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Updates & News from the Red Hills Community Cemetery

RHCC Getting Closer to Identifying a New Site

Over the last few months, the Red Hills Community Cemetery Board of Directors has been evaluating possible sites for our natural burial cemetery. The Board now has some promising land options and wants to gather member input toward a decision on a site we will offer to buy. Below you will find a summary of the Board's site evaluation approach and a schedule of the opportunities that members will have to learn more about these options. **There are numerous opportunities for input and engagement (meetings, site visits, etc.) outlined in this newsletter.**

As with any land transaction, we run the risk of losing our properties of interest to other buyers, so the timeline is very compact.

If you are not yet a member but intend on becoming one and wish to provide input on site selection, we urge you to become a member right away.

Site Acquisition Process

We set up a Site Acquisition Committee consisting of skilled Board and Cemetery members and have been working with two realtors who specialize in rural and agricultural land sales. We created a detailed evaluation matrix to use to analyze and compare available properties to help narrow down those properties that would be most consistent with our mission. The matrix identifies specific requirements by which to evaluate properties, including location, distance from the center of Tallahassee, acreage, price, topography, soil types, vegetation, and permit ability, among other criteria. **A high-level graphical representation of the decision framework is shown in the below "RHCC Site Selection Criteria".**

RHCC Site Selection Criteria									
Multi-level evaluation criteria Exclusionary criteria (yes/no) – 3 levels, applied first Ranking criteria (ordinal scale), applied after above criteria									
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The board evaluated 25 potential sites using the matrix and eliminated all but 5 because of price, insufficient acreage, lack of access, or shallow water table. In one case, a promising property was sold before we could do an onsite visit. We initially focused on Leon, Gadsden, and Jefferson counties, but when we learned that Jefferson's cemetery permitting process is onerous, time-consuming, with uncertain outcomes, we decided not to investigate properties in that county.

We are currently focused on **3 sites: 1 in Leon County and 2 in Gadsden County.** The committee has carried out extensive tours of two properties; a third that looks promising is scheduled for a site visit. Each property has its pros and cons and each has issues that would have to be worked out with the seller before the Board would be comfortable agreeing on a final sales contract.

We will have a more detailed list of property pros and cons at the [Zoom meeting \(see below\)](#), but here is a **QUICK SUMMARY** of some of the current considerations:

SOIL: all 3 properties appear to have appropriate soils. One appears to have an adequately deep seasonal high-water table to support natural burial. The other two would require soil borings to determine if that is the case.

DISTANCE & ACCESS: The Leon County property, is located on the eastern side of the county and is fairly close to the city, but drive-in access to the property is unclear and requires more information. The two Gadsden County properties are ~45 minutes from downtown Tallahassee, but one is very close to I-10, providing excellent regional access beyond just the Leon County area.

SIZE: The Leon County property is 17 acres, while, one of the Gadsden properties is ~24 acres and over the price we would ideally pay; the other is ~60 acres and very well priced. The latter property has more land than we are looking for right now, but has some interesting prospects for the future. Both of the properties the committee has toured have mature pines and some understory trees; the third property shows a mature pine canopy, with some open areas and more to be revealed during a tour. If we find this property to be worth further consideration, we will set up a tour for it.

Next Steps & Opportunities for Member Input

Now the Board wants to get members' thoughts, and we will be moving quickly over the next few weeks.

Members and other interested folks are invited to participate in the two meetings; **site visits are limited to members and associate members because of limited space.** Please note that *land acquisition is a dynamic activity, and plans can change at any time based on external factors.*

[Informational Session Zoom Meeting, Thursday, February 19, 2026, 6:30 pm](#)

This **Zoom Meeting** will provide deep detail about the site evaluation matrix and the process we have used to get to this point. This meeting is for those members who like to get way down in the weeds!

Here's the [Zoom Link](#) for the meeting. The passcode is **355781**.

[CLICK for ZOOM MEETING LINK](#)

[Two Land Tours, Sat. February 21 & Sat. February 28, 2026](#)

Two **In-Person Tours** of the Leon County site for those members who are interested and available at these times. While we'd like to offer more opportunities to tour the properties, the real estate agent must be onsite with us any time we go out. We will offer additional tours once a property has been purchased. Assume ~3 hours for each tour, from meeting spot to return.

- February 21, meet at carpool site at 9:15 am
- Saturday, February 28 meet at carpool site at 1:15

To go on either tour, please click [here](#) to fill out this form to allow us to plan better.

[CLICK TO RSVP FOR SITE TOURS](#)

General In-Person Meeting
Saturday, March 8, 2026,
11am-1pm
Micosukee Land Co-op Community Center

This **In-Person Meeting** will be an opportunity for members and other interested folks to hear about the site search process, the three principal land options, and more information about the Board's proposed decision. Members will be invited to ask questions and provide their input to the Board.

SPRING INTO ACTION: Informal Picnic & Policy Lunch
~1pm
 Directly following the **March 8 meeting**, members are cordially invited to bring a camp chair and bag lunch to eat together on the MLC grounds and share casual conversation. Then at 1:30pm, interested folks may gather in MLC's downstairs lounge to identify leaders and worker bees who will begin the creation of plans, policies, and documents necessary for creation and approval of our cemetery. Some identified tasks are: preparing the documentation for operations and management; developing the RHCC policies and guidebooks for families, professionals (such as funeral directors and clergy), employees, and volunteers; and more. The Red Hills Cemetery needs its Community to accomplish the goal of opening our cemetery in 2027!

Thank you for your engagement in this journey with us. We are so excited for the progress we have made thus far, and for what is to come for RHCC in 2026. While we are on a different journey than we anticipated, we are more aware than ever of the beauty of the land in this region and importance of establishing this cemetery as a lasting opportunity for our community to connect with the environment.

*With Ongoing Appreciation,
 Red Hills Community Cemetery, Inc.
 Board of Directors*

[Sign Up to Volunteer](#)

[Membership](#)

Building a community cemetery takes a COMMUNITY, thank you for your support and involvement. [Contact@RedHillsCommunityCemetery.com](mailto:contact@RedHillsCommunityCemetery.com) if you have any questions.

The Mission of the RHCC is to preserve and protect land using natural burial methods. Further, it is the Vision of the RHCC to further develop meaningful relationships between people, life, death, and ecosystems.

By subscribing to this newsletter, opting to become a paid member, or helping to volunteer you are part of the RHCC community.

