot Springs affects protection class rating for homeowners insurance.
  24. Insurance on vacant homes and businesses is more expensive and difficult to obtain.
  25. Change to median income with loss of higher-paying VA jobs in Hot Springs.
  26. Purchase of non-VA care from local provider would aid financial stability of provider, which in turn benefits all users.
  27. The rates paid for non-VA care would be insufficient for the local provider to recoup the costs of the care.
  28. Individual Veteran’s financial hardship from delay in receiving reimbursement from VA for payment for services by a private medical care provider.

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29. *VA Directive 0066 instructs the agency to give priority to locations in “rural town centers to strengthen the vitality and livability of the communities in which federal facilities are located.”*

### **3.2.12 Solid and Hazardous Materials**

1. Conduct an inspection for historic dump sites on the Hot Springs campus that could contain hazardous materials such as asbestos and lead-based paint, and conduct any required remediation before vacating the property.

### **3.2.13 Transportation and Parking**

1. Travel distance to receive health care at other locations should VA Hot Springs campus close.
2. Travel distance affects timely access to emergency care.
3. Travel distance affects the length of time Veterans endure during group transport and waiting while numerous appointments are completed.
4. Travel distance is more difficult during extreme weather conditions.
5. Travel distance is more difficult to endure by aging Veterans.
6. Travel distance affects transportation budgets of Veterans’ families, VA employees, volunteer groups, and government agencies transporting Veterans.
7. Availability of and access to public transportation (bus, air) to VA locations.
8. Availability of and access to VA or volunteer provided shuttle services.
9. Availability of shuttle/car-pool service for VA employees to work at other VA locations.
10. Pace and volume of traffic in Rapid City can be more difficult to navigate.
11. Local roads and sidewalks within the City of Hot Springs are more accessible for pedestrians, wheelchairs, and motorized scooters.
12. *Funding infrastructure (streets and utilities) improvements that serve the VA campus have taken priority over other infrastructure needs within the City of Hot Springs.*

### **3.2.14 Utilities**

1. Further reduction of inflow to the Hot Springs wastewater treatment plant from the VA campus would disrupt the efficiency of the treatment plant processes and operations. Physical and mechanical alterations to the treatment plant would be required to process less wastewater.
2. Loss of revenue from reduced wastewater inflow from the VA campus would increase the processing costs for all Hot Springs customers/users.
3. *Funding infrastructure (streets and utilities) improvements that serve the VA campus have taken priority over other infrastructure needs within the City of Hot Springs.*
4. New facilities would follow “green energy” designs.

### **3.2.15 NEPA Process**

1. VA decision-makers should visit the VA Hot Springs campus before implementing any reconfiguration.

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2. Use of EIS results by VA decision-makers.
  3. Identify VA decision-makers.
  4. *Factual basis of and discrepancies with data used for purpose and need, alternatives, and impact analysis.*
  5. Study area for EIS.
  6. Criteria used for decision-making, including ranking and importance of the criteria.
  7. EIS should be conducted with transparency and in an honest, fair, and unbiased manner.
  8. Lengthy time period for making a decision on the reconfiguration proposal causes uncertainty for the Hot Springs community.
  9. *Lengthy time period for making a decision on the reconfiguration proposal causes uncertainty for VA employees (current and future).*
  10. Decisions made before starting and completing EIS; timing of announcing and preparing EIS.
  11. EIS is illegal because VA made the reconfiguration decision before completing an EIS.
  12. Unusual to include any proposed alternatives before scoping is completed; VA's responsibility is to consider alternatives that come from scoping.
  13. *Incorporation of comments from initial town hall meetings from 2011 into developing alternatives.*
  14. Provide the public with sufficient notice of public meeting schedules and through appropriate contacts (media and organizations).
  15. Select meeting locations that are accessible to the majority of the Veterans, including Native American Veterans.
  16. Provide access to public meeting and EIS information; electronic access not available to all.
  17. Provide a form that lists issues on which the public can provide comments.
  18. EIS failed (and will fail) to address comments and recommendations.
  19. *List of alternatives is biased, incomplete, and not responsive to public comments.*
  20. *Majority of Veterans and the public do not want the VA Hot Springs campus closed.*
  21. Relationship of the contractor preparing the EIS with the VA.

### **3.2.16 NEPA / NHPA Integration**

1. VA must consult with consulting parties following 36 CFR 800.8(c), apply the guidance in the handbook for integrating NEPA with Section 106, and notify consulting parties of the timing of their input/consultation.
2. Substituting NEPA for Section 106 is not an effective way to address historic properties; uncertainty as to how VA will progress through the Section 106 consultation process.
3. NEPA and NHPA compliance started after VA made its preferred alternative known to the public.
4. NEPA and historic preservation laws require the buildings remain occupied to prevent deterioration.
5. *Incorporation of and compliance with relevant federal historic preservation laws and executive orders during the planning process for the undertaking.*
6. Assessment of impacts to historic properties when scope/size and location(s) of new facilities are yet to be determined.

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7. Identification and selection of consulting parties.

### **3.2.17 Outside Scope of NEPA and EIS**

1. Personal experiences with VA-provided or private-sector-provided care.
2. Wait time at VA facilities for health care appointments.
3. VA mission decisions regarding types of health care services provided.
4. VA mission decisions regarding how (VA or non-VA/purchased care) health care services are provided.
5. VA mission decisions regarding where health care services are provided.
6. Privatizing or decentralizing VA health care services, including management of VA facilities.
7. Timeliness of VA reimbursement to private providers.
8. Reduction (“downsizing”) of health care services offered over the years at VA Hot Springs campus.
9. Sociological culture and attitude of Hot Springs community towards Veterans.
10. Advantages of rural, small-town setting for health care treatment and recovery, including “Veterans Town” community support and respect.
11. Requests for Congressional field hearing with House Veterans Affairs Committee.
12. Introduction of bills into Congress pertaining to the reconfiguration proposal and EIS process.
13. Availability of VA health care facilities in case of a national emergency.
14. Benefits offered to Veterans upon entry to military service versus benefits received upon completion of service.
15. Personal opinions of and accusations towards VA management and staff.

### **3.3 Incorporation of Comments and Issues into the EIS**

The CEQ regulations implementing NEPA provide guidance as to content (40 CFR 1502.10), scope (40 CFR 1502.4), and impact analysis (40 CFR 1502.16) for an EIS. The scoping process (40 CFR 1501.7(a)(2)) allows for issues (comments) to be identified and eliminated from detailed study which are not considered significant.

Comments summarized by the categories representing the content of the EIS that are considered substantive are incorporated into the EIS. The substantive comments are assessed based on best available data to conduct a reasonable analysis.

Comments pertaining to the NEPA process and NEPA/NHPA integration are considered and addressed in the EIS if relevant and appropriate, or are incorporated into the ongoing public involvement and Section 106 consultation procedures.

Comments considered outside the NEPA process or outside the EIS scope, content, and impact analysis are not addressed or incorporated into the EIS. These types of comments generally address VA mission, administration, or policy actions. The analysis of reasonably foreseeable impacts must

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be supported by credible scientific evidence, not be based on pure conjecture, and be within the rule of reason (40 CFR 1502.22), which generally applies to personal experiences, opinions, or beliefs.

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## Appendix A: Notices of Intent

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Summary of Public Scoping

28602

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the property and interests in property of, *inter alia*, persons listed on the Annex to the Order.

On July 30, 2004, the President issued Executive Order 13350, which, *inter alia*, replaced the Annex to Executive Order 13315 with a new Annex that included the names of individuals and entities, including individuals and entities that had previously been designated under Executive Order 12722 and related authorities.

The Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control has determined that the following individual and entities should be removed from the SDN List:

#### Individual

ABBAS, Kassim, Lerchesbergring 23A, D-60598, Frankfurt, Germany; DOB 7 Aug 1956;

POB Baghdad, Iraq (individual) [IRAQ2]

#### Entities

S.M.I. SEWING MACHINES ITALY S.P.A., Italy [IRAQ2]

EUROMAC TRANSPORTI INTERNATIONAL SRL, Via Ampere 5, Monza 20052, Italy [IRAQ2]

EUROMAC, LTD, 4 Bishops Avenue, Northwood, Middlesex, United Kingdom [IRAQ2]

BAY INDUSTRIES, INC., 10100 Santa Monica Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA [IRAQ2]

The removal of the names from the SDN List was effective as of April 29, 2014. All property and interests in property of the individual and the entities that are in or hereafter come within the United States or the possession or control of United States persons are now unblocked.

Dated: May 12, 2014.

**Barbara C. Hammerle,**

*Acting Director, Office of Foreign Assets Control.*

[FR Doc. 2014-11411 Filed 5-15-14; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4810-AL-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Notice of Intent To Prepare an Integrated Environmental Impact Statement for the Department of Veterans Affairs, Black Hills Health Care System Proposed Improvements and Reconfiguration, Hot Springs and Rapid City, South Dakota

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

**ACTION:** Notice of intent

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4331 et seq.); the

Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); VA's NEPA Implementing Guidance (38 CFR Part 26); Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (16 U.S.C. Part 470F); and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Procedures for the Protection of Historic Properties (36 CFR Part 800 et seq.), VA intends to prepare an integrated environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed improvements to and reconfiguration of the VA Black Hills Health Care System (VA BHHCS) services in the Hot Springs and Rapid City, South Dakota, vicinities. The proposed action would involve reconfiguring existing services and expanding points of access to health care within the VA BHHCS service area to better serve the health care needs and distribution of Veterans in the VA BHHCS service area over the next 20 to 30 years. That area includes parts of South Dakota, northwestern Nebraska, and eastern Wyoming. The effects and impacts to be addressed will include those identified in 40 CFR 1508.8; i.e., ecological, aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, and health, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative. Both beneficial and detrimental effects of the proposed action will be identified as well. As part of the scoping process, VA seeks public input on the relative importance of these and other areas of environmental concern, and suggestions regarding additional environmental impacts that should be evaluated.

**DATES:** With the publication of this notice, VA is initiating the scoping process to identify issues and concerns to be addressed in the integrated EIS. Federal, state, and local agencies, environmental organizations, businesses, other interested parties and the general public are encouraged to submit their written comments identifying specific issues or topics of environmental concern that should be addressed. VA will hold two or more public scoping meetings within the VA BHHCS service area; the dates, times, and locations of which will be announced and published at least 14 days prior to the meetings. All written comments on the proposal should be submitted by June 16, 2014. VA will consider all comments received during the 30-day public comment period in determining the scope of the integrated EIS.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments on VA's notice of intent to prepare an integrated EIS through [www.Regulations.gov](http://www.Regulations.gov) or

[vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov). Please refer to: "VA BHHCS Notice of Intent to Prepare an Integrated EIS". Comments may also be submitted to Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health Care System, 113 Comanche Rd., Fort Meade, SD 57741

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Staff Assistant to the Director, VA BHHCS, at the address above or by telephone, 605-720-7170. Documents related to the VA BHHCS proposed reconfiguration will be available for viewing on the VA BHHCS Web site: <http://www.blackhills.va.gov/VABlackHillsFuture/>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In December 2011, VA made public a proposal to improve and reconfigure the Black Hills Health Care System services. The purpose of this proposed action is to enhance and maintain the quality and safety of care for Veterans in the 100,000 square-mile VA BHHCS service area, replace aging buildings for Veterans in Residential Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs (RRTP) and Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC), increase access to care closer to Veterans' homes, and reduce out-of-pocket expenses for Veterans' travel. VA BHHCS served approximately 18,650 Veterans in fiscal year 2012, a decrease from 20,500 in fiscal year 2009. VA projections estimate that within 10 years VA BHHCS will serve about 19,750 Veterans in the two hospitals (Hot Springs and Fort Meade) and nine CBOCs currently in operation.

The need for the reconfiguration of services is further substantiated by the following facts: (1) Veteran population centers are not in the same location as current VA facilities; (2) Difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff at current Hot Springs facility; (3) Difficulty maintaining high-quality, safe, and accessible care; (4) Long distances and travel times to receive specialty care; (5) Current residential treatment facilities and locations limit care available to Veterans; and (6) Higher operating costs than financial allocations.

At VA Hot Springs there are approximately 2,800 Veterans that receive primary care. About 5,500 Veterans visit the facility annually for some aspect of care. The operation of this small, highly rural facility located in a community of approximately 3,900 persons raises concerns about safety, quality of care, sustainability over time, recruitment and retention of staff, and cost of operations and maintenance and upgrades to the facility. Contributing factors are the difficulty complying with rules and laws governing handicapped

access, and the increasing age and cost of operating, maintaining and improving buildings ranging from 40 to over 100 years old.

At present, VA has identified seven potential action alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS: *Alternative A* would involve building/leasing a CBOC in Hot Springs and a Multi-Specialty Outpatient Clinic (MSOC) and 100-bed RRTP in Rapid City. *Alternative B* would involve building/leasing a 100-bed RRTP in Hot Springs and a MSOC in Rapid City. *Alternative C* would entail renovating Building 12 for a CBOC and the Domiciliary for a 100-bed RRTP at Hot Springs and building/leasing a MSOC at Rapid City. *Alternative D* would involve building/leasing a CBOC and 24-bed RRTP at Hot Springs and a MSOC and 76-bed RRTP at Rapid City. *Alternative E* would involve implementing a proposal put forward by the "Save the VA" committee, a Hot Springs public interest group, to repurpose VA Hot Springs as a multifaceted national demonstration project for Veterans care in a rural environment. *Alternative F* would be an as yet unidentified alternative use that might be proposed during the EIS process. *Supplemental Alternative G* would entail repurposing all or part of the Hot Springs campus through an enhanced-use lease or other agreement with another governmental agency or private entity in conjunction with Alternatives A through F. In addition to the above seven action alternatives, the EIS also will evaluate the impacts associated with the No Action or "status quo" alternative (*Alternative H*) as a basis for comparison to the action alternatives.

Potential issues and impacts to be addressed in the EIS will include, but not be limited to, physical and biological resources, cultural and historic resources, land use, socioeconomics, community services, transportation and parking, and cumulative effects. Relevant and reasonable measures that could alleviate or mitigate adverse effects and impacts also will be included. VA will undertake necessary consultations with other governmental agencies and consulting parties pursuant to the NHPA, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, and other applicable environmental laws. Consultation will include, but not be limited to, the following Federal, Tribal, state, and local agencies: State and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; National Park Service; and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Information related to the EIS process, including notices of public scoping and other informational meetings and hearings, will be available for viewing on the VA BHHCS Web site: <http://www.blackhills.va.gov/VABlackHillsFuture/>

VA anticipates that many of the issues to be addressed in assessing the impacts of the various alternatives will be broadly cultural in character; that is, they will involve potential impacts on the cultural environment as perceived by Veterans, their families, Indian tribes and communities of the area. Such impacts may include, but are not limited to: (a) Impacts on historic properties; (b) impacts on the cultural values ascribed to the Hot Springs and Fort Meade campuses by Veterans, local

residents, Indian tribes and others; (c) impacts to ongoing or traditional cultural uses of such locations; and (d) impacts on archaeological, historical, and scientific data.

In the interests of efficiency, completeness, and facilitating public involvement, it is VA's intention that all cultural impacts be addressed together, in consultation with all appropriate parties. To facilitate this inclusive process, VA will incorporate into its NEPA analysis process the review procedures for historic properties usually carried out separately under 36 CFR 800.3 through 6 of the NHPA Section 106 implementing regulations. This process is described in 36 CFR 800.8(c) of those procedures and in the Council on Environmental Quality and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation handbook for integrating NEPA and Section 106 dated March 2013.

#### Signing Authority

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or designee, approved this document and authorized the undersigned to sign and submit the document to the Office of the Federal Register for publication electronically as an official document of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Jose D. Riojas, Chief of Staff, Department of Veterans Affairs, approved this document on May 6, 2014, for publication.

Dated: May 13, 2014.

**Robert C. McFetridge**,  
Director, Regulation Policy and Management,  
Office of the General Counsel, Department  
of Veterans Affairs.

[FR Doc. 2014-11316 Filed 5-15-14; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8320-01-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS  
AFFAIRS**

[OMB Control No. 2900-0404]

**Agency Information Collection  
(Veteran's Application for Increased  
Compensation Based on  
Unemployability) Activity Under OMB  
Review**

**AGENCY:** Veterans Benefits  
Administration, Department of Veterans  
Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3521), this notice announces that the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs, will submit the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden; it includes the actual data collection instrument.

**DATES:** Comments must be submitted on or before July 14, 2014.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments on the collection of information through [www.Regulations.gov](http://www.Regulations.gov), or to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Attn: VA Desk Officer; 725 17th St. NW., Washington, DC 20503 or sent through electronic mail to [oir\\_submission@omb.eop.gov](mailto:oir_submission@omb.eop.gov). Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0404" in any correspondence.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Crystal Rennie, Enterprise Records Service (005R1B), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20420, (202) 632-7492 or email [crystal.rennie@va.gov](mailto:crystal.rennie@va.gov). Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0404."

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title:* Veteran's Application for Increased Compensation Based on Unemployability, VA Form 21-8940.

*OMB Control Number:* 2900-0404.

*Type of Review:* Revision of a currently approved collection.

*Abstract:* VA Form 21-8940 is used by Veterans to file a claim for increased disability compensation based on unemployability. Claimants are required to provide current medical, educational, and occupational history in order for VA to determine whether he or she is unable to secure or follow a substantially gainful employment due to service-connected disabilities.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to

respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on January 3, 2014, at page 426.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

*Estimated Annual Burden:* 18,000 hours.

*Estimated Average Burden per Respondent:* 45 minutes.

*Frequency of Response:* One-time.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 24,000.

Dated: June 9, 2014.

By direction of the Secretary.

**Crystal Rennie,**

*Department Clearance Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 2014-13810 Filed 6-12-14; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8320-01-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS  
AFFAIRS**

**Notice of Intent To Prepare an  
Integrated Environmental Impact  
Statement for the Department of  
Veterans Affairs, Black Hills Health  
Care System Proposed Improvements  
and Reconfiguration, Hot Springs and  
Rapid City, South Dakota; Comment  
Period Extension**

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

**ACTION:** Notice of intent; Comment period extension.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published, in the **Federal Register** on May 16, 2014, the Notice of Intent to prepare an integrated environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed improvements to and reconfiguration of the VA Black Hills Health Care System (VA BHHCS) services in the Hot Springs and Rapid City, South Dakota vicinities. Due to public request and the unavailability of the regulations.gov public comment Web site, the comment period for the scoping process has been extended from June 16, 2014 to August 16, 2014.

**DATES:** Public comments must be received by August 16, 2014.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments on VA's notice of intent to prepare an integrated EIS through [www.Regulations.gov](http://www.Regulations.gov) or [vablackhillfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillfuture@va.gov). Please refer to: "VA BHHCS Notice of Intent to Prepare an Integrated EIS". Comments may also be submitted to Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health

Care System, 113 Comanche Rd., Fort Meade, SD 57741.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Staff Assistant to the Director, VA BHHCS, at the address above or by telephone, 605-720-7170. Documents related to the VA BHHCS proposed reconfiguration will be available for viewing on the VA BHHCS Web site: <http://www.blackhills.va.gov/VABlackHillsFuture/>.

Correction: In the **Federal Register** of May 16, 2014 in FR Doc. 2014-11316, on page 28603, in the second column, correct the **DATES** caption to read:

**DATES:** With the publication of this notice, VA is initiating the scoping process to identify issues and concerns to be addressed in the integrated EIS. Federal, state, and local agencies, environmental organizations, businesses, other interested parties and the general public are encouraged to submit their written comments identifying specific issues or topics of environmental concern that should be addressed. VA will hold two or more public scoping meetings within the VA BHHCS service area; the dates, times, and locations of which will be announced and published at least 14 days prior to the meetings. All written comments on the proposal should be submitted by August 16, 2014. VA will consider all comments received during the 90-day public comment period in determining the scope of the integrated EIS.

*Extension:* The public comment period for the scoping process for the integrated environmental impact statement for the proposed improvements to and reconfiguration of the VA Black Hills Health Care System services in the Hot Springs and Rapid City, South Dakota vicinities has been extended from June 16, 2014 to August 16, 2014.

**Signing Authority**

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or designee, approved this document and authorized the undersigned to sign and submit the document to the Office of the Federal Register for publication electronically as an official document of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Jose D. Riojas, Chief of Staff, Department of Veterans Affairs, approved the Notice of Intent on May 6, 2014, for publication.

**Robert C. McPetridge,**

*Director of Regulations Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 2014-13840 Filed 6-12-14; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8320-01-P**

VA Black Hills Health Care System Reconfiguration

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## Appendix B: Scoping Notices

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Summary of Public Scoping

## **Public Scoping Meetings: Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**HOT SPRINGS:** Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Mueller Center, Auditorium  
801 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747

**RAPID CITY:** Thursday, June 12, 2014, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, Sheridan Room  
2111 N. LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations), after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov) by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act.

## Public Scoping Meetings: Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. Consultation on potential effects to historic resources, as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, will be integrated into this EIS process. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts. The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

- PINE RIDGE, SD: Tuesday, June 24, 2014, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.  
Prairie Wind Casino Convention Center, Lakota Dome Room  
U.S. 18, Pine Ridge, SD 57770
- CHADRON, NE: Tuesday, June 24, 2014, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Chadron State College, Student Center Ballroom  
1000 Main Street, Chadron, NE 69337
- ALLIANCE, NE: Wednesday, June 25, 2014, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.  
Alliance High School, Performing Arts Center  
1450 Box Butte Avenue, Alliance NE 69301
- SCOTTSBLUFF, NE: Wednesday, June 25, 2014, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Gering Civic Center  
1050 M Street, Gering, NE 69341
- MISSION, SD: Thursday, June 26, 2014, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.  
Sinte Gleska University, Multipurpose facility/gym  
101 Antelope Circle, Mission, SD 57555
- PIERRE, SD: Thursday, June 26, 2014, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Pierre Ramkota, Amphitheater II  
920 W Sioux Ave, Pierre, SD 57501
- NEWCASTLE, WY: Friday, June 27, 2014, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.  
U.S. Forest Service Office  
1225 Washington Boulevard, Newcastle, WY 82701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at the listed meeting time, after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments **by August 16, 2014**:

- by email to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov)
- online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), Docket VA-2014-VACO-0002
- online, direct to EIS contractor, at [www.blackhillseis.com](http://www.blackhillseis.com) (option to submit anonymously)

- by mail to Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health Care System, 113 Comanche Road, Fort Meade, SD 57741

This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act. Please continue to visit [www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillfuture/](http://www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillfuture/) for project updates.

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR RECONFIGURATION OF VA BLACK HILLS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide accessible, and cost-effective care where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**HOT SPRINGS:**

Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Mueller Center, Auditorium, 801 S. 6th Street Hot Springs, SD 57747

**RAPID CITY:**

Thursday, June 12, 2014, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, Sheridan Room, 2111 N. LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations), after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System. Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments to vablackhillfuture@va.gov by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act.

PUBLISH: May 22, 23, and 24, 2014 ZNEZ

# Affidavit of Publication

BOX BUTTE COUNTY }  
STATE OF NEBRASKA } SS.

Tom Shaal, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that he is the Publisher of the Alliance Times-Herald, a legal newspaper, under the statutes of the State of Nebraska, published in Box Butte County; that said newspaper circulation in Box Butte County and that to his personal knowledge, the notice, a true copy of which is here to annexed, was published in said newspaper for 3 week on the following dates:

May 22, 23 and 24, 2014



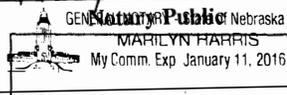
Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this

24 day of

Fee \$ 70.05

May, 2014  
Marilyn Harris

Federal I.D. Number 47-0368289



# Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA:  
COUNTY OF LAWRENCE:

Letitia Lister of said County and State being first duly sworn, on her oath says: That the BLACK HILLS PIONEER is a legal daily newspaper of general circulation, printed and published in the City of Spearfish, in said County and State by Letitia Lister, and has been such a newspaper during the times hereinafter mentioned; and that said newspaper has a bonafide circulation of at least 200 copies weekly, and has been published within said County in the English language for at least one year prior to the first publication of the notice herein mentioned, and is printed in whole or in part in an office maintained at the place of publication; and that I, Letitia Lister, the undersigned, am the Publisher of said newspaper and have personal knowledge of all the facts stated in this affidavit; and that the advertisement headed:

Public Scoping Meetings

a printed copy of which is hereto attached, was printed and published in said newspaper for 3 successive <sup>days</sup> and consecutive weeks, the first publication being made on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of May, 2014, and the last publication on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2014, that the full amount of fees charged for publishing same, to-wit: The sum of \$ 51.74, insures solely to the benefit of the publisher of the BLACK HILLS PIONEER, that no agreement or understanding for a division thereof has been made with any person and that no part thereof has been agreed to be paid to any other person whomsoever.

[Signature]  
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2014

[Signature]

Notary Public, Lawrence County, South Dakota  
My commission expires: 10-24-2016

**Public Scoping Meetings:  
Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings at the request of the Department from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**HOT SPRINGS:**  
Wednesday, June 11, 2014,  
2:30 - 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Mueller Center, Auditorium**



# Capital Journal

## AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

State of South Dakota, County of Hughes

Jackie Odom of said county, being, first duly sworn, on oath, says: That she is the publisher or an employee of the publisher of the Capital Journal, a daily newspaper published in the City of Pierre in said County of Hughes and State of South Dakota; that she has full and personal knowledge of the facts herein stated, that said newspaper is a legal newspaper as defined in SDCL 17-2-2.1 through 17-2-2.4 inclusive, that said newspaper has been published within the said County of Hughes and State of South Dakota, for at least one year next prior to the first publication of the attached public notice, and that the legal display advertisement headed Public Scoping Meetings: Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health... a printed copy of which, taken from the paper in which the same was published, and which is hereto attached and made a part of this affidavit, was published in said newspaper for three successive week(s) to wit:

<u>May 23</u>	20 <u>14</u>	_____	20 _____
<u>May 27</u>	20 <u>14</u>	_____	20 _____
<u>May 28</u>	20 <u>14</u>	_____	20 _____
_____	20 _____	_____	20 _____
_____	20 _____	_____	20 _____

That the full amount of the fee charged for the publication of the attached public notice inures to the sole benefit of the publisher or publishers; that no agreement or understanding for the division thereof has been made with any other person, and that no part thereof has been agreed to be paid to any person whomsoever; that the fees charged for the publication thereof are: \$ 62.89.

Signed: Jackie Odom

subscribed and sworn to before me this 30 day of May 20 14

Margi Baker

Notary Public in and for the County of Hughes, South Dakota.  
My Commission expires 2-19, 2015.

### Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

County of Pennington SS:

*Display Ad*

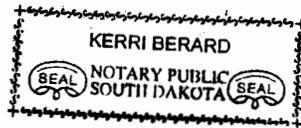
Brandyn Crawford being first duly sworn, upon his/her oath says: That he/she is now and was at all time hereinafter mentioned, an employee of the RAPID CITY JOURNAL, a corporation of Rapid City, South Dakota, the owner and publisher of the RAPID CITY JOURNAL, a legal and daily newspaper printed and published in Rapid City, in said County of Pennington, and has full and personal knowledge of all the facts herein stated as follows: that said newspaper is and at all of the times herein mentioned has been a legal and daily newspaper with a bonafide paid circulation of at least Two Hundred copies daily, and has been printed and published in the English language, at and within an office maintained by the owner and publisher thereof, at Rapid City, in said Pennington County, and has been admitted to the United States mail under the second class mailing privilege for at least one year prior to the publication herein mentioned; that the advertisement, a printed copy of which, taken from said Rapid City Journal, the paper in which the same was published, is attached to this sheet and made a part of this affidavit, was published in said paper once each week for 3 successive Days, the first publication there of being on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of May that the fees charged for the publication there of are 329 dollars and 94 cents.

*Brandyn Crawford*

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of June, 2014.

*Kerri Berard*  
Notary public

KERRI BERARD  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
MY COMM. EXP. AUGUST 21, 2019



My commission expires

**AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**

Star Herald  
PO Box 1709  
Scottsbluff, NE 69363

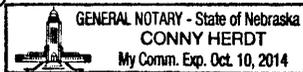
State of Nebraska  
County of Scotts Bluff ) ss.

I, Jennifer Harms do solemnly swear that I am the Accounts Receivable Bookkeeper of the Star-Herald, a legal newspaper of general circulation, published daily except Mondays, at Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska; that the notice hereto attached and which forms a part of this affidavit was Published in said paper 3 (three) consecutive week (s) in the issues published, respectively May 23, 24, 25, 2014

that said notice was published in the regular and entire issues and every number of the paper on the days mentioned, the same being the corresponding day of each week during the period of time of publication and that said notice was published in the newspaper proper and not in the supplement.

Jennifer Harms  
SUBSCRIBED in my presence and sworn to before me on May 27, 2014

Conny Herdt  
Notary Public



The publication fees amount to \$ 98.72  
CASH/PC13 - 53885031

tion ity   an ed the C	Track	is Fly Tr r
<p><b>Public Scoping Meetings: Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System</b></p> <p>The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host scoping meetings to invite comments from stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the community. The meetings will be held at the location of the Black Hills Health Care System. The meetings will include a presentation of the proposed alternatives and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The input on the development of these alternatives, potential impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions for improvements will be used in the development of the National Environmental Policy Act.</p> <p>The content and format of the public scoping meeting information will be the same.</p>	<p><b>HOT SPRINGS:</b> Wednesday, June 12, 2:30-4:30 p.m. &amp; 6:30-8:30 p.m. Mueller Center, Auditorium 801 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747</p> <p><b>RAPID CITY:</b> Thursday, June 12, 8:30 p.m. Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center Sheridan Room 2111 N. LaCrosse Street Rapid City, SD 57701</p>	<p>Does not will open 30 minutes before each meeting to allow for questions, comments, and oral comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (both locations), after which there will be an opportunity to provide oral comments. The meetings will be held at the location of the Black Hills Health Care System. The meetings will include a presentation of the proposed alternatives and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The input on the development of these alternatives, potential impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions for improvements will be used in the development of the National Environmental Policy Act.</p> <p>Published in the Star-Herald, Scottsbluff, Nebraska on May 23, 24, 25, 2014</p>

**AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**

State of South Dakota )  
 ) ss.  
County of Fall River )

Brett Nachtigall of Hot Springs, Fall River County, South Dakota, being duly sworn, upon oath says that he is the publisher of the Hot Springs Star, as a legal newspaper, as defined in SDCL 17-2-2.1 through 17-2-2.4 inclusive, and is published at Hot Springs, county and state aforesaid; that the advertisement headed –

#520 Public Meetings

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

a true printed copy thereof is hereunto annexed, was published in the said Hot Springs Star, in the regular and entire issue of said paper,

for one

successive issues, beginning with the

issue dated \_\_\_\_\_

May 27, 2014

and ending with the issue dated

May 27, 2014

That the full amount of the fee charged for the publication of said notice is

\$ 20.02, and that

no agreement or understanding, for the division thereof, has been made with any other person, and that no part thereof has been agreed to be paid to any person whomsoever, that the whole amount insures to the benefit of the publishers of said newspaper.

*[Signature]*

Subscribed and sworn to before me

this 29 day of May

20 14.

*[Signature]*  
Notary Public

My Commission Expires  
December 3, 2019



**520**  
**Public Scoping Meetings:**  
**Environmental Impact**  
**Statement for**  
**Reconfiguration of VA Black**  
**Hills Health Care System**  
The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**HOT SPRINGS:**  
Wednesday, June 11, 2014  
2:30 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 8:30 p.m.

Mueller Center, Auditorium,  
801 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs,  
SD 57747

**RAPID CITY:**  
Thursday, June 12, 2014  
6:30 8:30 p.m.

Best Western Ramkota Hotel  
and Conference Center,  
Sheridan Room, 2111 N.  
LaCrosse Street, Rapid City,  
SD 57701

~~Doors will open 90 minutes~~  
before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations), after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments to [vablackhillfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillfuture@va.gov) by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$20.02.  
May 27

# PROOF OF PUBLICATION

## STATE OF NEBRASKA

### COUNTY OF DAWES

I, Kerri Rempp, editor of the Chadron Record, being first duly sworn, on my oath, depose and say that the Chadron Record is a weekly legal newspaper for the publication of legal and other official notices, printed and published at Chadron, in Dawes County, Nebraska in the English language and having a bonafide circulation of at least three hundred copies weekly and which said Chadron Record has been published within said county of Dawes County for more than fifty-two successive weeks prior to the publication of the attached notice, and printed in an office maintained in Chadron, the place of publication, and that I have personal knowledge of the fact of the publication of said notice as hereafter specified.

That a legal notice of which the annexed is a printed copy, cut from the said Chadron Record and to which reference is hereby made as part of this affidavit was regularly published in said weekly newspaper once each week for 1 successive weeks, the first of said weekly publications having been so made in said newspaper on the 26 day of May, 2014; and the last of said weekly publications having been so made in said newspaper on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_; that the said notice was published in the regular and entire issue of every number of said newspapers during the time of publication; and that said published in the newspaper, and not in the supplement.

*Kerri Rempp*

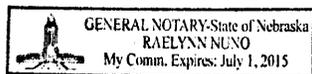
Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this

28 day of May, A.D., 2014.

*Raelynn Nuno* Notary Public

Printer's Fee \$ 26<sup>14</sup>

Paid by \_\_\_\_\_



### Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning ~~services and resources~~ to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

#### HOT SPRINGS:

Wednesday, June 11, 2014,  
2:30 - 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Mueller Center, Auditorium  
801 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747

#### RAPID CITY: Thursday, June 12, 2014, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, Sheridan Room  
2111 N. LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can view displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations), after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments to [vablackhillfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillfuture@va.gov) by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act. Revised May 28, 2014

### Affidavit of Publication

State of South Dakota )  
 )ss.  
County of Custer )

Charles W. Najacht of said county, being duly sworn, on oath says that he is publisher of the Custer County Chronicle, a weekly newspaper printed and published in Custer City, said County of Custer and has full and personal knowledge of all the facts herein stated; that said newspaper is a legal newspaper and has a bona-fide circulation of at least two hundred copies weekly, and has been published within said County for fifty-two successive weeks next prior to the publication of the notice herein, mentioned, and was and is printed wholly or in part in an office maintained at said place of publication: that the

Dept of Veterans Affairs  
Public Scoping Meetings

a printed copy of which, taken from the paper in which the same was published, is attached to this sheet, and is made a part of this Affidavit, was published in said newspaper at least once each week for 1 successive week(s), on which said newspaper was regularly published, to wit:

- May 28, 2014; \_\_\_\_\_;
- \_\_\_\_\_;
- \_\_\_\_\_;
- \_\_\_\_\_;
- \_\_\_\_\_;

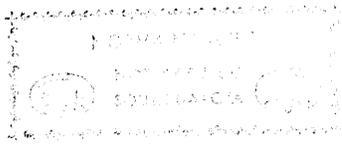
the full amount of the fees for the publication of the annexed notice is \$ 41.10

Charles W. Najacht

Subscribed and sworn to me before this 28  
of May, 20 14;

Naama Najacht NOTARY PUBLIC

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES: May 5, 2018



**Public Scoping Meetings:**  
**Environmental Impact Statement for**  
**Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts. The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**HOT SPRINGS:** Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Mueller Center, Auditorium  
801 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747

**RAPID CITY:** Thursday, June 12, 2014, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, Sheridan Room  
2111 N. LeCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations), after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System. Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments to [vablackhillfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillfuture@va.gov) by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act. Published once at an approximate cost of \$41.10

**AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**

Gering Courier  
PO Box 70  
Gering, NE 69341

State of Nebraska  
County of Scotts Bluff ) ss.

I, Jennifer Harms do solemnly swear that I am the Accounts Receivable Bookkeeper of the Gering Courier, a legal newspaper of general circulation, published weekly at Gering, Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska; that the notice hereto attached and which forms a part of this affidavit was Published in said paper 1 (one)

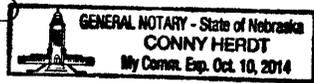
consecutive week (s) in the issues published, respectively May 29, 2014

that said notice was published in the regular and entire issues and every number of the paper on the days mentioned, the same being the corresponding day of each week during the period of time of publication and that said notice was published in the newspaper proper and not in the supplement.

*Jennifer Harms*

SUBSCRIBED in my presence and sworn to before me on May 29, 2014

*Conny Herdt*  
Notary Public



The publication fees amount to \$ 35.12  
1CASHCH - 53885193

**Public Scoping Meetings:**  
**Environmental Impact Statement for**  
**Reconfiguration of**  
**VA Black Hills Health Care System**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, family members, service providers, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning, consolidating, and upgrading VA health care facilities. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

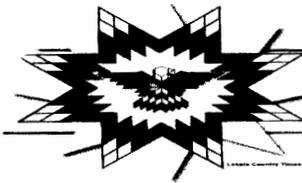
The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**HOT SPRINGS:** Wednesday, June 11, 2014  
2:30 - 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Muller Center, Auditorium  
901 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747

**RAPID CITY:** Thursday, June 12, 2014, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Rapid City Community College  
Conference Center, South Hall  
2111 N. LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations), after which the public is encouraged to provide comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment. Participants are encouraged to bring a representative who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments via teleconference at va.gov by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Published in the Gering Courier, Gering, Nebraska  
11 May 29, 2014



*www.lakotacountrytimes.com*  
**LAKOTA COUNTRY TIMES**

*Truth, Integrity and Lakota Spirit*

316 Main St. PO Box 386, Martin, SD 57551 Phone: 605-685-1868 FAX:605-685-1870

US Postal Permit Number: USPS 024-176

**AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**

State of South Dakota, County of Bennett:

Faith Cross of said county, being first duly sworn, on oath, says that he/she is the Editor/Publisher or an employee of the Publisher of the Lakota Country Times, a weekly newspaper published in the county of Bennett for circulation in the counties of Bennett and Shannon and Todd in South Dakota; That he/she has full and personal knowledge of the facts herein stated, that said newspaper is a legal newspaper as defined in SDCL 17-2-2.1 through 17-2-2.4 inclusive, that said newspaper has been published within the said County of Bennett and State of South Dakota, for a least one year prior to the first publication of the attached public notice, and that the legal advertisement headed

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS**

printed copy of which, taken from the paper in which the same was published, and which is hereto attached and made a part of this affidavit, was published in said newspaper for 1 successive week(s) to wit:

<u>          MAY 29          </u>	2014	Volume 10	Issue # 36
<u>                                  </u>	2014	Volume 10	Issue #
<u>                                  </u>	2014	Volume 10	Issue #
<u>                                  </u>	2014	Volume 10	Issue #

That the full amount of the fee charged for the publication of the attached public notice inures to the sole benefit of the publisher or publishers; that no agreement or understanding for the division thereof has been made with any other person, and that no part thereof has been agreed to be paid to any person whomsoever; that the fees charged for the publication thereof are:

\$ 46.92

Signed: Faith Cross

Subscribed and sworn to before me this date: JUNE 15, 2014, 2014

Signed: Connie Smith

Notary Public in and for the County of Bennett, South Dakota

My Commission expires Dec. 11, 2019



## Affidavit Proof of Publication

I, Robert A. Bonnar do solemnly swear that I am Editor of the *News Letter Journal*, a newspaper of general circulation, printed and published each week at Newcastle, County of Weston, State of Wyoming; that the advertisement hereto attached, and which has been made a part of the affidavit, and a part of the proof of publication:

### Meeting Notice

Public Scoping Meetings: Hot Springs, SD – June 11, 2014

Rapid City, SD – June 12, 2014

Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of  
VA Black Hills Health Care Systems

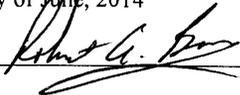
Department of Veterans Affairs

Advertisement was printed the first having been  
Printed and made in said newspaper May 29, 2014

And the last on May 29, 2014

That said advertisement was printed and published  
in the newspaper proper and not a supplement  
Subscribed and sworn before me on the  
23rd day of June, 2014

Editor

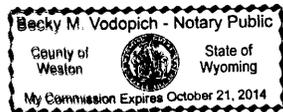


Notary Public



Commission Expires:

October 21, 2014



## Meeting Notice

### **PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR RECONFIGURATION OF VA BLACK HILLS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

#### **HOT SPRINGS:**

Wednesday, June 11, 2014  
2:30 – 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Mueller Center, Auditorium  
801 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747

#### **RAPID CITY:**

Thursday, June 12, 2014, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference  
Center, Sheridan Room  
2111 N. LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD  
57701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations), after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov) by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act.

(Publish May 29 and June 5, 2014)

# Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

County of Pennington SS:

June 4  
L20867331  
**Public Scoping Meetings:  
Environmental Impact  
Statement for  
Reconfiguration of VA  
Black Hills Health  
Care System**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**HOT SPRINGS:**  
Wednesday, June 11, 2014,  
2:30 - 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Mueller Center, Auditorium  
801 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747

**RAPID CITY:**  
Thursday, June 12, 2014,  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, Sheridan Room  
2111 N. LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations), after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov) by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS

under the National Environmental Policy Act.

(Published once at the total approximate cost of \$29.95).  
**MEADE COUNTY TIMES**

Robert Evans being first duly sworn, upon his/her oath says: That he/she is now and was at all time hereinafter mentioned, an employee of the Rapid City Journal, a corporation of Rapid City, South Dakota, the owner and publisher of the MEADE COUNTY TIMES, a legal and daily newspaper printed and published in Sturgis, in said County of Meade, and has full and personal knowledge of all the facts herein stated as follows: that said newspaper is and at all of the times herein mentioned has been a legal and daily newspaper with a bonafide paid circulation of at least Two Hundred copies weekly, and has been printed and published in the English language, at and within an office maintained by the owner and publisher thereof, at Sturgis, in said Meade County, and has been admitted to the United States mail under the second class mailing privilege for at least one year prior to the publication herein mentioned; that the advertisement, a printed copy of which, taken from said Meade County Times, the paper in which the same was published, is attached to this sheet and made a part of this affidavit, was published in said paper once each day for one successive day, the first publication there of being on the 4th day of June that the fees charged for the publication there of are 29 dollars and 95 cents.

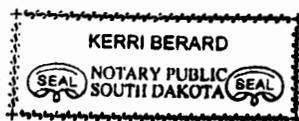
Robert J. Evans

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 4th day of June, 2014.

Kerri Berard  
Notary public

**KERRI BERARD  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
MY COMM. EXP. AUGUST 21, 2019**

My commission expires



# Affidavit of Publication

I, Lisa LeVasseur, Editor and Publisher of the WESTON COUNTY GAZETTE, a weekly newspaper published every Thursday at Upton, Wyoming, do solemnly swear that a copy of the notice as per clipping attached, was published weekly in the regular and entire issue of the said newspaper and not in any supplement thereof, for 3 week (s) commencing with the issue dated

MAY 29, 2014 and ending with the issue dated

MAY 29, 2014.

Lisa LeVasseur  
Editor and Publisher

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME,

THIS 11<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2014.

Connie E. Montgomery  
Notary Public

My commission expires: 10/11, 2014.

## Public Scoping Meetings: Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives; potential environmental impacts from any alternatives; and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

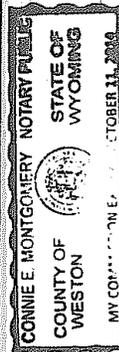
The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**HOT SPRINGS:** Wednesday, June 11, 2014,  
2:30 – 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Mueller Center, Auditorium  
801 S. 6th Street,  
Hot Springs, SD 57747

**RAPID CITY:** Thursday, June 12, 2014,  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Best Western Ramkota Hotel and  
Conference Center, Sheridan Room  
2111 N. LaCrosse Street,  
Rapid City, SD 57701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations) after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments to [vablackhillfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillfuture@va.gov) by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act.



### Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

County of Pennington                      SS:

*Display  
Ad*

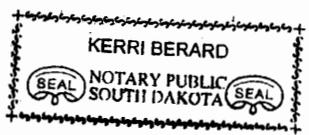
Brandyn Crawford being first duly sworn, upon his/her oath says: That he/she is now and was at all time hereinafter mentioned, an employee of the RAPID CITY JOURNAL, a corporation of Rapid City, South Dakota, the owner and publisher of the RAPID CITY JOURNAL, a legal and daily newspaper printed and published in Rapid City, in said County of Pennington, and has full and personal knowledge of all the facts herein stated as follows: that said newspaper is and at all of the times herein mentioned has been a legal and daily newspaper with a bonafide paid circulation of at least Two Hundred copies daily, and has been printed and published in the English language, at and within an office maintained by the owner and publisher thereof, at Rapid City, in said Pennington County, and has been admitted to the United States mail under the second class mailing privilege for at least one year prior to the publication herein mentioned; that the advertisement, a printed copy of which, taken from said Rapid City Journal, the paper in which the same was published, is attached to this sheet and made a part of this affidavit, was published in said paper once each Week for one successive Week, the first publication there of being on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of June that the fees charged for the publication there of are 1421 dollars and 75 cents.

*[Handwritten Signature]*

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 10<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2014.

*[Handwritten Signature: Kerri Berard]*  
Notary public

KERRI BERARD  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
MY COMM. EXP. AUGUST 21, 2019



My commission expires



# PROOF OF PUBLICATION STATE OF NEBRASKA COUNTY OF DAWES

I, Kerri Rempp, editor of the Chadron Record, being first duly sworn, on my oath, depose and say that the Chadron Record is a weekly legal newspaper for the publication of legal and other official notices, printed and published at Chadron, in Dawes County Nebraska in the English language and having a bonafide circulation of at least three hundred copies weekly and which said Chadron Record has been published within said county of Dawes County for more than fifty-two successive weeks prior to the publication of the attached notice, and printed in an office maintained in Chadron, the place of publication, and that I have personal knowledge of the fact of the publication of said notice as hereafter specified.

That a legal notice of which the annexed is a printed copy, cut from the said Chadron Record and to which reference is hereby made as part of this affidavit was regularly published in said weekly newspaper once each week for 1 successive weeks the first of said weekly publications having been so made in said newspaper on the 18 day of June, 20 14 and the last of said weekly publications having been so made in said newspaper on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_; that the said notice was published in the regular and entire issue of every number of said newspapers during the time of publication and that said published in the newspaper, and not in the supplement.

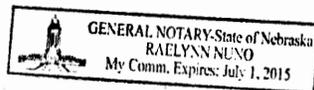
Kerri Rempp

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this 18 day of June, A.D., 20 14.

Raelynn Nuno Notary Public

Printer's Fee \$ 36.45

Paid by \_\_\_\_\_



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host additional public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

PINE RIDGE, SD: Tuesday, June 24, 2014, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Prairie Wind Casino Convention Center, Lakota Dome Room

~~1000 Pine Ridge, SD 57770~~

CHADRON, NE: Tuesday, June 24, 2014, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Chadron State College, Student Center Ballroom  
1000 Main Street, Chadron, NE 69337

ALLIANCE, NE: Wednesday, June 25, 2014, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Alliance High School, Performing Arts Center  
1450 Box Butte Avenue, Alliance NE 69301

SCOTTSBLUFF, NE: Wednesday, June 25, 2014, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Gering Civic Center  
1050 M Street, Gering, NE 69341

~~Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for~~

written comments. A brief presentation will begin at the listed meeting time, after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments by August 16, 2014:

by email to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov)

online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), Docket VA-2014-VACO-0002

online, direct to EIS contractor, at [www.blackhillseis.com](http://www.blackhillseis.com) (option to submit anonymously)

by mail to Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health Care System, 113 Comanche Road, Fort Meade, SD 57741

This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act. Please continue to visit [www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture/](http://www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture/) for project updates. Publish June 18, 2014

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR RECONFIGURATION OF VA BLACK HILLS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host additional public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**PINE RIDGE, SD:** Tuesday, June 24, 2014, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Prairie Wind Casino Convention Center, Lakota Dome Room U.S. 18, Pine Ridge, SD 57770

**CHADRON, NE:** Tuesday, June 24, 2014, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Chadron State College, Student Center Ballroom, 1000 Main Street, Chadron, NE 69337

**ALLIANCE, NE:** Wednesday, June 25, 2014, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Alliance High School, Performing Arts Center, 1450 E. 1st Street, Alliance NE 69301

**SCOTTSBLUFF, NE:** Wednesday, June 25, 2014, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Gering Civic Center, 1050 M Street, Gering, NE 69341

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at the listed meeting time, after which the participants will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments by August 16, 2014  
o by email to [yab-lackhillfuture@va.gov](mailto:yab-lackhillfuture@va.gov)

# Affidavit of Publication

**BOX BUTTE COUNTY }  
STATE OF NEBRASKA } SS.**

Tom Shaal, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that he is the Publisher of the Alliance Times-Herald, a legal newspaper, under the statutes of the State of Nebraska, published in Box Butte County; that said newspaper circulation in Box Butte County and that to his personal knowledge, the notice, a true copy of which is here to annexed, was published in said newspaper for 3 week on the following dates:

*June 13, 14 and 16, 2014*

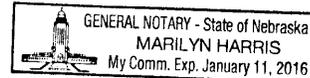
*Tom Shaal*

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this

16 day of June, 2014

Fee \$ 106.29 <sup>RAID</sup> *Marilyn Harris*  
Notary Public

Federal I.D. Number 47-0368289



AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION OF NEWSPAPER  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

COUNTY OF Pennington

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared Jackie Giago, publisher (OR REPRESENTATIVE) of Native Sun News, who, being by me duly sworn, upon oath deposes and says:

That the attached NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING was published in the NATIVE SUN NEWS, a newspaper published in the English language and of general circulation in the City of RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA and in the territory proposed to be annexed, which said territory is described in said NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING, in the following issue: 13 Volume 6, 20 14 and that the attached newspaper clipping is a true and correct copy of said published notice.

Signed: Jackie Giago

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME, this the 19<sup>th</sup> day of June, 20 14

Christy C. Tibbitts  
Notary Public in and for Pennington County, South Dakota  
Commission expiring March 11, 2017

(SEAL)

Published at a rate of \$ 13.20



316 Main St. PO Box 386, Martin, SD 57551

Phone: 605-685-1868 FAX:605-685-1870

US Postal Permit Number: USPS 024-176

**AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**

State of South Dakota, County of Bennett:

Faith Cross of said county, being first duly sworn, on oath, says that he/she is the Editor/Publisher or an employee of the Publisher of the Lakota Country Times, a weekly newspaper published in the county of Bennett for circulation in the counties of Bennett and Shannon and Todd in South Dakota; That he/she has full and personal knowledge of the facts herein stated, that said newspaper is a legal newspaper as defined in SDCL 17-2-2.1 through 17-2-2.4 inclusive, that said newspaper has been published within the said County of Bennett and State of South Dakota, for a least one year prior to the first publication of the attached public notice, and that the legal advertisement headed

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS**

printed copy of which, taken from the paper in 2 successive week(s) to wit:

<u>          MAY 29          </u>	2014	Volume 10	Issue # 36
<u>          JUNE 19          </u>	2014	Volume 10	Issue # 39
<u>                                  </u>	2014	Volume 10	Issue #
<u>                                  </u>	2014	Volume 10	Issue #

That the full amount of the fee charged for the publication of the attached public notice inures to the sole benefit of the publisher or publishers; that no agreement or understanding for the division thereof has been made with any other person, and that no part thereof has been agreed to be paid to any person whomsoever; that the fees charged for the publication thereof are:

\$ 70.38 AND \$46.92 = \$117.30

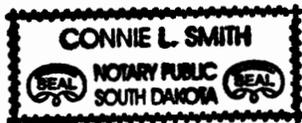
Signed:           Faith Cross          

Subscribed and sworn to before me this date:           JUNE 30, 2014          , 2014

Signed:           Connie Smith          

Notary Public in and for the County of Bennett, South Dakota

My Commission expires Dec. 11, 2019



## Affidavit Proof of Publication

I, Robert A. Bonnar do solemnly swear that I am Editor of the *News Letter Journal*, a newspaper of general circulation, printed and published each week at Newcastle, County of Weston, State of Wyoming; that the advertisement hereto attached, and which has been made a part of the affidavit, and a part of the proof of publication:

Meeting Notice  
Public Scoping Meetings: Newcastle, WY – June 27, 2014  
Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of  
VA Black Hills Health Care Systems  
Department of Veterans Affairs

Advertisement was printed the first having been Printed and made in said newspaper June 19, 2014

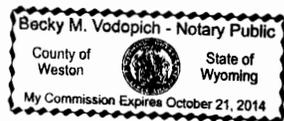
And the last on June 19, 2014

That said advertisement was printed and published in the newspaper proper and not a supplement Subscribed and sworn before me on the 23rd day of June, 2014

Editor *Robert A. Bonnar*

Notary Public *Becky M. Vodopich*

Commission Expires *October 21, 2014*



## Meeting Notice .....

### **PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR RECONFIGURATION OF VA BLACK HILLS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host an additional public scoping meeting to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

**NEWCASTLE, WY:**  
Friday, June 27, 2014, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.  
U.S. Forest Service Office  
1225 Washington Boulevard,  
Newcastle, WY 82701

Doors will open 30 minutes before the meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at the listed meeting time, after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments by August 16, 2014:

by email to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov) online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), Docket VA-2014-VACO-0002 online, direct to EIS contractor, at [www.blackhillseis.com](http://www.blackhillseis.com) (option to submit anonymously) by mail to Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health Care System, 113 Comanche Road, Fort Meade, SD 57741

This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act. Please continue to visit [www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture/](http://www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture/) for project updates.

(Publish June 19, 2014)

**AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**

Gering Courier  
PO Box 70  
Gering, NE 69341

State of Nebraska  
County of Scotts Bluff } ss.

I, Jennifer Harms do solemnly swear that I am the Accounts Receivable Bookkeeper of the Gering Courier, a legal newspaper of general circulation, published weekly at Gering, Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska; that the notice hereto attached and which forms a part of this affidavit was Published in said paper 1 (one) consecutive week (s) in the issues published, respectively June 19, 2014

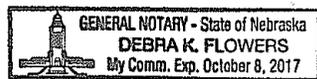
\_\_\_\_\_ that said notice was published in the regular and entire issues and every number of the paper on the days mentioned, the same being the corresponding day of each week during the period of time of publication and that said notice was published in the newspaper proper and not in the supplement.

Jennifer Harms  
6/19/14

SUBSCRIBED in my presence and sworn to before me on \_\_\_\_\_.

Debra K. Flowers  
Notary Public

The publication fees amount to \$ 39.32  
LABAT - 53887105



See Attached

VA Black Hills Health Care System Reconfiguration

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## Appendix C: News Releases

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Summary of Public Scoping



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:  
Teresa Forbes, Public Affairs Officer  
605.720.7170 or 605-490-5074  
[www.blackhills.va.gov](http://www.blackhills.va.gov)

# News Release

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 19, 2014**

### **VA Black Hills Health Care System (VA BHHCS) announces the publication of the Notice of Intent in the Federal Register**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS) announced today the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The NOI signaled the formal start of the Integrated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process regarding VA BHHCS' proposal to reconfigure the services of VA BHHCS and the Hot Springs VA campus.

The NOI specifies that all written comments on the proposal should be submitted by June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014. VA will consider all comments received during the 30-day public comment period in determining the scope of the integrated EIS.

The methods to submit written comments on VA's notice of intent to prepare an integrated EIS are through [www.Regulations.gov](http://www.Regulations.gov) or [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov). Please refer to: "VA BHHCS Notice of Intent to Prepare an Integrated EIS". Comments may also be submitted to the Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health Care System, 113 Comanche Rd., Fort Meade, SD 57741. Public meetings are being planned; notifications about the meetings dates, times, and locations will be published 14 days in advance of the meetings.

Veterans, their families, and community members should continue to use the VA BHHCS website [www.blackhills.va.gov](http://www.blackhills.va.gov) as a resource for information about the EIS process.

###



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Teresa Forbes, Public Affairs Officer  
605-720-7170 or 605-490-5074  
www.blackhills.va.gov

# News Release

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 21, 2014**

### **VA Black Hills Health Care System (VA BHHCS) Announces Public Scoping Meetings: Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host three public scoping meetings to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System. The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives, including no action, for realigning services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. The VA requests input on the development of these alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternatives, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

**HOT SPRINGS:** Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Mueller Center, Auditorium  
801 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747

**RAPID CITY:** Thursday, June 12, 2014, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, Sheridan Room  
2111 N. LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. A brief presentation will begin at 2:30 p.m. (Hot Springs only) and 6:30 p.m. (both locations), after which the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed realignment of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov) by June 26, 2014. This scoping process complies with the VA's procedures for preparing an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act.

###



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:  
Teresa Forbes, Public Affairs Officer  
605.720.7170 or 605-490-5074  
[www.blackhills.va.gov](http://www.blackhills.va.gov)

# News Release

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**6/10/2014**

### **Additional Public Scoping Meetings and Public Comment Period Extension: Environmental Impact Statement for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System**

Seven additional scoping meetings have been scheduled by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to invite comments from Veterans, stakeholders, government agencies, and members of the public for an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the reconfiguration of the VA Black Hills Health Care System. VA is also extending the public comment period for EIS scoping from June 16, 2014 to August 16, 2014.

The EIS will evaluate the proposal to realign services and resources to provide high-quality, safe, accessible, and cost-effective care closer to where Veterans live. Six alternatives to implement the proposal, a supplemental re-use alternative, and no action will be assessed. Consultation on potential effects to historic resources, as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, will be integrated into this EIS process. The VA requests input on the development of the alternatives, potential environmental impacts from any alternative, and suggestions to mitigate impacts.

The content and format of the public scoping meetings at each location will be the same.

HOT SPRINGS, SD: Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Mueller Center, Auditorium  
801 S. 6th Street, Hot Springs, SD 57747

RAPID CITY, SD: Thursday, June 12, 2014, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, Sheridan Room  
2111 N. LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

PINE RIDGE, SD: Tuesday, June 24, 2014, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.  
Prairie Wind Casino Convention Center, Lakota Dome Room  
U.S. 18, Pine Ridge, SD 57770

- CHADRON, NE: Tuesday, June 24, 2014, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Chadron State College, Student Center Ballroom  
1000 Main Street, Chadron, NE 69337
- ALLIANCE, NE: Wednesday, June 25, 2014, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.  
Alliance High School, Performing Arts Center  
1450 Box Butte Avenue, Alliance NE 69301
- SCOTTSBLUFF, NE: Wednesday, June 25, 2014, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Gering Civic Center  
1050 M Street, Gering, NE 69341
- MISSION, SD: Thursday, June 26, 2014, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.  
Sinte Gleska University, Multipurpose facility/gym  
101 Antelope Circle, Mission, SD 57555
- PIERRE, SD: Thursday, June 26, 2014, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Pierre Ramkota, Amphitheater II  
920 W Sioux Ave, Pierre, SD 57501
- NEWCASTLE, WY: Friday, June 27, 2014, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.  
U.S. Forest Service Office  
1225 Washington Boulevard, Newcastle, WY 82701

Doors will open 30 minutes before each meeting so participants can review displays and obtain handouts and forms for written comments. Following a brief presentation, the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comments regarding the VA's proposed reconfiguration of the Black Hills Health Care System.

Those who cannot attend or who prefer to provide written comments are encouraged to participate by submitting comments no later than August 16, 2014:

- by email to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov)
- online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), Docket ID VA-2014-VACO-0002
- Submit direct to EIS contractor at [www.blackhillseis.com](http://www.blackhillseis.com) (with option to submit anonymously)
- by mail to: Staff Assistant to the Director  
VA Black Hills Health Care System  
113 Comanche Road  
Fort Meade, SD 57741

###

VA Black Hills Health Care System Reconfiguration

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## Appendix D: Scoping Meeting Materials, Displays, and Presentation

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Summary of Public Scoping



## INFORMATION SHEET PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

### Environmental Impact Statement for VA Black Hills Health Care System Reconfiguration

#### National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Federal agency must consider environmental impacts of their proposal in deciding what action to take
- Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to determine if the proposed action or alternatives have potential to significantly impact the natural and human (social, economic) environment
- Identify reasonable measures to avoid or minimize environmental harm

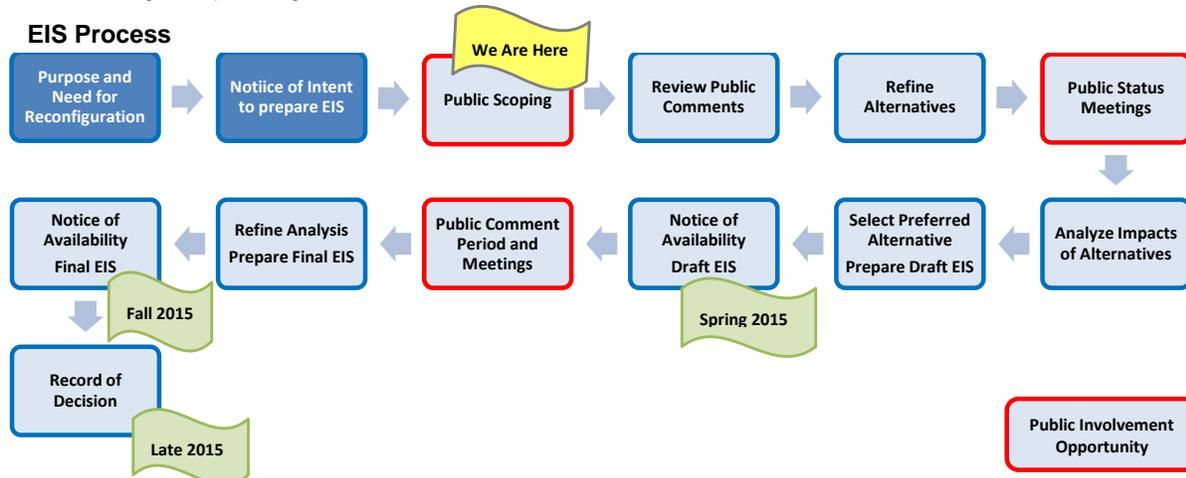
#### Scoping Process

- Involve public with identifying the issues and resources to evaluate in the EIS
- Receive public and agency input on alternatives, impacts, and mitigation options
- Use comments in preparing EIS

#### Purpose of and Need for Health Care System Reconfiguration

- **Purpose:** Provide quality, safe, accessible health care for Veterans well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by:
  - Enhancing and maintaining quality and safety of care in the 100,000-square-mile service area
  - Replacing aging and ADA-noncompliant buildings for Veterans in Residential Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs and Community-Based Outpatient Clinics
  - Increasing access to care closer to Veterans' homes
  - Reducing out-of-pocket expenses for Veterans' travel
- **Need:**
  - Veteran population centers are not in the same location as current VA facilities
  - Difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff at Hot Springs facility
  - Difficulty maintaining high-quality, safe, and accessible care
  - Long distances and travel times to receive specialty care
  - Current residential treatment facilities and locations limit care available to single parent Veterans and handicapped Veterans, and limit enhancements of the recovery model of care
  - Higher operating costs than financial allocations

#### EIS Process



**Alternatives**

Hot Springs		Rapid City
<b>A</b>	CBOC – build/lease; vacate VA campus	MSOC, RRTP (100 beds) – build/lease
<b>B</b>	CBOC, RRTP (100 beds) – build/lease; vacate VA campus	MSOC – build/lease
<b>C</b>	CBOC – renovate Bldg 12; RRTP (100 beds) – renovate Domiciliary	MSOC – build/lease
<b>D</b>	CBOC, RRTP (24 beds) – build/lease; vacate VA campus	MSOC, RRTP (76 beds) – build/lease
<b>E*</b>	RRTP (200 beds) – renovate Domiciliary; Bldg 12 (inpatient) – renovate; other upgrades/renovations – new programs & services	no change
<b>F</b>	to be determined	to be determined
<b>G**</b>	future re-use of all or part of VA campus	no change
<b>H</b>	no action – status quo	no action – status quo

\* “Save the VA”      \*\* Supplement to Alternatives A–D  
MSOC – Multi Specialty Outpatient Clinic      CBOC – Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
RRTP – Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program

**“Save the VA” Alternative**

- Renovate existing hospital and domiciliary instead of construction or lease of a new facility.
- Expand and restore hospital healthcare services at Hot Springs VA for a length of time (recommended 10 years) to get baseline data regarding Veteran need for and access to healthcare, on which to support future alignment plans.
- Engage Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) Veterans and teach historic building preservation standards and methods to support VA maintenance program of the National Historic Landmark and other recognized historic structures in the Black Hills.
- Expand on educational opportunities for Veterans and staff in the catchment area, including the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.
- Undertake expanded study of effectiveness of PTSD/TBI/ Substance Abuse Treatment in a therapeutic **rural setting**.
- Utilize expanded work-therapy programs, educational opportunities, and physical and mental programs to treat homeless Veterans, and assist unemployed and underemployed Veterans.

**Analysis of Environmental Resources**

Human Environment	
Aesthetics	Community Services
Cultural Resources	Solid / Hazardous Materials
Noise	Transportation / Parking
Land Use	Utilities
Socioeconomics	Environmental Justice
Physical Environment	
Air Quality	Geology / Soils
Floodplains / Wetlands	Hydrology / Water Quality
Biological Environment	
Wildlife / Habitat	

**National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)**

- Requires a federal agency to determine the effects of their action on historic properties
- Regulations permit “substitution” of NEPA review for the Section 106 compliance process
- Identify consulting parties during scoping process
- Identify and evaluate historic properties concurrently with other resources
- Consult with tribal governments
- Assess potential effects to Battle Mountain Sanitarium National Historic Landmark and other cultural resources
- Opportunities for input from consulting parties and public before releasing Draft EIS (see EIS process graph)
- Commit to mitigation strategy in Record of Decision if preferred alternative affects a historic property



Photos: Battle Mountain Sanitarium Building 1 – Rotunda (top); vintage aerial view (bottom)



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FOLD AND TAPE – DO NOT STAPLE

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From:



Staff Assistant to the Director  
VA Black Hills Health Care System  
113 Comanche Road  
Fort Meade, SD 57741

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FOLD AND TAPE – DO NOT STAPLE



## MAILING LIST



### VA Black Hills Health Care System Reconfiguration Environmental Impact Statement PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Name & Address (PLEASE PRINT)
NAME:
ADDRESS:
CITY/STATE/ZIP:
ORGANIZATION:
NAME:
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## Public Involvement: EIS for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System

*Scoping is your opportunity to provide input to the alternatives and help us improve our analysis of their potential environmental impacts.*

- Dec 2011** VA announced the proposal to reconfigure the Black Hills Health Care System.
- 2011–2012** VA held 15 public town hall meetings to seek Veteran and stakeholder feedback.
- May 2012** VA held a *National Historic Preservation Act* Section 106 consultation meeting related to the reconfiguration proposal.
- May 16 – Aug 16, 2014** Public scoping period, with scoping meetings in 10 towns in June.
- Fall 2014** Public status update meetings—details on alternatives and historic properties
- Spring 2015** Draft EIS published for public review and comment.
- Fall 2015** Final EIS available to public

### Scoping includes:

- Determining the scope and the significant issues to be analyzed in depth in the EIS.
- Identifying and eliminating from detailed study the issues that are not significant or not related to the agency decision at hand.
- Identifying environmental review and consultation requirements.



## Purpose and Need for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System



The “purpose and need” element of an EIS explains why the action being proposed is needed, and serves as the basis for developing a reasonable range of alternatives.

Need: underlying condition or problem that leads the agency to propose the action.

Purpose: objectives of proposed action that address the underlying condition or correct the problem.



### Purpose of Action

Provide quality, safe, accessible health care for Veterans well into the 21st century by:

- Enhancing and maintaining quality and safety of care in the 100,000-square-mile VA Black Hills Health Care System service area
- Replacing aging, ADA-noncompliant buildings for Veterans in Residential Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs and Community-Based Outpatient Clinics
- Increasing access to care closer to Veterans’ homes
- Reducing out-of-pocket expenses for Veteran’s travel

### Need for Action

- Veteran population centers are not in the same location as current VA facilities
- Difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff at current Hot Springs facility
- Difficulty maintaining high-quality, safe, and accessible care
- Long distances and travel times to receive specialty care
- Current residential treatment facilities and locations limit care available to single parent Veterans and handicapped Veterans, and limit the enhancement of the recovery model of care



## Alternatives for Reconfiguration of VA Black Hills Health Care System

### Alternatives\*

Location	A	B	C	D	E "Save the VA"	G Supplemental Alternative	H No Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All reasonable alternatives are evaluated in the EIS (40 CFR 1502.14).</li> <li>Reasonable alternatives are technically and economically practicable or feasible, and meet the purpose and need for the proposed action.</li> <li>The No Action alternative must be considered, and also provides a baseline for comparing impacts among alternatives.</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">CBOC</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #f0f0f0;"><del>Existing VA Campus</del></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">CBOC</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #d9ead3;">RRTP 100 beds</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #f0f0f0;"><del>Existing VA Campus</del></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Building 12 Renovation CBOC</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #d9ead3;">Domiciliary Renovation RRTP-100 beds</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">CBOC</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #d9ead3;">RRTP 24 beds</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #f0f0f0;"><del>Existing VA Campus</del></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #d9ead3;">Building 12 Renovation</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #d9ead3;">Continue inpatient services</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #d9ead3;">Domiciliary Renovation RRTP-200 beds</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; border-radius: 10px; background-color: #fff2cc;">Other Upgrades / Renovations New programs &amp; services</div>	Future re-use of all or part of the existing Hot Springs VA campus by others: Supplement to Alternatives A-D	No Change
	Hot Springs	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">MSOC</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #d9ead3;">RRTP 100 beds</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">MSOC</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">MSOC</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">MSOC</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #d9ead3;">RRTP 76 beds</div>	No Change	No Change
Rapid City	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">MSOC</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; background-color: #d9ead3;">RRTP 100 beds</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">MSOC</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">MSOC</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">MSOC</div>	No Change	No Change	No Change
<p>*Alternative F— to be determined. CBOC = Community Based Outpatient Clinic RRTP = Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program MSOC = Multi Specialty Outpatient Clinic</p>							
							

# Analysis of Environmental Consequences

The EIS will evaluate the potential impacts of the alternatives on the resources that make up the environment:

## Human Environment

- Aesthetics
- Cultural resources
- Noise
- Land use
- Socioeconomics
- Community services
- Solid and hazardous materials
- Transportation and parking
- Utilities
- Environmental justice

## Physical Environment

- Air quality
- Floodplains and wetlands
- Geology and soils
- Hydrology and water quality

## Biological Environment

- Wildlife and habitat

## Other issues for analysis:

- Cumulative impacts
- Controversy
- Unavoidable adverse impacts
- Mitigation and monitoring



### Affected Environment

The geographic range of the analysis is determined by the alternatives and may vary by resource, due to the different nature of potential impacts.

For example:

- Potential impacts to aesthetics would be assessed at the locations of specific VA facilities.
- Potential impacts to socioeconomics would be evaluated on a local and regional basis.

The affected environment for each resource will be clearly described in the EIS.



## Integrating National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Compliance into the NEPA Process



### Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act:

- Federal agencies must:
- Identify and assess effects of actions on historic properties
  - Avoid, minimize, or mitigate those effects
  - Provide the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment

Agencies are encouraged to coordinate Section 106 compliance with NEPA.

Federal regulations permit "substitution" of NEPA review for the Section 106 process. Historic properties analysis is integrated into NEPA public involvement, agency coordination, impact analysis, and the agency decision.



### Notify Consulting Parties and Initiate Consultation

- ◆ Secretary of the Interior, State Historic Preservation Officers, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Tribal Historic Preservation Officers and other tribal representatives, and other stakeholders.
- ◆ Identify/discuss historic preservation issues associated with the Black Hills Health Care System reconfiguration alternatives.

### Identify Historic Properties and Traditional Cultural Properties

- ◆ Establish areas of potential effect for the EIS alternatives.
- ◆ Identify known and potential cultural resources and their status or eligibility for listing on the National Register.
- ◆ Document findings as the Affected Environment for cultural resources in the EIS.

### Assess Potential Effects

- ◆ Evaluate potential impacts to cultural resources using Section 106 criteria.
- ◆ With consulting parties, identify measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate effects on historic properties.
- ◆ Document findings in the EIS as part of the Environmental Consequences and Mitigation Measures for cultural resources impacts.

### Additional Consultation and Public Involvement

- ◆ Provide adequate opportunity for consulting parties' input prior to finalizing the Draft EIS.
- ◆ Notify National Park Service of potential effects on the Battle Mountain Sanitarium, a National Historic Landmark.
- ◆ Provide ongoing information to the public on the Section 106 process and its integration into the NEPA process.
- ◆ Document all Section 106 consultation activities in the EIS and its Administrative Record.

### Concluding Section 106 Consultation

- ◆ If preferred alternative can potentially affect a historic property, identify mitigation strategy: Memorandum of Agreement, Programmatic Agreement, other binding mitigation commitment made in the VA's Record of Decision.
- ◆ Implement the selected alternative and any associated mitigation.

# **WELCOME**

## **Public Scoping Meeting**

### **VA Black Hills Health Care System Reconfiguration**



# Meeting Overview

- **Purpose of this meeting**
- **Information on reconfiguration proposal**
- **Process to prepare Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**
- **Integration of historic preservation concerns and tribal consultation**
- **How to provide comments**
- **Comments**



# Meeting Purpose



## NEPA and NHPA

- **NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act**
  - Federal agency *action* or project
  - Effects of that action on *human environment*
- **NHPA – National Historic Preservation Act**
  - Federal agency *undertaking*
  - Effects of that undertaking on *historic properties*



# Scoping

- **Initial step in environmental analysis process**
- **Identify scope of issues related to proposal**
- **Gather information on resources to be analyzed**
- **Receive public and agency input on alternatives, impacts, and mitigation**



# Scoping

- **Identify consulting parties**
- **Use comments to prepare EIS**
  - **Process questions – provide clarification on NEPA or NHPA**
  - **Content questions – will be noted and applied to:**
    - Refining alternatives
    - Analyzing alternatives
    - Identifying mitigation
  - **Comments are not a “vote” for or against the proposal**



# Reconfiguration Proposal





# Purpose and Need

- **Purpose for reconfiguration**
  - **Enhance and maintain quality and safety of care**
  - **Replace aging, non-ADA accessible buildings**
  - **Increase access to care closer to Veterans' homes**
  - **Reduce Veterans' travel expenses**



## Purpose and Need

- **Need for reconfiguration**
  - **Veteran population centers are not in same location as current VA facilities**
  - **Recruiting and retaining qualified staff at Hot Springs facility**
  - **Maintaining high-quality, safe, and accessible care**
  - **Long distances and travel times to receive specialty care**



## Purpose and Need

- **Need for reconfiguration (continued)**
  - **Existing residential treatment facilities limit care available to single parent Veterans and handicapped Veterans, and limit the enhancement of the recovery model of care**
  - **Higher operating costs than financial allocations**



# Alternatives

- **A, B, and D – build / lease in Hot Springs and Rapid City, vacate Hot Springs VA campus**
- **C – renovate in Hot Springs and build/ lease in Rapid City**
- **E – renovate / repurpose Hot Springs VA campus (“Save the VA” alternative)**



# Alternatives

- **F – to be determined**
- **G – future re-use of Hot Springs VA campus by others (supplement to alternatives A – D)**
- **H – No Action (status quo)**
  - **No action must be considered**
  - **Provides baseline for comparing impacts among alternatives**



Location	Alternatives*					
	A	B	C	D	E	H No Action
Hot Springs	CBOC  <del>Existing VA Campus</del>	CBOC  RRTP 100 beds  <del>Existing VA Campus</del>	CBOC Building 12 Renovation  RRTP-100 beds Domiciliary Renovation	CBOC  RRTP 24 beds  <del>Existing VA Campus</del>	Continue inpatient services Building 12 Renovation RRTP-200 beds Domiciliary Renovation Other Upgrades / Renovations New programs & services	No Change
Rapid City	MSOC RRTP 100 beds	MSOC	MSOC	MSOC RRTP 76 beds	No Change	No Change

\*Alternative F— to be determined.

\* G - future re-use by others of all or part of existing Hot Springs VA campus; supplemental action to Alternatives A-D.

CBOC = Community Based Outpatient Clinic

RRTP = Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program

MSOC = Multi Specialty Outpatient Clinic

# EIS Process



# EIS

- **Purpose and need for action**
- **Alternatives**
- **Affected or baseline environment**
  - **Ecological and physical features**
    - Natural and manmade
  - **Social and economic issues**
  - **Historic properties and cultural values**



# EIS

- **Impacts (effects)**
  - **Direct, indirect, cumulative**
  - **Adverse, beneficial**
- **Mitigation**
- **Public involvement**
- **Tribal and agency consultations**

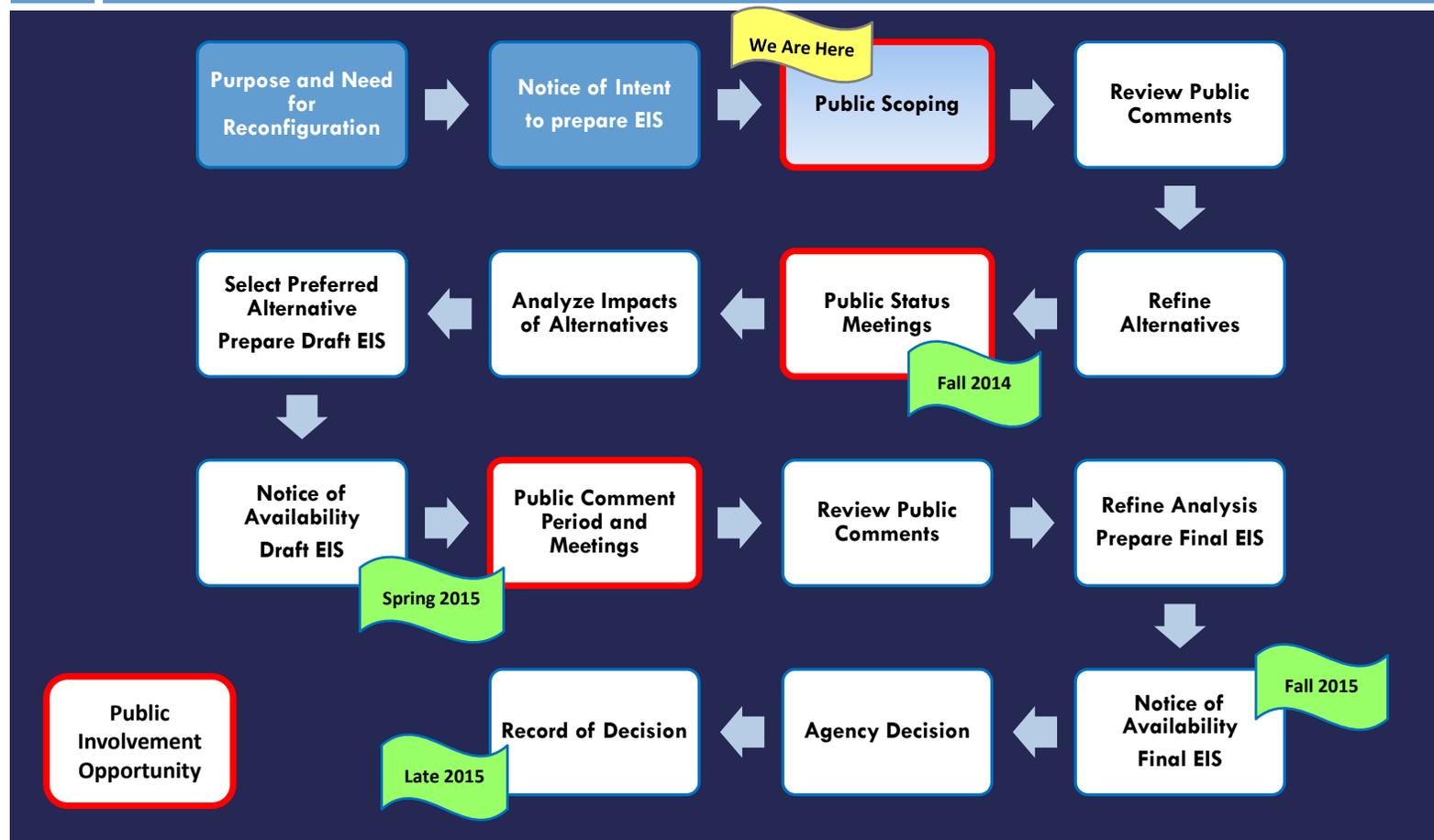


# Impact Evaluation

- **Aesthetics**
- **Air quality**
- **Cultural resources**
- **Geology / soils**
- **Hydrology / water quality**
- **Wildlife / habitat**
- **Noise**
- **Land use**
- **Floodplain / wetlands**
- **Socioeconomics**
- **Community services**
- **Solid / hazardous materials**
- **Transportation / parking**
- **Utilities**
- **Environmental justice**



# EIS Process and Schedule



# EIS

- **Stay involved and informed**
  - **Now – provide scoping comments**
  - **Later –**
    - **Fall 2014 – status meetings on alternatives and historic properties**
    - **Spring 2015 – public comment period on Draft EIS**
  - **Always –**  
**[www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture](http://www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture)**



# NHPA Integration



# NHPA Integration

- **Section 106 of NHPA**
  - Process to determine effects of undertaking on historic properties
  - Can be separate process or integrated with NEPA using *substitution*
- **Black Hills EIS: integrated process**
  - Section 106 proceeds concurrently with EIS
  - Identification and evaluation of historic properties documented in EIS
  - Enhance opportunities for public participation



## Section 106 Steps

- **Identify consulting parties**
  - **State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)**
  - **Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO)**
  - **Native American tribes**
  - **Local governments**
  - **Other individuals and organizations entitled to be consulting parties, determined in consultation with SHPO and THPO**

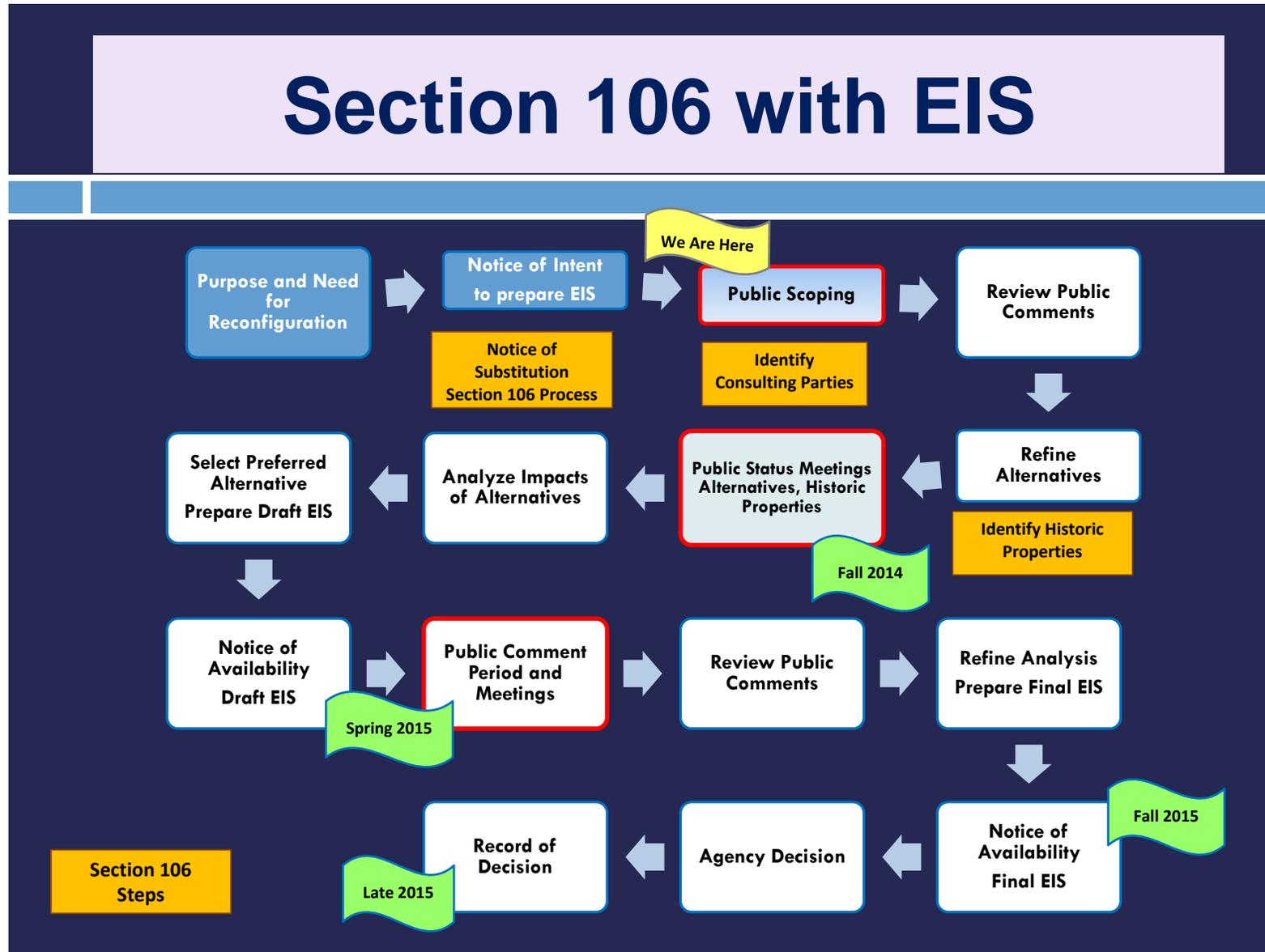


## Section 106 Steps

- **Identify historic properties**
  - **National Historic Landmark**
  - **Other pre-historic or historic resources**
    - Site, building, structure, object, or district
    - Artifacts, records, material remains of properties
  - **Traditional religious and cultural importance**
  - **Included in or eligible for inclusion in National Register of Historic Places**
- **Seek and consider views of public to inform agency decision-making**



# Section 106 with EIS



# How to Provide Comments



## Written Comments

- **Complete comment form today**
  - Available at entrance table
  - Deposit in basket before leaving
- **Mail comment form or letter to:**

**Staff Assistant to Director**  
**VA BHHCS**  
**113 Comanche Road**  
**Fort Meade, SD 57741**



# Written Comments

- **E-mail:**  
**vablackhillfuture@va.gov**
- **Internet:**  
**www.blackhillseis.com**  
(online submission direct to EIS contractor; option to submit anonymously)

**www.regulations.gov**

Docket number: VA-2014-VACO-0002

***Submit comments by***

**August 16, 2014**



## Verbal Comments

- **Use microphone**
  - State name and organization if speaking as representative
  - May remain anonymous
- **Be considerate of others who would like to speak (there may be time for a second opportunity to speak)**
- **Provide speaker your full attention (refrain from side conversations, cell phone use)**



# Comments

- **Requesting your input on:**
  - **Reconfiguration proposal**
  - **Alternatives to consider**
  - **Data and information resources to consider in impact evaluation**
  - **Suggestions to improve environmental analysis**



# Send Your Comments

**[vablackhillfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillfuture@va.gov)**

**[www.blackhillseis.com](http://www.blackhillseis.com)**

**[www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov)**

**Docket number: VA-2014-VACO-0002**

**Staff Assistant to Director**

**VA BHHCS**

**113 Comanche Road**

**Fort Meade, SD 57741**

**Thank you for participating!**



VA Black Hills Health Care System Reconfiguration

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## Appendix E: Consulting Party Identification

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Summary of Public Scoping



— 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

May 13, 2014

«Courtesy Title» «First Name» «Last Name»  
«Job Title»  
«Company»  
«Address 1»  
«City», «State» «Postal Code»

Dear «Courtesy Title» «Last Name»:

Since December 2011, VA Black Hills Health Care System (VA BHHCS) has been engaged in discussions with Veterans and other stakeholders regarding proposed changes in the delivery of high-quality health care for Veterans in the VA BHHCS service area. Many changes have been proposed, but no decisions have been made at this time. VA is now preparing an integrated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) regarding the proposed reconfiguration in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EIS will include a comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental, cultural and historic, and socioeconomic effects of the proposed reconfiguration of health care services. A contract for EIS support will be utilized to prepare the EIS.

The proposed reconfiguration of VA BHHCS, summarized in Attachment 1, involves changes in how health care is delivered in Hot Springs, SD and the surrounding areas as well as shifting resources to service area population centers. VA BHHCS recognizes that such changes may have an impact on the Hot Springs medical center campus, which is a National Historic Landmark (NHL), as well as a future Rapid City, SD location. In May 2012, VA BHHCS initiated consultation under Sections 106 and 110(f) of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) to consider ways of identifying and avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating such impacts.

**EIS/NHPA Support Contractor Selection:**

VA has contracted with Labat Environmental, Inc. to support the environmental impact analysis process. Labat Environmental is a multi-disciplinary environmental consulting firm and a Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business. They have over 30 years of experience in environmental management, consultation, and compliance and have provided expert environmental and historic preservation support services to many Federal agencies, including VA.

**EIS Notice of Intent:**

The Notice of Intent (NOI) formally initiating the EIS process will soon be published in the Federal Register. Following publishing of the NOI, VA and Labat Environmental will begin the EIS process with public scoping meetings. The meeting schedule will be posted on our website and notices will be provided to the media.

**NEPA/NHPA Integration:**

In part because the cultural, historic, and natural environmental elements of the Black Hills area are so interrelated, we have chosen to integrate the NHPA Section 106 consultation procedures into the NEPA environmental impact analysis process using an option formally known as substitution. A more common option is to coordinate the NHPA Section 106 compliance separately but in parallel with the broader NEPA process. However, 36 CFR 800.8(c) of the NHPA grants Federal agencies the latitude to use the substitution option in accordance with the provisions in the Section 106 regulations if they choose. This approach is consistent with the March 2013 report, NEPA and NHPA: A Handbook for Integrating NEPA and Section 106, issued by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). Finally, substituting the NEPA process implements the direction found in Presidential Executive Order 13563, Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review, issued in January 2011.

**Reengaging consultation:**

VA is now reengaging consultation with all appropriate consulting parties (including the ACHP, National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Park Service, State Historic Preservation Office, Native American Tribes, and federal, state and local governmental officials). It is important to engage in consultation early, in conjunction with the start of the EIS, when a wider range of alternatives is open for consideration.

Your organization was identified as a potential consulting party and invited to participate in May 2012. We want to be sure that we have involved all potential consulting parties; please examine the list of the parties (Attachment 2) that we have identified. If you are aware of additional parties that you believe should be invited to consult, we would appreciate knowing of them.

For your information, the proposed improvements to VA BHHCS as well as information specific to the EIS or Section 106 and 110(f) consultation process can be found online at <http://www.blackhills.va.gov/VABlackHillsFuture/>.

We welcome your participation in our efforts to identify and consult on potential impacts as well as preserve our National Historic Landmark and other potentially affected historic properties as we prepare for the future of Veteran health care. Additional questions may be directed 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

Attachments (2)

## Attachment 1

The driving factor that led to the proposals is our need to deliver safe, quality health care. We also want to decrease travel times for Veterans and their family members. We know that in the coming years, the Veteran population in our area will continue to decline. The more prepared we are for the future, the better we can assure the quality and safety of Veteran health care.

Below is a summary of the proposed changes:

- **Opening a new Hot Springs Community Based Outpatient Clinic either co-located with the Fall River Hospital, the State Veterans Home or at a free-standing site.** This VA-staffed clinic would provide the same outpatient care Veterans currently receive, but in a modern, more efficient building for providing health care, primary care, mental health, and limited specialty care. We want to continue to provide dialysis and would like to purchase pharmacy, laboratory and x-ray services at the Fall River Hospital.
- **A phased plan would be implemented to close the VA Hot Springs inpatient and nursing home units, operating rooms, and urgent care facilities.** VA would buy the care from providers in Hot Springs and in your local communities. The goal is to make health care, especially specialty care, more accessible, and save Veterans long-distance travel. VA nurses will be helping manage Veterans' care between VA and non-VA providers.
- **Building a new Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program facility (also known as the Domiciliary) in Rapid City.** This new structure would be designed to meet modern health care standards and help us better accommodate disabled Veterans, more female Veterans, and Veterans with children. Veterans would benefit from increased access to job training and job sites, state-of-the-art home-like facilities, educational opportunities, housing options following treatment, and other community services. This new facility would allow VA to phase out use of the Hot Springs Domiciliary which is out of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- **Services in Rapid City would be enhanced by expanding the VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic.** Expansion in Rapid City would take care of more Veterans and would also provide x-ray, lab, pharmacy and physical therapy services - allowing VA to provide more services where more Veterans live.
- **Enhance services at the Fort Meade VA Medical Center by building new operating rooms and renovating the inpatient medical/surgical/intensive care units.**

## Attachment 2

### Potential Consulting Parties

(Listed in alphabetical order)

- 1) Advisory Council for Historic Preservation Representative
- 2) AFGE Local 1539 President
- 3) Area Tribal Leadership Representative
- 4) Black Hills Historic Preservation Trust Representative
- 5) City of Hot Springs: Mayor, City Council, Chamber of Commerce Representative
- 6) Department of the Interior: National Park Service
- 7) Department of Veterans Affairs: Historic Preservation Office—VISN 23 Midwest Health Care Network—Black Hills Health Care System—Black Hills National Cemetery
- 8) Fall River County, SD Representatives: Historical Society, County Commissioner and School District
- 9) Hot Springs CLG Historic Preservation Commission Representative
- 10) Local “Save the VA” Representative
- 11) National American Indian Veterans, Inc. Representative
- 12) National Trust for Historic Preservation Representative
- 13) Preserve South Dakota Representative
- 14) South Dakota Historical Society Representative
- 15) South Dakota - Office of the Governor
- 16) South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office Representative
- 17) South Dakota State Legislators—District 30
- 18) State Veterans Service Organization Leadership Representatives: Nebraska, South Dakota, Wyoming
- 19) U.S. Senators and Representatives from South Dakota, Nebraska and Wyoming
- 20) Other attendees of May 31, 2012 consultation meeting



— 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

October 9, 2014

«AddressBlock»

RE: Proposed VA Black Hills Health Care System Services Reconfiguration – Section 106 Consultation

«GreetingLine»

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has proposed to reconfigure the delivery of health care services across the VA Black Hills Health Care System (VA BHHCS) service area. VA is preparing an integrated environmental impact statement (EIS) to evaluate the environmental effects this proposal may have. The EIS will integrate the implementation and review procedures of Section 102 of the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) with consultation under Section 106 of the *National Historic Preservation Act* (NHPA). The purpose of this letter is to provide an update on the NHPA Section 106 consultation process.

During the EIS scoping period (May 16 to August 16, 2014), comments on a range of issues, including historic resources, were submitted by letter, email, and web-based forms; and in both written and verbal comments at ten public meetings. Attendees at these scoping meetings were invited to submit written requests to the VA to be considered as a consulting party<sup>1</sup> under Section 106 of NHPA. The VA has now developed the following preliminary list of consulting parties with whom consultation on effects to historic properties will be conducted. This list may be modified as consultation proceeds.

Consulting Parties:

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- South Dakota State Historical Society/State Historic Preservation Office
- Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office
- Department of the Interior–National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office
- Fall River County, South Dakota–County Commission
- City of Hot Springs
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Save the VA
- Oglala Sioux Tribe
- Northern Arapahoe Tribe
- Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the state historic preservation officer(s), tribal representatives, local government representatives, additional consulting parties are “Certain individuals and organizations with a demonstrated interest in the undertaking... [who] may participate as consulting parties due to the nature of their legal or economic relation to the undertaking or affected properties, or their concern with the undertaking’s effect on historic properties” (36 CFR 800.2).

- additional tribal governments (follow-up contacts in progress)

In accordance with 36 CFR 800.2(d), the VA is also seeking and considering the views of the public “in a manner that reflects the nature and complexity of the undertaking and its effects on historic properties, the likely interest of the public in the effects on historic properties, confidentiality concerns of private individuals and businesses, and the relationship of the Federal involvement to the undertaking.” The 90-day public scoping period provided multiple avenues and opportunities for the public to communicate their views and concerns related to historic properties and cultural resources effects, among other issues. The public will be invited to review the status of the proposal alternatives in late 2014, and comment on the analysis of effects to historic resources from the proposed action and alternatives in the published Draft EIS in 2015. The published Final EIS will address comments on the Draft EIS analysis, with the analysis revised as needed, prior to the VA’s decision on this proposal. All recipients of this letter have also been added to the mailing list for the integrated NEPA/Section 106 process, and will receive postcard notification of future public meetings and the availability of the Draft EIS, Final EIS, and Record of Decision.

The VA BHHCS website ([www.blackhills.va.gov/VABlackHillsFuture/](http://www.blackhills.va.gov/VABlackHillsFuture/)) has and will continue to provide periodic updates and access to documents throughout this integrated NEPA/Section 106 process. A summary and schedule of the milestones for the integrated NEPA/Section 106 process is attached, for your reference.

If you have any questions regarding the list of consulting parties or concerns about the historic properties consultation process, please send an email to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov), or a letter to Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health Care System, 113 Comanche Road, Fort Meade, SD 57741.

Sincerely,



Stephen R. DiStasio  
Director

Attachment (1)

«CC»

«CC1»

«CC2»

«CC3»

**INTEGRATING NEPA AND SECTION 106  
PROPOSED RECONFIGURATION OF THE VA BLACK HILLS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM  
MILESTONES AND SCHEDULE**

*Note: This schedule is subject to change to allow for availability of participants and unforeseen events, but will be targeted in order to keep the integrated NEPA/106 process on schedule; slippage in dates could affect the schedule for activities that follow.*

<b>MILESTONE AND ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
<b>Public Scoping and Consulting Party Identification</b>	
Notice of Intent to prepare EIS	5/16/2014
VA letter to stakeholders potentially interested in Section 106 process	5/13/2014
Public scoping meetings	6/11–27/2014
Mailing lists	September 2014
List of potentially affected tribes	8/18/2014
Identify appropriate consulting parties from stakeholders list, requests to participate as a consulting party, and others	September 2014
Contact consulting parties by telephone, email, or written letter to confirm party representative contact information and other logistics	September–October 2014
<b>Tribal Consultations</b>	
VA letter to list of potentially affected tribes inviting their participation in Section 106 consultation process; response requested from tribes within 15 days of receipt of letter	8/18/2014
VA letter with additional Project and consultation information to tribes who accept invitation to participate in Section 106 consultation process	October 2014
Communicate with tribal governments via group or individual emails, teleconferences, and web-based presentations to identify religious and culturally significant properties and potential effects	September–November 2014
<b>Identification of Historic Properties</b>	
Define area(s) of potential effects (APE)	October 2014
Consult with SHPO(s) for concurrence on APE(s)	October 2014
Communicate with consulting parties (including tribal governments) to identify historic properties and potential effects via group emails, teleconferences, and web-based presentations (type and frequency of communication will vary)	October–November 2014
<b>Project Status Meetings</b>	
Notify consulting parties (including tribal governments) and other stakeholders of meeting schedules and locations	2 weeks before meetings
Public meetings to present status of Project alternatives, identified historic properties, and initial assessment of effects	November 2014

MILESTONE AND ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
Communicate via group emails, teleconferences, or web-based presentations with consulting parties (including tribal governments) on measures to resolve potential adverse effects to historic properties	October–December 2014
<b><i>Draft EIS Comment Period</i></b>	
Notice of Availability of Draft EIS	Spring 2015
Notify consulting parties (including tribal governments) and other stakeholders of schedules and locations for public comment meetings on Draft EIS	Spring 2015
Public meetings on Draft EIS	Spring 2015
<b><i>Final EIS and Record of Decision</i></b>	
If necessary, communicate via group emails, teleconferences, or web-based presentations with consulting parties (including tribal governments) for input for resolution of adverse effects of preferred alternative on historic properties in preparing Final EIS	Spring–Summer 2015
If necessary, communicate via group emails, teleconferences, or web-based presentations with consulting parties (including tribal governments) on measures the VA will implement to resolve adverse effects to historic properties in preparing Record of Decision	Fall 2015
Notice of Availability of Final EIS	Fall 2015
If necessary, communicate via group emails, teleconferences, or web-based presentations with consulting parties (including tribal governments) on measures the VA will implement to resolve adverse effects to historic properties in preparing Record of Decision	Fall 2015
Record of Decision	Fall 2015