



**2016 Annual Report
of the
Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs**

STATE OF COLORADO

COLORADO BOARD OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Members

Duane Dailey, Chair
Rene Simard, Vice Chair
Hollie Caldwell, Secretary
William L. Robinson
Patricia Hammon
Jack Rudder
Robert McLaughlin

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John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

General
Mike Edwards
The Adjutant General



2016 Report of Board of Veterans Affairs

December 12, 2016

The Honorable John Hickenlooper
Governor, State of Colorado
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver CO 80203

Senator Ray Scott
State, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee
Colorado Senate
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver CO 80203

Representative Su Ryden
State, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee
Colorado House of Representatives
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver CO 80203

Subject: 2016 Annual Report of the Board of Veterans Affairs

In accordance with the Colorado Revised Statutes, I am pleased to provide you the 2016 Report of the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs (CBVA). This report covers the period of December 1, 2015 through December 12, 2016. The enclosed reports reflect the current impact of the services rendered by the state and provide a pathway to making Colorado a leader in veteran resources.

The CBVA is comprised of seven members, all honorably discharged military veterans who serve four-year terms on the board. Pat Hammon, of Eagle, is a US Army Veteran, Vietnam Nurse, and Eagle County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO), appointed to serve out the term of retiring Chris Holden. Robert "Bob" McLaughlin, US Army OIF, OEF Veteran and COO of Mt. Carmel Center of Excellence of Colorado, is replacing Dana Niemela. Other ongoing members of the Board are Chairman Duane Dailey, Vice Chairman Rene Simard, Secretary Holly Caldwell, William "Robby" Robinson, and Jack Rudder. During the reporting period, the Board met eleven times throughout the state to identify existing veteran issues within a variety of communities, to address community concerns and to support collaborative efforts. Board members participated in a number of events such as homeless stand downs and local community events and functions honoring veterans.

By the spring of 2017, the CBVA will have traveled to all regions of the state. Starting in June 2015 meetings have been held in Granby, Grand Junction, Montrose, Florence, Ft. Collins, Sterling, Monte Vista, Colo. Springs, Pueblo, Longmont, Conifer, in addition to the Denver metro area. By next May we will have been to Trinidad, Durango, Rifle and Ft. Lyon. Additionally, the make-up of the board has taken on a different look. Historically, most board members have been located within a 50 mile wide band on either side of I-25. The make-up of the present board includes four members within that same corridor, and three members from west of the continental divide, including one from the San Luis Valley, one from western Vail Valley and one from the north central mountains.

A continuing issue that plagues veterans is the lack of readily available access to mental health care, both in rural parts of the state as well as the urban areas. Urban area veterans have greater accessibility for treatment through federal VA facilities, although waiting lists for treatment are common. Rural veterans often lack local resources for mental health assistance primarily due to a lack of available and competent treatment facilities, and far too often are referred to local law enforcement agencies. This exacerbates an already bad situation for the veteran and family in need of help. The VA implemented the "Veterans Choice Card" program designed to allow those veterans living more than 40 miles from the nearest VA medical facility to seek care locally. The program is slowly improving, but needs much more refinement. To date, providers have been slow to enroll due to lack of knowledge and/or the level of reimbursement from the VA. Encouraging more health care providers to enroll in the program would address many needs at the local level, providing for consistency and ease of care. Support from your office and local officials may assist in encouraging local service provider enrollment to provide critical care needed for veteran's well-being.

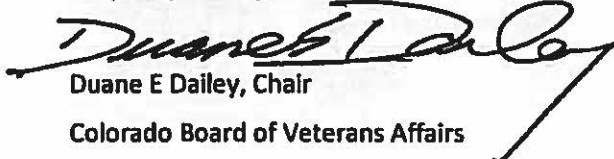
Veteran homelessness is an ongoing challenge throughout the state. In all of the communities visited, the Board received reports of the lack of resources and housing options to address the needs, particularly in rural areas. The need for low-income housing continues to be critical as previously housed low-income veterans are being priced out of the market. We would encourage leadership to continue to place affordable housing a high priority in the state.

The Veterans Trust Fund and Veterans Assistance Grant are very powerful tools provided by the state to assist veterans in need. These two grants are truly appreciated by those they help. The administration of the grant programs are dynamic in part due to the fact that state auditors are requiring the board to more closely monitor the outcomes provided. While a vast majority of the grantees are highly supportive, particularly those outside of the greater metro area, a small number of Trust Fund grantees voice concerns regarding the complexity of managing the Trust Fund grants. Most of the Trust Fund grantees are volunteers frustrated in the additional tasks required to deliver the grant monies to those in need. When queried, the frustration resides in the difficulties in working directly with the veterans rather than the grant programs.

A year ago the state stepped up its commitment by increasing its financial assistance for the mandated County Veterans Service Office. Counties throughout the state responded by increasing hours of the County Veterans Service Officers. This act resulted in an increase in claims processed and the connection of veterans to Federal benefits for health care, housing, and employment opportunities. Local communities will benefit greatly through the increase in VA dollars funneled into the area.

As Colorado continues to increase in population and grow its services it is evident that those veterans served by this great state and the numerous community-based organizations are outstanding. The State's strong commitment to veterans continues to enable Colorado to be a leader in serving those who have served.

Very Respectfully,



Duane E Dailey, Chair
Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

2016 Report of the Board of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Trust Fund

The Veterans Trust Fund, established by the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement, was appropriated \$876,770 during FY 2015-2016. Funds may be utilized for State Veteran's Community Living Centers, the State Veterans Cemetery, the Division of Veterans Affairs and nationally recognized nonprofit veterans' organizations as designated under Title 38, USC. These organizations include entities such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Disabled American Veterans. Of the total appropriation, \$832,931 was awarded in grants. Over eighty-five hundred Colorado veterans received services and support through grantees. Funds provided homeless prevention, transportation to medical appointments, addressed emergency needs and a host of other needed services. The detailed Veterans Trust Fund Annual Report for FY 2015-2016 is attached to this document (Attachment #1).

Veterans Assistance Grant

The State General Assembly, through appropriations, authorized the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) Veterans Assistance Grant to receive \$1,000,000 from the general fund for FY 2015-2016. Of these funds, \$966,549 was awarded through grants to nonprofit organizations and governmental entities throughout the State. These organizations provided direct assistance to veterans such as housing and shelter, substance abuse treatment, emergency assistance and mental health services. Program evaluation measures indicate that 99.4% of the veterans surveyed rated the services provided as favorable with 92% indicating an increase in overall health and well-being. The detailed Veterans Assistance Grant Report for FY2015-2016 is attached to this document (Attachment #2).

Division of Veterans Affairs

The Division of Veterans Affairs (DVA), with their Veterans Service Officers (VSOs), serves as the State "hub" for the network of County Veteran Service Officers. They review claims from the counties and forward them to the US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) for processing. Importantly, the State VSOs are also certified to represent veterans on claim appeals. They also provide initial direct claim service to many veterans from Denver County who walk in to the DVA offices. Importantly, the Division also provides annual training and certification to County Veterans Service Officers and service officers from veterans' organizations.

The detailed Division of Veterans Affairs Report for FY 2015-2016 is attached to this document (Attachment #3).

Veteran Service Officer Training

The Division of Veterans Affairs staff provided training to new County Service Officers and provided continuing education credit needs for their seasoned service officers.

The detailed Veteran Service Officer Training Report for FY 2015-2016 is attached to this document (Attachment #4).

Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado

The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado was built using federal and State funds in 2002. Over the years the Board has provided funds from the Veterans Trust primarily to add columbarium space and occasional emergency repairs.

The detailed Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado Report for FY 2015-2016 is attached to this document (Attachment #5).

Department of Labor and Employment

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment delivers an array of labor and employment services to Colorado veterans through the 59 State and county run One Stop Workforce Centers and satellite offices. Services provided include job matching and referral, vocational and career guidance, labor market information, and resume writing and job search workshops. Centers also refer eligible veterans to appropriate Workforce Investment Act training programs and referrals to skilled apprenticeship program.

The detailed Department of Labor and Employment Report for FY 2014-2015 is attached to this document (Attachment #6).

Department of Revenue

There are 29 different military and veterans license plates authorized in statute. Many, such as the Medal of Honor Recipient, Purple Heart and Disabled Veteran plates are free and exempt from annual vehicle fees while others, such as the U.S. Army, Navy or Air Force plates cost \$50 and do not exempt the vehicle from fees. There are 138,519 vehicles registered with one of the military or veterans license plates.

The Department also provides several other services to members of the armed services. Deployed members may be exempt from motor vehicle registration fees and pay only \$1.00 in specific ownership tax. The VETS-2-TRUCKS program allows service members with 2 years of heavy truck operator experience to qualify for a Commercial Driver's License without taking the skills test. Veterans and active duty service members may also have a veteran or active military identifier placed on their State driver's license for free.

The detailed list of services provided by the Department of Revenue for FY 2015-2016 is attached to this document (Attachment #7).

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Parks and Wildlife offers several benefits to Colorado veterans. Veterans with a disabled veteran license plate are granted free admission to State parks. Any active or retired military member receiving treatment at a military facility or convalescing facility can be given a free fishing license. A Purple Heart recipient or disabled veteran may also obtain a free lifetime combination small game hunting and fishing license. Wounded warriors and active duty military who are stationed in Colorado or residents of Colorado are also offered a range of several benefits and exceptions for big game hunting draw preferences.

The detailed Department of Natural Resources Report for FY 2015-2016 is attached to this document (Attachment #8).

Colorado Veterans Monument

C.R.S. 24-80-1401(2) requires that one member of the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs be a member of the Preservation Trust Committee for the Colorado Veterans Monument. The monument is located at Veterans Park to the west of the Colorado State Capitol. Board member Rene Simard holds the membership position.

Mr. Tim Drago of the Preservation Trust Committee continues to ensure that the monument and grounds are well maintained and reflect Colorado's pride in those men and women who have served our great nation and the State of Colorado.

Attachments:

1. Veterans Trust Fund Report
2. Veterans Assistance Grant Report
3. Division of Veterans Affairs Report
4. Veteran Service Officer Training Report
5. Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado Report
6. Department of Labor and Employment Report
7. Department of Revenue Report
8. Department of Natural Resources Report

**DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS REPORT ON THE
COLORADO STATE VETERANS AFFAIRS TRUST FUND FOR FY 15-16**

Subject: Colorado State Veterans Trust Fund

Requirement: Pursuant to §25-1-108.5 (2), C.R.S. as amended, the following report is provided for State Fiscal Year 15-16 covering the period from July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016.

Funds Received: The Veterans Trust Fund (VTF) received a Long Bill appropriation of \$876,770 for FY 15-16. The Division of Veterans Affairs was authorized to expend \$42,197 (less than 5% of the funds) for administration of the grant; however the actual expenditures were \$32,796.89 (3.7%) for administration, which includes a significant amount of Board travel. VTF grant applications exceed the annual appropriation provided to the trust fund. Of the \$832,931 of trust fund monies provided for grants, \$832,930.75 was awarded in grants, and \$753,236.26 was expended. Of the unspent funds, a significant amount of \$32,345.25 was returned by a grantee upon learning they would not be considered for funding for the 2016-2017 FY due to a late submission of an application. The grantee returned the funds too late to be reallocated or redirected.

Program Description (with eligible population): The Colorado State Veterans Trust Fund is designed with the overall goal of assisting all veterans in need of assistance residing in the State of Colorado regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, marital or religious status. The key goals of the program are to provide sufficient support and funding to meet the needs of veterans in the four areas defined below:

- State Veteran's Nursing Homes for capital improvements or needed amenities for existing or future state veterans nursing homes.
- Operation and maintenance of existing or future State Veterans Cemeteries.
- Costs incurred by the Division of Veterans Affairs.
- Veterans programs operated by nonprofit veterans' organizations that meet criteria adopted by the board and that are selected by the Board as grant recipients.

Non-Profit Criteria:

Nonprofit veterans' organizations: Nonprofit veterans' organizations must be nationally recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as an organization that can provide services to veterans under Title 38, USC. The organization must be designated by the IRS as a 501(c)19 or 501(c)23 organization.

Program Criteria: The Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs (BVA) criteria for veterans programs operated by nonprofit veteran's organizations located within the State of Colorado are programs that provide assistance to the needs of veterans for their health and well being. Examples of such programs are veteran's transportation programs to medical centers and/or clinics (23%), homelessness prevention and intervention (35%), emergency needs (28%), Stand Downs (5.6%), medical/mental health services not provided and/or covered through the VA (1.8%), veteran's employment training programs and job related services (.8%) and other needed services (5.6%).

Eligible Population: Veterans within the state of Colorado with an other than dishonorable discharge. There are no income eligibility requirements.

Services Provided: The following represents a breakdown by category of agencies that received funding, grants or awards during the reporting period, to include the type of service and/or assistance provided.

Non-Profit Veterans Service Organizations and State Veterans Community Living Centers – these organizations expended \$753,236.26 in grant funds to support veterans and their needs.

- Homelake Veterans Community Living Center expended \$9,683 for alternative therapy supplies. Walsenburg Veterans Community Living Center expended \$19,576.40 for telephones for each veteran’s room.
- Non-Profit Veterans Service Organizations expended the remaining amount of grant funds. The services provided were located throughout the state, with 59% of the grantees in rural areas and 41% in metro areas. As previously noted, services include transportation to medical appointments, emergency assistance, housing support, Stand Downs, medical/mental health assistance not provided by the VA, employment and educational assistance and other services to meet the needs of veterans.

During FY 2015-2016, the (duplicated) number of veterans served by grantees was 8,680 with 4,966 unique individuals receiving services and support.

Program Effectiveness: During 2015-2016, a service recipient survey was implemented to measure the effectiveness of the services provided by the grantees and to measure the outcomes or impact of the services. The survey utilizes a standard Likert scale to rate the grantee program effectiveness, and changes in well-being. Overall, 99.5% of the veterans rated the services favorable with 96% indicating an increase in well-being as a result of the program. Many veterans write personal notes of appreciation on the surveys. Examples include an indication that medical appointments would not be possible without the transportation programs; veterans were able to remain housed rather than becoming homeless; a few indicated that the services received prevented suicide.

Evaluation of the Operation of the Program: Process improvements remain a primary focus. Additional grantee trainings via webinars were conducted. A Grantee Handbook was provided to all grantees with specific details on VTF policies, procedures and processes. We continue to seek input from grantees for further program enhancements. For example, based upon grantee feedback, the service recipient survey was modified for FY2016-2017.

Grantees: Please see the attached list for all grantees awarded Veterans Trust Fund monies.

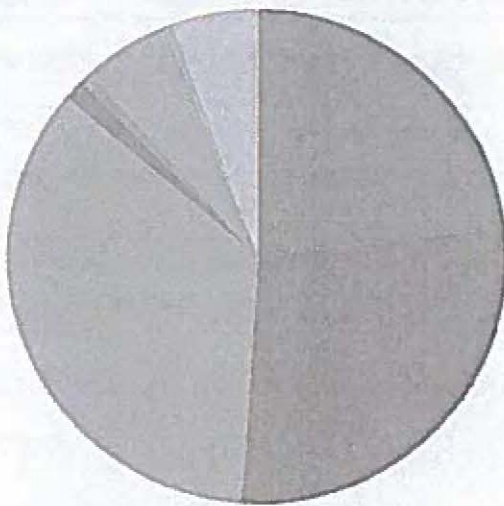
In Closing: Over the past fourteen years the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs, through the Colorado Veterans Trust Fund, have provided direct benefits ranging from emergency assistance, housing assistance, work clothes, rent assistance, utility assistance and transportation to Veterans Affairs medical facilities to tens of thousands of veterans throughout the State. We would request \$803,391 for FY2017-2018.

FY2015-2016 Veterans Trust Fund Grantees

Grantee	Location	Purpose	Amount Awarded
American Legion Post 44	Steamboat Springs	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$5,600
DAV Chapter 48	Durango	Transport/Vet Assist/Stand Down	\$80,270
American Legion Post 103	Littleton	Vet Assistance	\$30,000
VFW Post 523 I	Mancos	Housing/Vet Assistance	\$4,810

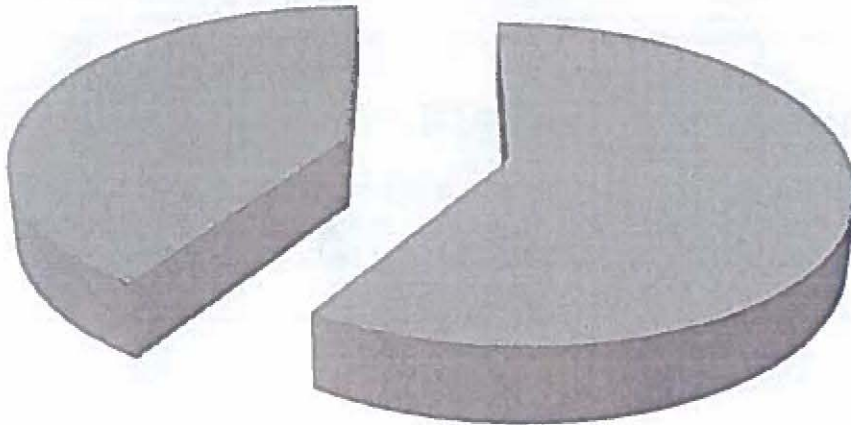
American Legion Post 115	Rye	Vet Assistance	\$5,000
DAV Chapter 44	Cortez	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$68,900
American Legion Post 18	Greeley	Vet Assistance	\$16,600
VFW Post 899	Alamosa	Transport/Vet Assistance/Van	\$48,568.35
American Legion Post 108	Pagosa Springs	Transport/Vet Assistance/Van	\$50,000
VFW Post 7829	Monument	Stand Down	\$20,000
American Legion Post 88	Hot Sulphur Springs	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$20,000
American Legion Post 170	Westcliffe	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$51,750
American Legion Post 2	Pueblo	Transport/Vet Assist/Stand Down	\$18,000
VFW Post 1	Denver	Vet Assistance	\$5,625
VFW Post 8661	Bailey	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$8,400
DAV Chapter 25	Grand Junction	Stand Down/Vet Assistance	\$12,000
American Legion Post 32	Longmont	Transport/Vet Assist/Stand Down	\$50,000
VFW Post 41	Loveland	Veterans Assistance	\$58,000
DAV Chapter 48	Durango	Transport/Vet Assist/Stand Down	\$36,000
American Legion Post 25	Florence	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$25,000
American Legion Post 109	Windsor	Transport/Vet Assist/Stand Down	\$60,000
American Legion Post 170	Westcliffe	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$40,000
VFW Post 4265	Craig	Transport/Vet Assistance/Van	\$36,120
VFW Post 5843	Meeker	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$6,500
VFW Department of Colorado	Lakewood	Vet Assistance	\$53,028
American Legion Post 143	Bayfield	Housing/Vet Assistance	48,000
Vietnam Veterans of America Chap. 1071	Denver	Vet Assistance	\$25,000
SVCLC Homelake	Monte Vista	Alternative therapy supplies	\$9,683
SVCLC Walsenburg	Walsenburg	Phones for veteran rooms	\$19,576.40
Total			\$832,930.75

Types of Services Provided



- Transportation
- Emergency Services
- Housing
- Medical
- Employment/Education
- Stand Down
- Mental Health
- Health/Rec.
- Other

Location of Grantees



- Rural
- Urban

STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COLORADO DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

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Ben Mestas
Director

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John W. Hickenlooper
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Major General
H. Michael Edwards
The Adjutant General

Veterans Assistance Grant 2015-2016 Final Report

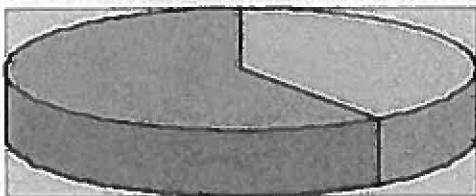
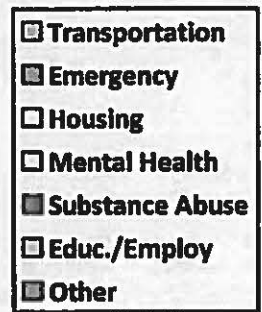
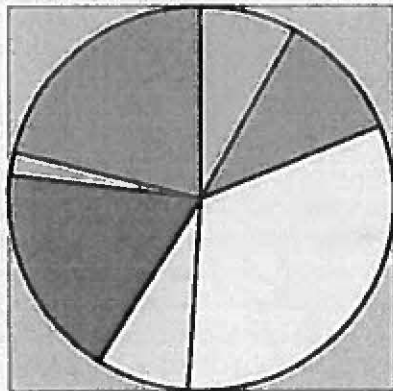
Pursuant to C.R.S. 28-5-712, Legislative appropriations authorized the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) Veterans Assistance Grant to receive \$1,000,000 from the general fund for FY 2015-2016. Of these funds, a total of \$970,000 was designated to be granted to non-profit or governmental agencies to provide assistance to veterans in the State. The following is a final report of the administration of those monies. The grant program received requests in the amount of \$1,687,773. A total of 25 non-profit organizations and governmental entities throughout the state were awarded grants totaling \$966,549. The direct services provided through the grants include the provision of shelter and housing (32%), emergency assistance (11%), employment assistance (2%), transportation (8%), mental health services (8%), substance abuse treatment (18%) and other forms of assistance (21%). These "other services" include medical assistance, therapeutic art programming, family retreats, adaptive farm equipment, furniture and bedding for transitioning veterans, Stand Down, and Service Dog training. A total of \$770,643.24 was expended by the grantees. A total of 2207 veterans were served during the contract period. Of those, 1766 were unduplicated. The execution rate was impacted by several issues during the grant year. For instance, one grantee was able to negotiate a better deal than anticipated on a vehicle purchase. Another grantee experienced a reduction in transportation requests as the VA Choice program allowed veterans to access health care within the community rather than traveling long distances to a VA clinic. Several grantees implemented cost savings or received designated/restricted donations for services, reducing the need for funds. While these are all positive developments, they did negatively impact on the grant execution rates. We also had one grantee that failed to execute the contract due to leadership turnover, lack of appropriate trained professional staff, and numerous other circumstances. Despite 3 site visits, numerous contacts and support from the Grant Administrator, the grantee declined to return the contract thus \$80,250 for that single contract was unspent. Overall, the execution rate was 87% when removing the unexecuted contract, which is a 10% increase over the previous fiscal year. Program evaluation measures include a service recipient survey to measure the effectiveness of the services provided by the grantees and to measure the outcomes or impact of the services. The survey utilizes a standard Likert scale to rate the grantee program as well as changes in the overall health and well-being of veterans served. Overall, 99.4% of the veterans rated the services favorable with 92% indicating an increase in overall well-being. Of the total grantees, 60% are located within a metro area and 40% within rural area.

(A full list of grant recipients, location and funding amount is attached.)

FY2015-2016 Veterans Assistance Grantees

Grantee	Location	Purpose	Amount Awarded
La Puente Home, Inc.,	Alamosa	Homeless Veteran Assistance	\$20,000
Alamosa County Veterans Services	Alamosa	Emergency/Veteran Assistance	\$23,000
Grand County Veterans Services	Hot Sulphur Springs	Transportation/Emergency Assistance	\$15,000
CO Veterans Resource Coalition	Colorado Springs	Homeless/Substance Abuse Shelter	\$99,700
Pikes Peak Workforce Center	Colorado Springs	Employment/Homeless Veteran Assistance	\$20,000
Catholic Charities of Denver	Denver/Ft. Collins	Housing/Veteran Assistance/Transportation	\$50,000
Mountain Resource Center	Conifer	Emergency Assistance/Mental Health	\$40,000
Operation Revamp	Grand Junction	Veterans Arts Program	\$35,715.18
Sobriety House, Inc.	Denver	Substance Use/Abuse Treatment	\$45,084
Project Sanctuary	Granby	Family retreats	\$23,330
Archuleta County Veterans Services	Pagosa Springs	Mental Health/ Emergency Assistance	\$40,000
Goodwill Industries of Denver	Denver	Adaptive Equipment	\$40,000
Providers Resource Clearinghouse	Aurora	Furniture/Bedding	\$41,800
BPOE Lodge #1319	Lamar	Vehicle, Transportation	\$35,000
Denver Options -RMHS	Denver/El Paso County	Homeless Assistance	\$41,713
Park County Senior Coalition	Fairplay	Vet Assistance	\$45,724
Chaffee County	Salida	Transportation/Emergency Assistance	\$50,000

Cross Purpose	Denver	Veteran Ex-Offender Assistance/Mental Health	\$50,000
Welcome Home Montrose	Montrose	Employment	\$80,250
Colorado State University	Ft. Collins	Emergency Assistance/Education	\$17,656
Women Veterans of Colorado	Denver	Stand Down	\$7,376
CNDC-Veterans Helping Veterans Now	Boulder	Mental Health	\$11,284.82
Veterans for Veterans of Archuleta County	Pagosa Springs	Housing/ Emergency Assistance/Stand Down	\$25,000
Home Front Cares, Inc.	Colorado Springs	Veterans Assistance/ Housing	\$58,916
Freedom Service Dogs, Inc.	Englewood	Service Dog Training	\$50,000
Total			\$966,549.00



STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Division of Veterans Affairs

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Diane Ricci
Deputy Director



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COLORADO DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

2016 REPORT ON SERVICE TO VETERANS

October 31, 2016

For the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Annual Report to the Governor

Chairman Duane Dailey
Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

Re: State Board of Veterans Affairs Annual Report to the Governor

Dear Mr. Dailey:

This year was marked by persistent outreach to Colorado Veterans with over 170 outreach events. State Veteran Service Officers monthly participated in and actively attended events including: Colorado's public and private nursing homes, homeless stand-downs, Transitional Assistance Program for veterans transitioning from active duty, Veterans Day events, county events, one-stop-shops, and many others. The need for highly trained State and County Service Officers remains paramount as we see the ongoing need for assistance with veterans facing Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome, education/Post-911 GI-Bill, vocational rehabilitation, and claims processing.

Executive Summary: In fiscal year 2015-16 Colorado Veterans continued to make a positive impact on their local economies as Colorado saw an over-all increase by \$300 million and reached the \$3.4 billion mark in total benefits. Of these \$391 million went to education and vocational rehabilitation benefits. The Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs team assisted with the \$1.5 billion in direct pay outs to veterans in the form of compensation and pension benefits. The Division of Veterans Affairs team features 18 full time employees, which includes staff at our Veteran Memorial Cemetery in Grand Junction, Grant Administrator and State Veteran Service Officers. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reported the Colorado Veteran population at 409,469, which is a decrease from last year by 3,802. This small decrease indicates a small loss of aging veterans countered by an increase in Post 9-11 veterans leaving the military with the reduction in forces while other veterans are choosing Colorado as their home. We anticipate expenditures for VA healthcare to continue with the aging population of Vietnam Veterans, and with the care for our Veterans from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Summary of Significant Activities and Accomplishments:

Unceasing outreach continued as a major mission for the Division: Our Service Officers actively participated in various programs mentioned above increasing visibility, phone calls, appointments, claims filed and overall division effectiveness.

Annual Training Conference for County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO): This paramount week-long annual event in April enables the State VSOs to meet with and train the CVSOs in large and small groups as well as one-on-one. We use a variety of teaching methods and activities to facilitate learning and active participation. We also conduct regional training in the fall where my staff travels throughout the state to meet with CVSO's in their home counties.

Processing Veteran Benefits: Our team filed more than 11,401 additional claims this year than last.

Summary of Program Assessment:

The following information is submitted for your consideration:

COLORADO DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS		
Date: October 31, 2016		
	OFFICE ACTIVITIES	
ITEM	2015	2016
New Power of Attorneys	6162	6063
Letters to VA	6999	6157
New Claims	15,536	26937
Telephone Calls	29,483	27742
Health Care Enrollment	1502	1596
Certified Appeals Sent to BVA	131	238
Referendum E Veteran Property Tax Exemption: Running Total	6334	7132

INTERMENTS IN VETERAN MEMORIAL CEMETERY OF WESTERN COLORADO	
Date OCTOBER 31,2016	
Veteran	2633
Spouse	971
Dependent	8
TOTAL	3,612

Short and Long term goals: This year the Division approved 658 Veterans Property Tax Exemption (REF E) applications. This number includes Veterans widows (HB 14-1373).

We continued to streamline our business model with the VA in the processing of compensation and pension claims. This is most evident in the decrease in count of Letters to VA by over 840. This is indicative of the change in programs implemented by the VA in coordination with their State partners with the Fully Developed Claim (FDC) Program allowing veterans to provide all claim forms, supporting documents, and private medical evidence up front with the initial submission of the claim resulting in faster claims processing time. Our Division made every effort to adhere to this program and our data shows the program worked in minimizing the number of letters going back and forth between the VA and veterans during the evidence gathering phase of VA claims. The result was also a faster claim turn-around time in the FDC program by at least 90 days on average.

Challenges and Goals: By 2025 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs predicts veterans from Post 9-11 conflicts as the largest group, followed by our Vietnam Veterans and Korean War era Veterans. Currently our Vietnam era Veterans are the largest group. By 2040 the VA predicts we will see the largest population of female and minority veterans in U.S. history.

Our success is measured by the percent of veterans seeking us as their representative. The Post 9-11 generation of veterans choose to utilize online applications and social media to obtain veteran information. Thus, we continue to adapt to the latest technologies to reach veterans. Despite advances in technology, nothing replaces the sound advocacy our Division provides in assisting veterans in obtaining VA Benefits. The mediums may have changed, but the laws and requirements surrounding VA benefits have not.

As our Armed Forces participate in world-wide missions, our Nation's leaders will continue to call upon the myriad of units based in Colorado. As Colorado Veterans complete their tours of duty, we will provide unabated support serving them as they return home to a grateful community here in Colorado.

Administrative Condition: Our Division reported last year our use of the web based program, VETRASPEC, for claim management and claim filing for benefits with the Federal Department of Veteran Affairs. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is in the process of partnering with VETRASPEC programmers on an initiative called Digits-to-Digits, whereby claims entered in to the State's VETRASPEC system will automatically populate into the VA's programs for claims processing. This potentially provides the State with significant cost savings in terms of paper expense. With the assistance of my staff, Colorado Counties were able to service 15,536 new entitlement claims in VETRASPEC over the last year.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Diane Ricci, my Deputy Director at 303-284-6077. Also, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss the Division's recommendations and this annual report.

Sincerely,



Ben Mestas, Director
Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs

Annual County Veterans Service Officer Training

The 2016 Annual County Veterans Service Officer Training Conference was held on May 19 through 22, 2016, at the Denver Marriott West hotel. The Division of Veterans Affairs staff and volunteers provided training to new County Service Officers and provided continuing education credits, on two advanced levels for seasoned service officers. There were 85 participants with representatives from the 68 county service offices, Colorado State Veteran Community Living Centers, Rocky Mountain Human Services, and Volunteers of America. The presenters provided their experience and expertise to the group and facilitated several breakout sessions on the three levels of instruction covering such diverse topics as: pension, aid and attendance, education, service connected claims, notice of disagreement and appeals, ethics, health care, presumptive and secondary issues, increases, state programs, discharge upgrades, debt management, Reserve and Guard issues, retirements, and the statewide software Vetraspec. Special emphasis was given to issues facing veterans, which include homelessness, rural Colorado, and women's issues. The end result was to provide each service officer with the most up-to-date information on changes in programs, benefits and legislative actions that may impact current benefits, thus providing the greatest level of benefits to Colorado veterans.

At the conclusion of the conference, a written examination was given to all participants, everyone achieved a passing grade and were presented with certificates. All participants expressed their appreciation to the Denver office staff for their time and dedication to planning and coordinating the event.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Rudder
Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs member,
Rio Grande County CVSO.

STATE OF COLORADO



DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado

Status Report

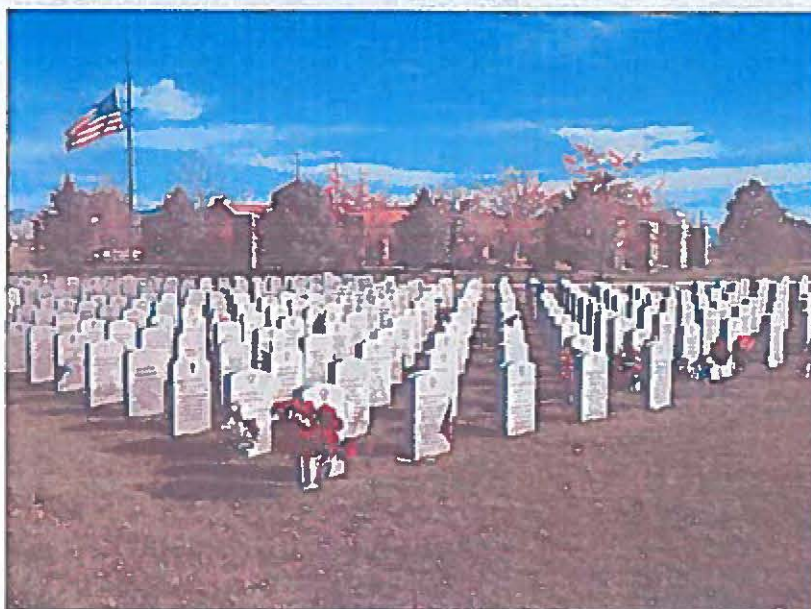
Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado

November 1, 2015 through October 28, 2016

to the

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

October 28, 2016



VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY OF WESTERN COLORADO
2830 Riverside Parkway
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501



**Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado
November 1, 2015 through October 28, 2016
to the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs
October 28, 2016**

Executive Summary

1. Background

This section is unchanged.

2. Physical Layout and Facilities

This section has been updated to reflect additional property acquired from the Readiness Center.

3. Organization

This section has been updated to reflect new staff.

4. Functions

This section is unchanged.

5. Extra-Curricular Activities

Updated to reflect the new quarterly veterans memorial service for unaccompanied veterans.

6. Burial Operations

Gravesite Utilization: Updated to reflect numbers, statistics, projections, etc. since last year's report.

2015 – 2016 Interments by Month: Updated to reflect numbers, statistics, projections etc., since last year's report.

Interments by Year: Updated to reflect numbers, statistics, projections etc., since last year's report.

7. Customer Satisfaction

Updated to reflect comments, numbers, statistics, etc., since last year's report.

8. Early Registrations

Updated to reflect numbers, statistics, projections etc., since last year's report.

9. Issues and Concerns

Issues and concerns from last year's report were updated to reflect their current status or eliminated if they were no longer relevant. New issues and concerns were documented.

Colorado Mesa University (formerly Mesa State College) Development: No new developments.

Water Issues: This section has been updated to reflect silt buildup in the lower pond and Administration building flooding.

Cemetery Funding: Funding remains a major concern. Burial reimbursements from VA have increased to \$749.00 (from \$747.00) per veteran interment.

Equipment Replacement/Repair: The irrigation system's main pumps were replaced. Both mowers need to be replaced; Bobcat Sweeper attachment and components need to be replaced.

Personnel Issues: My promotion to Director and Mr. Steven Stogsdill hired as Cemetery Support Assistant. New FTE hired September, 2016 as the replacement for FTE who did not complete his probationary period from October, 2015. In the process of hiring a replacement for groundskeeper, Mr. Gary Vigil, who left in December on medical leave and retired on April 1, 2016. A temporary groundskeeper has been held over until hiring takes place. In the absence of a fourth FTE, we will need to hire a temporary employee for April/May 2017 timeframe in time for the irrigation system startup.

Columbaria: Reflects the addition and status of four new columbaria, and the need to seek funding for additional columbaria.

Sod: Reflects the replacement of sod.

Roadway: This section is updated to reflect on going repairs of man-hole's and sealing of roadways from the expansion project.

In-Ground Gravesites: We had minimal problems with in-ground gravesites freezing during the 2015-2016 winter season.

Stonework: Reflects continuing process of sealing stonework.

Painting: Due to the lack of resources, we are still unable to refinish and repaint the metal work at the Administration Building, Committal Shelter, Assembly Area and Riverside Parkway frontage.

Silt Trap: Reflects need for a new plan for excavating at least once per year.

Main Line Irrigation System Breaks: Numerous Main lines breaks experienced during reporting period.

FIRE/Burglar Alarms: Reflects additional alarm system installed at West Shop. Unreported damage to Building reflects possible video surveillance to be installed.

Burial Operations Support System (BOSS): Updated to reflect new PIV enforcement and issues related.

NCA Audit: Documents triennial VA audit of cemetery.

Rainbird Irrigation System: Irrigation Pumps replaced.

Cemetery Expansion Project Punch list: The cemetery expansion project's on-going punch list and issues is described in this section.

10. Monuments and Memorials

This section has been updated to reflect new memorials.

11. In Closing

Closing remarks.

2015 - 2016 Interments by Month (Figure 4)

CY 2015 had the greatest number of interments, 313, since the cemetery opened. Interments for CY2016 are running at a pace that, if it keeps up, will total around 325, an increase of 3.6%. Interments by month since November 1, 2015 are shown below.

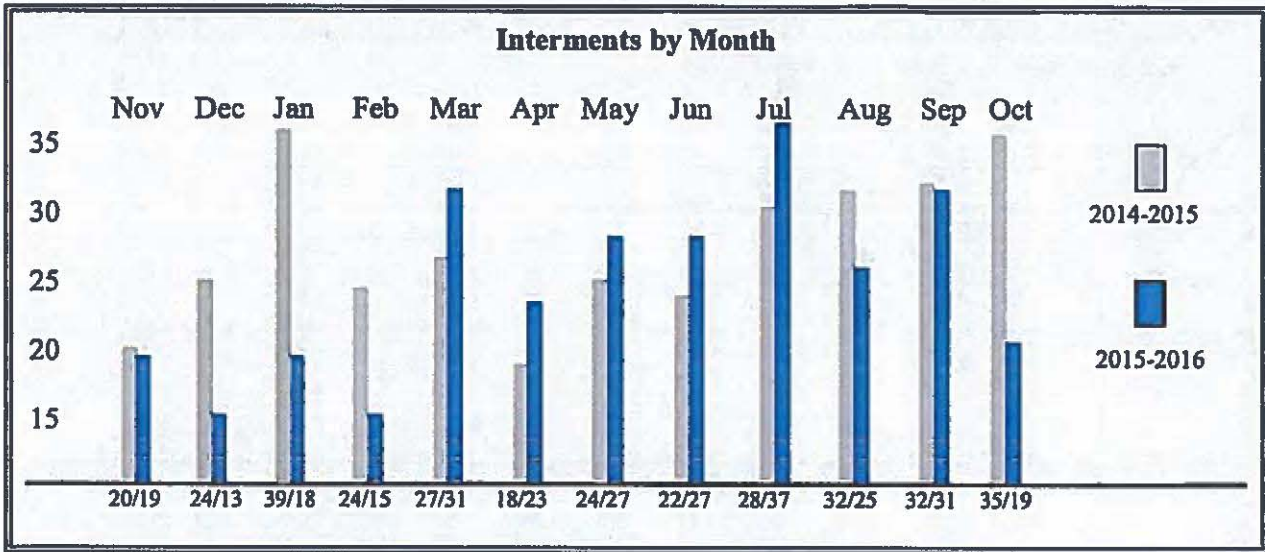


Figure 4

Interments by Year (Figure 5)

The interments of 3,582 veterans, spouses and/or dependents are broken down by year below.

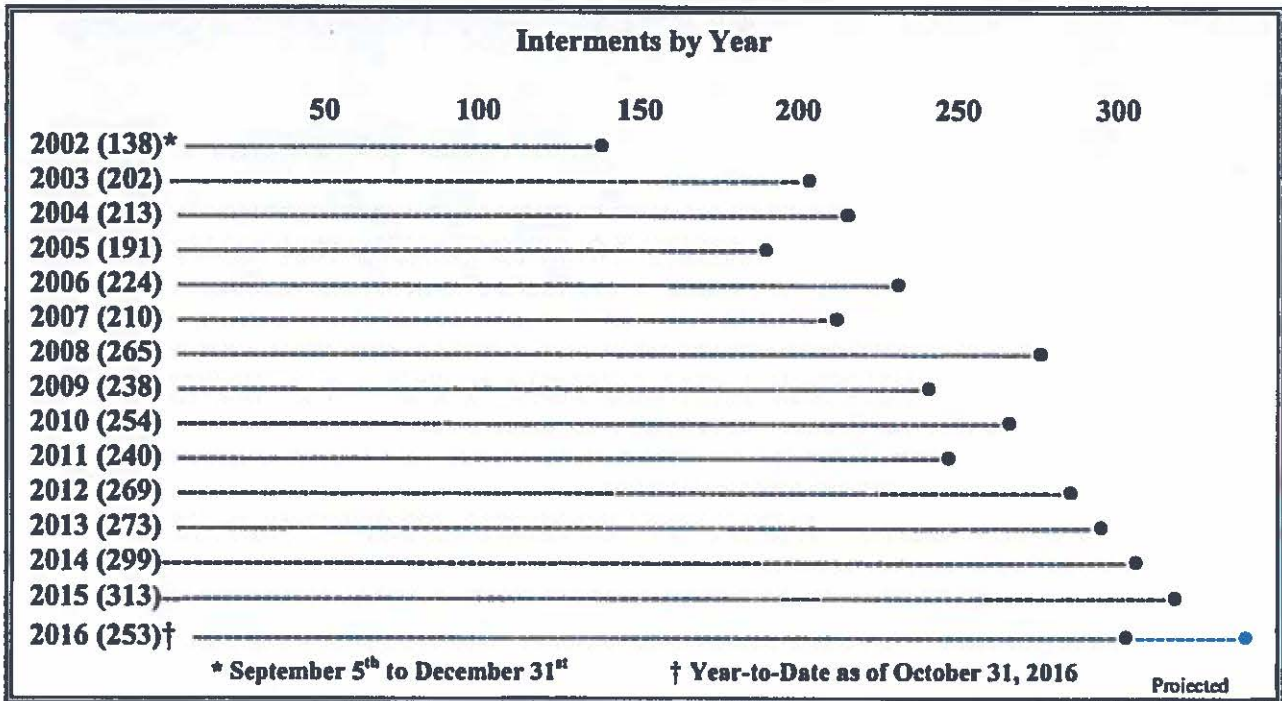


Figure 5

7. Customer Satisfaction *(Figure 6)*

The cemetery sends out Customer Satisfaction Surveys every three months to gauge the level of customer satisfaction for the previous quarter.

Survey forms are given to ~ 25% of the next-of-kin of those who were interred during the previous quarter. All surveys are anonymous; however, many respondents sign their names.

A scale of 1 to 5 is used with 4 - 5 considered a satisfactory rating. The average of these ratings is shown in *Figure 6* below.

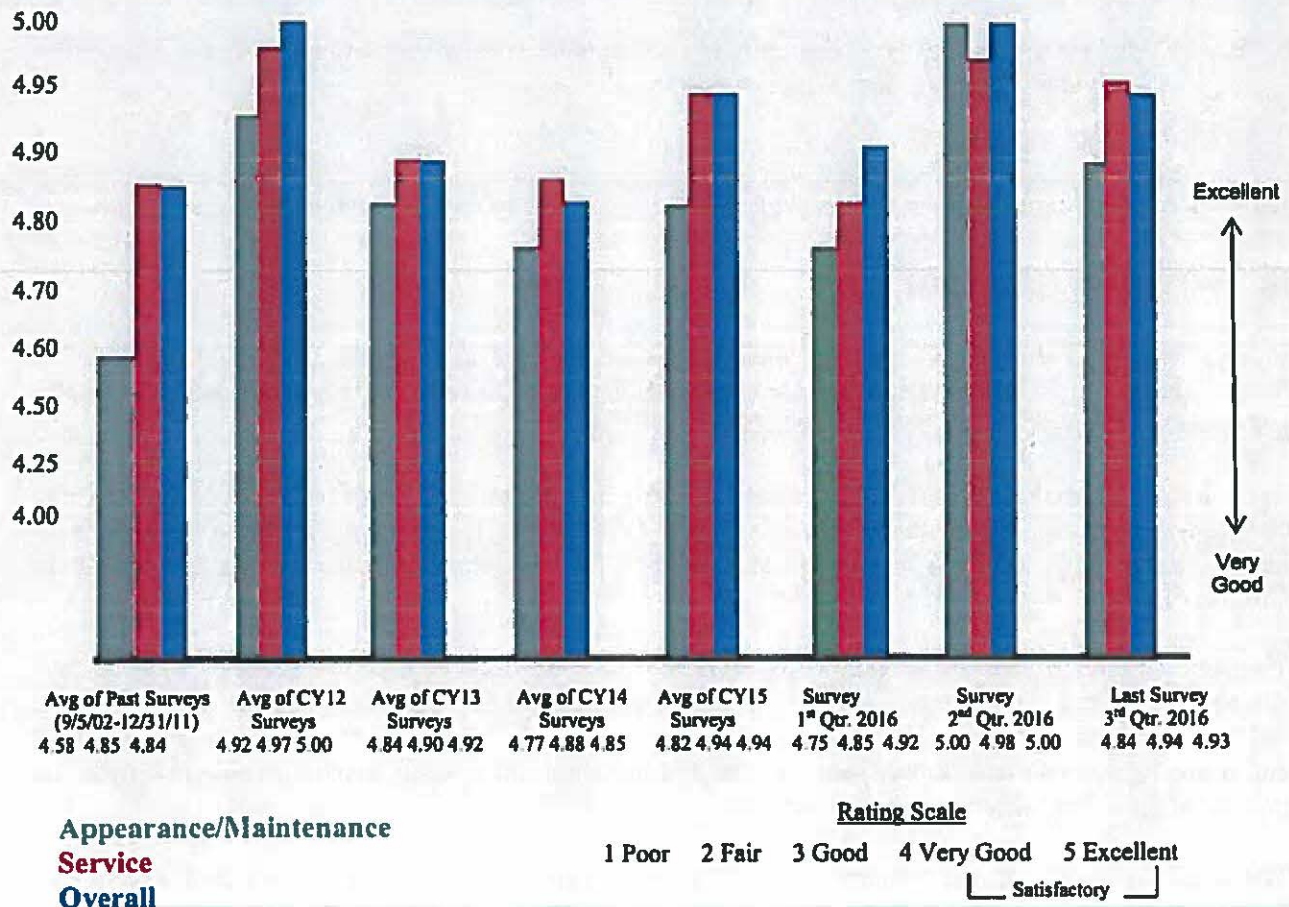


Figure 6

On the surveys, there is room for any comments a respondent may wish to make. Some of the responses the cemetery has received are shown below (these are typical of the majority of responses):

Comments from most recent Customer Satisfaction Surveys

1. "We are fortunate to have such a lovely facility to honor our vets. Thank you!"
2. "The service for my father was so beautiful. I would like to thank everyone involved. It was very professional & I thank you all so very much."
3. "The entire service was perfectly done-very impressive! I did not see a flaw! Thanks so much!"
4. "Absolutely Amazing Professional Caring above and beyond expectation of service. Thank you very, very much."
5. "This service was exceptional-very patriotic, symbolic and perfect for your loved one. Thank you.."
6. "It was simply beautiful...A great deserving, peaceful place for my friend to rest...Thank You, all of you...and God Bless the Red, White and Blue...."
7. "Thank you for a great job!"

All responses are kept on file at the Cemetery and are available to anyone wishing to review them.

8. Early Registrations

In an attempt to better serve the local veterans community and at the same time attempt to predict future needs, the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado offers a service not usually provided at most veterans cemeteries, i.e., Early Registration.

Early Registration allows a veteran to receive an early determination of eligibility for interment at the cemetery. A veteran will complete a cemetery form (VMC Form 1) and submit it with a copy of his or her discharge (e.g., DD214) and proof of residency (if the veteran's home of record was not in Colorado).

The cemetery determines the veteran's eligibility for interment and keeps copies of the paperwork on file so that, when the time comes, it will be one less thing for the family to worry about. For those who did not complete early registration, there have been several instances where eligibility for interment could not be immediately determined, e.g., the family could not find the discharge. This delayed the interment until eligibility could be determined.

The ancillary benefit to the cemetery of such a program is that it allows cemetery staff to estimate future interments and incorporate the information into short and long range planning.

As of the date of this report, 2,930 veterans have registered. This represents 4,688 likely interments, including these veterans, their spouses and eligible dependents.

9. Issues and Concerns

Issues and concerns identified in previous reports are updated below and new issues and concerns have been added.

Colorado Mesa University (formerly Mesa State College) Development

There were no new developments with this issue during the timeframe covered by this report. We are continuing to monitor the situation.

Water Issues

(Silt Buildup) Lower pond

Silt and moss in the stream corridor and upper holding pond was addressed as part of the cemetery expansion and improvement project. The sediment build up in the upper pond was excavated down to the liner and removed. The lower pond was not addressed due to the unexpected amount of silt in the upper pond and cost associated with its removal.

During repair of a break in the flush line for the new irrigation pump, contractors were required to enter the lower pond to gain access to the pipe requiring the repair. An alarming amount of sediment build-up at the bottom of the pond was observed. The filter at the end of the intake line is actually creating its own space within the sediment to pull water to supply the pump. The sediment will need to be addressed in the near future as the pumps will soon start to struggle to supply the amount of water required to keep the pumps functioning properly.

Flooding of Administration Building Crawl Space

Routine maintenance includes checking the crawl space in the Administration building. October 1st, water was discovered in the crawl space, 8-10 inches in some areas. While contractors were pumping out the water into the sewer cleanout, it was discovered the septic was backed up. While pumping out the three manholes which were full, it was discovered a plastic one liter water bottle, along with chunks of concrete, were blocking the outlet of the fourth man-hole. Most of the man-holes had crumbling concrete around the rim, under the lids. After the sewer lines were drained and hydro-jetted, a video inspection took place. This inspection revealed a broken sewer pipe outside of the administration building, along the sidewalk. Contractors excavated the area where the video indicated a break, and it revealed the septic line was not broken but was a short piece of pipe with two rubber gaskets placed to extend this line to the main pipe. This piece of sewer pipe was bending at an angle, due to an irrigation main line placement right on top of it during initial construction, and appearing as broken. This bending sewer line was replaced with more appropriate fittings, the irrigation pipe re-routed with 45 degree pipe fittings, up and over the sewer pipe, and the excavated hole was backfilled, roses, fabric and rock replaced. State Emergency funds are being accessed to pay for the remediation.

We are still tracking down the source of the excessive amount of water in the crawlspace. It was noted the new gutters were improperly installed, causing water to run down next to the building and splashing into the window wells. The gutters will be replaced by the contractor before winter.

The crawlspace is being dried out via large dehumidifiers and mold remediation will be forthcoming. This will be a lengthy process due to the amount of moisture still in the crawl space.

As of this date, the concrete associated with the crumbling man-holes are being repaired and/or replaced.

Cemetery Funding

Funding continues to be a problem and, unless something changes, it may not be sufficient for the future. This has continued to remain a significant concern. A stable source of funding for the cemetery needs to be identified and established; otherwise its long-term viability is in question.

Burial reimbursements from the VA were increased to \$749.00 per veteran in October 2016, up from \$747.00 previously. This represents 75% of the cost to inter an individual veteran. Spouses or other eligible dependents are not reimbursed. These reimbursements only account for about half of the cemetery's budget.

Equipment Replacement/Repair

We received and placed into service a new desktop computer for use by the administrative staff to access BOSS to order headstones and niche covers. The VA launched a PIV requirement and our old system was unable to accommodate the change. The new system is running smoothly and we are able to access BOSS as required.

As reported the last two years, one of the riding mowers, John Deere 1435, will have to be replaced or overhauled. This 1435 is also used for plowing the smaller areas around the cemetery in winter, and for aerating the grounds in spring/fall. In addition, the John Deere 910 has experienced breakdowns resulting in costly repairs this year. Both mowers will need to be replaced in the near future. The Hustler riding mower is no longer serviceable and has been taken out of service. Mr. Gary Vigil, cemetery grounds person with considerable repair skills, was able to procure parts and make repairs on his own. Mr. Vigil retired in April and we have had to send the equipment out for repairs.

The sweeper attachment for our Bobcat Skid Steer is worn out and is no longer functioning. We have not been able to sweep our roadways since last spring. This sweeper attachment and mounting components will need to be replaced.

Personnel Issues and Needs

The vacant position on our grounds crew from October, 2015, was not filled until September 15, 2016. It had been occupied for nine months by a temporary grounds-person, who was unsuccessful in passing his background investigation for a full time position. His appointment

ended June 30th. This left us with a vacancy in the middle of our busy growing season, and an integral part of our grounds crew gone.

December, 2015, long-time employee, Mr. Vigil, went out on medical leave. This left us with one FTE and one temporary Grounds person during the winter months into spring. Mr. Vigil did retire on April 1, 2016. We hired our normal temporary, seasonal employee who started on May 19th to work for six months. However, due to being short-staffed, he is being held over until our irrigation system is shut down for the season, approximately November 30. He is also assisting with training the new FTE in our operations. We still need to hire a temporary employee for the April/May 2016 timeframe to assist with grounds-keeping when the irrigation system comes on line for the 2016 season. It is our understanding that we will have the funding to do so.

The announcement for the third FTE position has closed and we are in the process of hiring.

In January, I was promoted to Director, and Mr. Steven Stogsdill was hired as a temporary Program Assistant. July 1, 2016, Mr. Stogsdill became our permanent Cemetery Support Assistant (Formerly the position was classified as Program Assistant). He has done a most commendable job and is a welcome addition to the team.

This year has been very difficult as our grounds staff was reduced significantly, as family, medical and other situations resulted in time off for our fulltime grounds-persons. With Mr. Vigil retiring, I have been tasked with working in the field training grounds crew, along with training Mr. Stogsdill in the Administration office.

The cemetery staff, consisting of two FTE's and two temporary employees, operated the cemetery on a reduced interment schedule for over a seven month period. When Mr. Stogsdill became an FTE on July 1st, and Mr. Stetson Bell on September 19th, that allowed the cemetery to have four FTE's. We normally have 5 FTE's plus a temporary, seasonal employee.

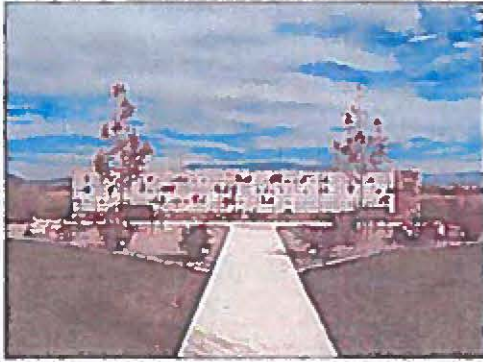
Four Newest Columbaria (Figure 7)

The four newest columbaria, 8, 9, 14 and 15, were built in 2015. Each contained 168 niches, a total of 672. As of June, 2016, Columbarium No. 8 achieved full capacity. Columbarium No. 9 is expected to be full by early October, 2017 (at the current rate of usage), at which time we will begin using Columbarium 14. Space was reserved between Columbarium No.'s 9 and 15, and No.'s 8 and 14, to allow placement of four future columbaria.

The use of Columbarium 9 required utilization of the previous modifications we made for Columbarium 7. Because of the relative proximity of the first seven columbaria to the Committal Shelter, we have allowed the next-of-kin and/or other family members to walk with the urn, accompanied by a cemetery staff member, to the particular niche for personal placement of the urn.

Columbarium 9 is a much greater distance from the Committal Shelter so allowing family members to place the urn there would take much more time and could represent a hardship for a family member who has difficulty walking.

We will, therefore, pick up the urn at the end of the committal service and transport it by jeep, as we have done with urns scheduled for in-ground niches, to Columbarium 9. If, afterwards, the family wishes to visit the columbarium, they can do so. We have also utilized our new golf cart to transport elderly to the columbarium as well.



Columbarium 8



Columbarium 9



Columbarium 14



Columbarium 15

Figure 7

Given the current usage rate, we expect Columbarium 9 to be full by October 2017. We expect to be completely out of Columbaria space by August, 2021.

We will need to seek funding for additional columbaria if we are to continue offering columbarium space beyond October 2021.

Sod

As part of the cemetery expansion project, large sections of the cemetery were sodded. The success we have had with using sod prompted us to continue the practice. The cost is low and the return is substantial, i.e., the much better appearance of the grounds. We are hoping to procure heavy duty matting to mitigate the tearing up of sod on gravesites due to heavy equipment operations while opening and closing in-ground interments. This will cut back on sod replacement in the spring.

Roadway

The asphalt roadway around the cemetery continued to deteriorate and more tripping hazards for those using walkers or crutches appeared. The cemetery expansion project addressed a great many of these concerns by tearing up the asphalt and laying down concrete. The concrete roadways started cracking and the caulking was coming out. The roadway was re-caulked this summer and we have had no issues since.

In-Ground Gravesites

We experienced minimal problems with in-ground gravesites due to heavy snow and freezing during the 2015-2016 winter season. We have utilized donated concrete blankets to place on gravesites prior to the scheduled interment, to start warming the ground. We will also auger holes this year in the In-Ground urn area, Section 6, before the ground freezes. These open plots will be covered and marked with traffic cones.

Stonework

As part of the cemetery expansion project, the stonework on the new columbaria was sealed. Due to limited staff this season, only stonework on columbaria which needed immediate attention were caulked and sealed.

Painting

Once again, primarily due to a lack of manpower, we were unable to refinish and repaint the wrought iron at the Administration Building, Assembly Area, Committal Shelter and along Riverside Parkway.

Silt Trap

Our silt trap needs to be excavated at least once per year, due to the extremely silty ditch water, and lack of the heavy equipment required to remove it. In the past, we have received assistance from FMS #3, contractors on site during the expansion project, and Mesa County Road and Bridge. We are working on a long term solution utilizing DMVA Corps of Engineers to help clean out the silt trap every spring, before irrigation season starts up.

Main Line Irrigation System Breaks

We continued to experience major breaks in the irrigation system water lines this past year. This was due to the age of the system, its heavy usage and, in some cases, faulty installations on the part of the subcontractor DURING THE expansion project. It continues to be a fairly costly spring ritual. Some of the repairs were under warranty from the expansion project. This took most of our energies this season. Due to the late installation of the new pump station, it took until July 1st to actually get the system up and running. This caused stress on trees, shrubs and soil/sod.

FIRE/BURGLAR ALARMS

The west shop had a new fire and burglar alarm system installed as part of the expansion project. However, no video surveillance cameras or associated recorders were installed. Due to minor damage to the outside of a building and two newly installed 500 gallon fuel tanks next to our open driveway, we are hoping to install surveillance cameras in the near future.

BURIAL OPERATIONS SUPPORT SYSTEM (BOSS)

In November, 2015, the VA changed its procedure for accessing the Federal Burial Operations Support System (BOSS) which is used by all national and state veterans cemeteries for interment records-keeping. A PIV card and card reader are now required.

As a result, we experienced significant problems trying to obtain the cards and card readers along with utilizing BOSS. This was largely due to the VA's premature implementation of the new procedure and complicated by the fact that our computer system is part of the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) system. As such, its internal operations, controls and security measures interfered greatly with the new VA protocol.

Numerous attempts to resolve the situation resulted in only a partial and temporary solution. We had to obtain temporary exemptions every seventy-two hours to order markers. Once we received our PIV cards and readers, we were unable to access BOSS due to outdated software. It appears that the best way to address the issue was to have a new, updated, stand-alone computer dedicated solely to BOSS.

On September 16, such a computer was delivered and installed by DMVA OIT. OIT worked with the VA to help us get it up and running.

During this year long process, we experienced a delay in ordering markers. While being audited for compliance by NCA, their team helped to uncover a delay in our receiving upright granite headstones, which was a vendor error. Apparently, the vendor for our type of headstones has been non-compliant in their shipments. Thus, we received our first shipment of thirty headstones in September, from interments which took place in May, June and July. The additional help of the temporary grounds person significantly helped us to handle the setting of markers within the timeframe set forth by the NCA. We adjusted our interment schedule to set aside days to focus solely on headstone setting.

NCA Audit

In the past, Mr. Joe Turnbach, Director of Ft. Logan National Cemetery in Denver, would conduct our triennial review and report his findings. His mission was to inspect this cemetery in accordance with the VA's triennial state veterans cemetery audit program. This year, we were contacted by the NCA Review Team, and were requested to provide documentation related to interment operations, grounds maintenance plans, administrative report and numerous checklists associated with cemetery operations. In preparation for this audit, our FTE grounds-person and our temporary grounds-person went to Ft. Logan National Cemetery for training.

This was made possible by the generosity of the Board of Veterans Affairs and their on-going support. Valuable information was learned which helped us to implement policies and new practices in regards to burial operations. Unfortunately, the temporary employee who had been training for nine months in June, 2016, was unable to pass his background check and his employment.

On September 13 and 14, 2016, we were visited by the NCA Review team and their contractor support staff. They spent full two days in the field and office, observing, documenting, measuring headstones and niche covers for proper placement and interviewing staff. All the requested documentation we provided was reviewed and the preliminary results yielded a compliant score of 85%. We are very proud of the results our team has achieved, given our limited resources. The lowest scores were in gravesite conditions, to include sunken or raised gravesites, and headstone alignment. We would need to add a fourth FTE to our grounds crew to be able to split the crew into two teams, one to focus on landscaping/grounds management and the other to focus on burial operations and headstone placement, to meet the minimum requirements of NCA. We will also need to eventually add an FTE in the office for administrative support as interments increase.

Rainbird Irrigation System

The Rainbird irrigation system computer and associated software were replaced during the previous reporting period. This allowed us to address many, but not all, of the problems associated with the irrigation system.

During this reporting period, we acquired new pumps for the pump station. This new pump station is tied into the newly acquired Rainbird computer system. Due to the delay in approval to purchase pumps and the pumps taking 10 weeks to build, we were not ready to start up the system when the water came on in April. This delay in the initial testing and startup of the pumps, caused stress on the newly planted trees, sod, and plantings which are part of the cemetery expansion project. Some trees and shrubs were replaced and the others are under close watch.

Despite the pumps and related issues, the new pumps are a most welcome replacement for the aging pumps we had. These pumps run more efficiently and distribute water more effectively. We have focused our energies on tightening up our irrigation system, replacing sprinkler heads with more efficient water distribution heads, and tracking down and repairing/replacing aging parts. We have noticed a significant reduction in our water usage this season.

Cemetery Expansion Project Issues (Figure 8)

Actual work began in the first part of November 2014 and the project was substantially completed in October 2015. The ultimate aim was to position the cemetery to serve Colorado veterans to the year 2025.

The cemetery expansion and improvement project's punch list and warranty items extended into this reporting period. We had numerous issues which have been, and still are, being addressed. Some of the issues are:

All roadways had to be re-calked due to cracking and peeling of calking. Man-hole cover rings cracking and crumbling, falling into the sewer lines and causing a back-up.

Solar tubes which were installed on the roof had to be repainted to match the existing roof.

The door on the pump house was not installed properly and had to be re-installed, new framing placed and then painted.

The stonework on the whole south side of Columbarium No. 15 fell off and had to be reinstalled.

The ground surrounding Columbarium No. 14 and No. 15 had large settling issues. Additional soil had to be added, tamped, and replanted with seed, and then additional watering and monitoring took place.

The new Double vault areas, Sections 2D, 3D and 4D, experienced settling in between vaults, up to 8' deep. These areas had to be filled, compacted and replanted with seed and sod several times during the summer as the areas continued to settle and tripping hazards were observed.

This vault area also experienced water line breaks due to survey pins placed through irrigation lines.

Settling in the new Single Vault area, section 2S, also occurred. This area had to have fill soil brought in, compacted and replanted with seed and sod.

We experienced major irrigation breaks throughout the season, some due to construction. This caused our pumps to be turned on and off to accommodate for excavation, time for glue to dry, backfilled and tested. This caused stress on our trees, shrubs and new plantings.

The newly landscaped area had faulty installation of irrigation lines, which also caused stress on plantings. These dead/dying shrubs have been replaced and the irrigation corrected.

The overall capacity of the cemetery has increased by 1,979 gravesites resulting in an overall capacity of 12,799 which should serve the needs of Colorado's veterans for the next ten plus years WITH THE EXCEPTION OF columbaria space. As previously noted, columbarium niches are the most common choice for veterans on the Western Slope. The four new columbaria, funded as part of this project, will provide enough niches to the year 2021. The cemetery really needs to add more columbaria if it is to meet these needs to the year 2025. It is estimated that another four columbaria will be needed to meet this objective.

This project represents the continuing commitment by the State and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to Colorado veterans and their families who have faithfully and honorably served their state and their country.

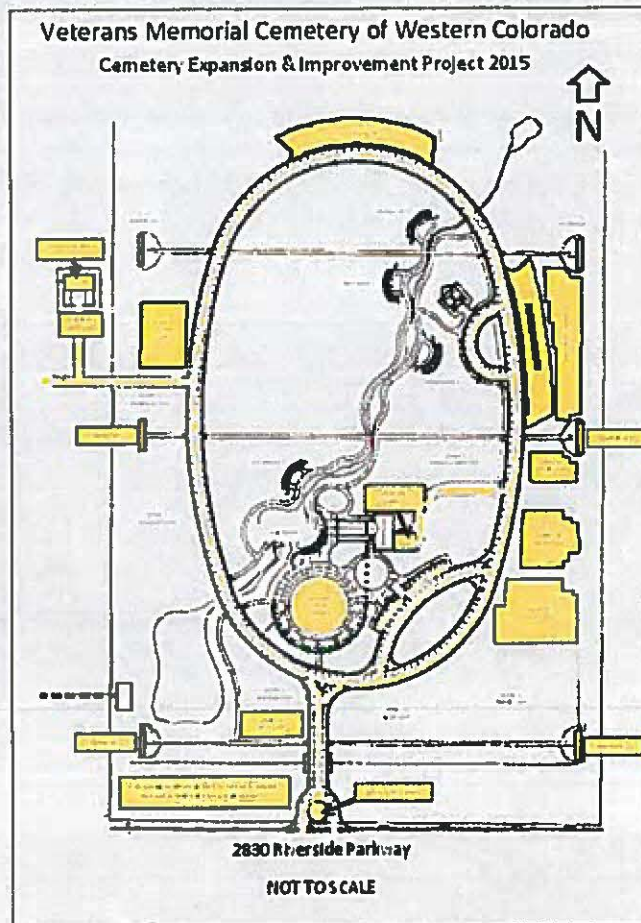


Figure 8

Areas in yellow indicate expansions, additions and improvements, not including landscaping

10. Monuments and Memorial Benches

The Grand Mesa Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution donated a granite bench to the cemetery, in honor of all veterans and all branches of service, including the United States Army National Guard and the United States Air National Guard. This bench is situated on the knoll east of the Committal Shelter.

The Martin-Heald Families donated a granite bench in honor of all veterans who served during the Korean War. This bench is situated on the knoll south-east of the administration building, facing north.

The Martin-Heald Families also donated a granite bench in honor of all veterans who served during all conflicts since 1983. This bench is situated on the knoll south-east of the administration building, facing south.

The Mesa County Chapter of the Robert Leroy Parker Outpost of E Clampus Vitus, donated a 1887 19" diameter bronze bell with a frame. This Veterans Memorial Bell II is mounted at the entrance to the Assembly area.

There is now a United States Army soldier, mounted on top of the cemetery entrance pillar. A small part of the grant from the State of Colorado for the expansion project was set aside, by law, for artwork. Upon entering the cemetery, the life size, bronze soldier is mounted on top of the cemetery entrance sign, saluting and facing in to the cemetery.



All Branches of Service

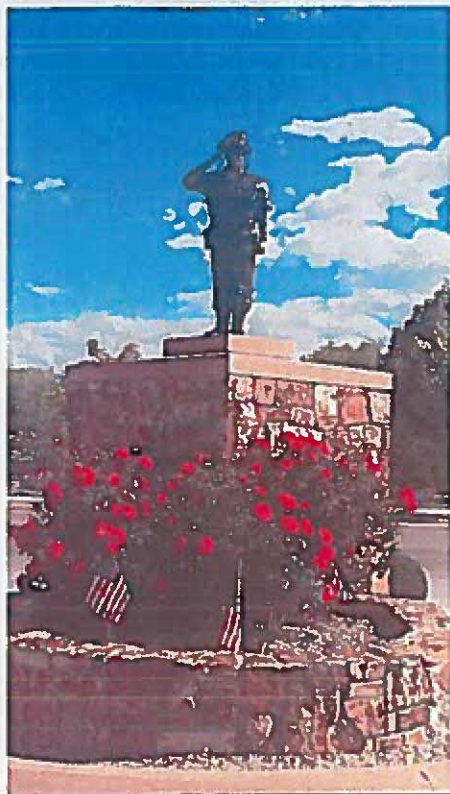
All Conflicts Since 1983



Korean War Memorial Bench



Veterans Memorial Bell II



Saluting Soldier

11. In Closing

The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado continues to be one of the “crown jewels” of the State Veterans Affairs program on the Western Slope. To the veteran’s community and their families, it represents the State of Colorado’s concern for and commitment to its veterans.

In spite of increased reimbursement, over the years, by the VA for veterans’ interments, funding for the cemetery and its operations has become an issue this year with our operating budget continuing to be at the lowest levels since the cemetery opened. Hopefully, new funding sources will be found to maintain the high levels of appearance, operational efficiency and management effectiveness developed over the past 13 years.

The cemetery and its staff continue to enjoy the highest levels of support from the veterans community and this has been a significant contributor to any successes the cemetery has enjoyed.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Iglesias

Director

Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado
Grand Junction, Colorado



COLORADO
Department of
Labor and Employment

Workforce Development Programs
633 17th Street, Suite 201
Denver, CO 80202-3660

September 6, 2016

**Duane Dailey, Chairman,
Colorado Board of Veterans
Department of Military and Veteran Affairs
1333 South Colorado Blvd. Building C, Suite 113
Denver, CO 80222**

Dear Mr. Dailey,

The following information reflects the annual accomplishments of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), Veterans Employment and Training Program. We continue to dedicate ourselves to providing Colorado's Veterans with outstanding employment and training services with the goal of providing Colorado Businesses with qualified and viable Veteran job seekers.

The enclosed report outlines the outreach services provided to veterans utilizing the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) and the state and county operated Workforce Center staff. We also highlighted our success in sponsoring one of the state's largest veteran hiring events, Military and Veteran Employment Expo (MVEE) and the Hilton Honors Military Rewards program, a national initiative in which Colorado was one the first states to take part in. CDLE is committed to providing eligible transitioning service members, veterans, spouses and wounded warrior caregivers with the employment services and training needed to succeed in the 21st Century workforce by meeting labor-market demands with qualified job seekers. Our commitment to serve those who served us is demonstrated in our ability to not only meet but to exceed our federally negotiated performance measures for the past two program years. These performance measures can be found at the end of this report.

We continue to align CDLE Veterans Program to reflect the new guidelines outlined in the U.S. Department of Labor/VETS Veterans Program Letters, particularly VPL 03-14 with changes 1 and 2 which clearly outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist. These 38 individuals are strategically located within county and state operated Workforce Centers that have the highest veteran population.



Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE)

**Program Year (PY) 2015 Report on Service to Veterans
July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016**

**For the Colorado Department of Military and Veteran Affairs
Annual Report to the Governor**

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) delivers the full array of labor and employment services to Colorado veterans throughout the 61 State and County operated Workforce Centers and satellite offices. Through the effective utilization of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) and the Workforce System, Colorado continues to promote the hiring and retention of eligible veterans, spouses and caregivers of wounded warriors. State and County Labor and Employment Specialists provide veterans with employment services that include but are not limited to:

- Resume and cover letter writing
- Interview tips and techniques
- Translating military experience to civilian duties and qualifications
- Identifying education and training grants and opportunities offered within the community
- Navigating online job boards and career fair resources
- Targeting job search by industry
- Providing information of wage rates and employment trends

Workforce Centers also refer eligible and qualified veterans to appropriate Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) training programs as well as referrals to skilled trade apprenticeship programs throughout the state. Colorado Workforce Centers make referrals to various Federal, State, and local agencies in the community that provide supportive services to those in need.

As illustrated in the PY 2015 chart below, 26,454 veterans registered for employment assistance on the Department's job bank, Connecting Colorado. Connecting Colorado is the department's website where job seekers and employers are able to meet each other's employment needs. Employers are able to view resumes, search for qualified candidates, post job openings, and learn of the hiring incentives offered by the state. Veterans can post resumes, conduct job searches, access employment resources using self-directed virtual employment tools or receive in person staff assisted services through their local workforce center.

Of the 26,454 registered veterans, 18,161 or 67% visited their local Workforce Centers to receive staff assisted services. When comparing PY 2014 and PY 2015 charts, there was an overall decrease in the number of veterans seeking employment assistance from the local Workforce



In PY 2015, Connecting Colorado received 566,545 job openings from 15,194 employers. Most of these job openings were a result of CDLE's active participation with Job Central. Job Central is the Internet's first public-service employment website owned and managed by leading U.S. employers through their membership in Direct Employers Association enabling them to outreach through a network of 50 state sites and over 6,200 cities and communities. Participating employers are able to make their jobs available on a national nonprofit, public service employment network and to increase their recruiting outreach throughout the nation.

In addition to the State and County Labor and Employment Specialists who provide outstanding front-line services to all veterans, CDLE employs 29 full-time Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists and nine full-time Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER) staff who are assigned to Workforce local areas around the state. These positions are funded through a U.S. DOL Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) grant.

The primary role of the DVOP specialist is to provide intensive services to "eligible veterans and eligible persons." In order to effectively serve eligible veterans and spouses and efficiently target their services, the DVOP specialist delivers these services utilizing a case management approach. By federal law they limit their services to eligible veterans and eligible persons who meet the definition of an individual with a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE). Veterans categorized as having a SBE are:

- Disabled and Special Disabled Veterans who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs; or who were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;
- Homeless, as defined in Section 103(a) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a));
- A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who at any point in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks;
- An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 101 (27), who has been released from incarceration,
- Lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or
- Low-income (as defined by WIA at Sec. 101(25)(B))
- Veterans between the ages of 18-24 years old;
- Transitioning Service Members who participated in TAP and are in need of intensive services;
- Wounded warriors assigned to a wounded warrior transition unit or the care-giver of a warrior.

Colorado DVOP specialists provided staff assisted services to 1,665 registered veterans. Of the 1,665 veterans who received in person employment services; 1,501 or 90.1% received intensive employment services by the DVOP specialists. These veterans were considered most in need of intensive services in order to obtain viable employment. Delivery of services can be provided by using the case management approach. The following veterans received priority in the provision of intensive services: disabled, special disabled which includes wounded warriors, homeless,



The Military and Veteran Employment Expo (MVEE) is a wonderful example of how the CDLE JVSG staff and external organizations collaborate in bringing the veteran job seeker and employer together to meet the employment needs of both parties through the utilization of hiring events. CDLE, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center (PPWFC), Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), US Department of Defense and Labor and the National Guard supported and hosted this three-day event to help transitioning vets and their spouses better prepare for civilian careers. The event was held in Colorado Springs, May 17-19, it was a new and improved approach to preparing for a career fair. For two days, participants spent time learning about specific industries and working with mentors.

The entire Pikes Peak Workforce Center JVSG staff was responsible for orchestrating two days of industry specific classes held at Pikes Peak Community College (PPCC). The LVER's worked with PPCC to arrange the use of over 30 classrooms to put on the classes. The classes were designed to educate job seekers about opportunities in 12 different industries including Information Technology, Defense Contractors, Law Enforcement and Public Safety, Business and Sales, Healthcare, Energy & Utilities, State & Local Governments, Advanced Manufacturing, Federal Agencies, Skilled Trades & Construction, Transportation and Starting Your Own Business.

The LVER's and DVOP specialists served as Industry class moderators and classroom assistants. In this role, the DVOPs set up the individual classrooms, introduced the employers, guided the discussion, controlled the classroom and made important MVEE program announcements. After the main panel discussion was over, DVOPs guided employers and veteran job seekers to individual breakout classrooms throughout the PPCC campus, where one-on-one discussions took place.

On the third day, where the hiring event took place the LVER's partnered with E2I office representative on Fort Carson and successfully recruited 170 employers who attended the event only after being vetted as having viable open positions. There were also over 600 veteran job seekers who attended the hiring event as well. The survey responses received were amazing. Over 94% of the employers rated the job fair and the preparedness of job candidates as excellent or good, and over 50% of the employers anticipated filling between 1 to 5 vacancies as a result of attending the MVEE. Veteran job seekers reported that over 86% of the companies that attended had jobs of interest to them, and 20% of the job seekers reported they were offered an on-site interview or an interview in the near future.

Another innovative initiative used to support veterans and transitioning service members is the Hilton Honors (HHonors) Military Rewards Program. In partnership with the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) and CDLE, Hilton donates points to eligible veterans and transitioning service members to support their transition to civilian employment. Eligible veterans participating in the HHonors Military Rewards program received a donation of 100,000 Hilton Honors points to support hotel stays related to job search activities. The program launched in Colorado Springs, December 1, 2014. Shortly thereafter, it expanded into Arapahoe County and went statewide the beginning of PY15. During this PY 2015 the program served 34 veterans; 24 veterans used the program for job interviews, 10 veterans used



PY 2015 Performance Targets for Workforce Center Services to Veterans (Source: ETA-9002D):			
	Goal	Actual	Goal Met? (Y/N)
Veterans Entered Employment Rate (VEER)	49%	54.7%	Yes
Veterans Employment Retention Rate (VERR)	75%	81.6%	Yes
Veterans Average Earnings (VAE) (Six Months)	\$14,500	\$19,308	Yes
Disabled Veterans Entered Employment Rate (DVEER)	41%	50.2%	Yes
Disabled Veterans Employment Retention Rate (DVERR)	71%	80.3%	Yes
Disabled Veterans Average Earnings (DVAE)	\$14,500	\$19,950	Yes

PY 2014 Performance Targets for Jobs for Veterans State Grant Funded Services (Source: VETS-200A)			
	Goal	Actual	Goal Met? (Y/N)
Intensive Services Provided to Individuals by DVOP Specialists / Total Veterans and Eligible Persons Served by DVOP Specialists in the State	60%	84%	Yes
Veterans Entered Employment Rate (VEER) Weighted	53%	68%	Yes
Veterans Employment Retention Rate (VERR)	71%	78%	Yes
Veterans Average Earnings (VAE) (Six-Months)	\$14,200	\$19,369	Yes
Disabled Veterans Entered Employment Rate (DVEER)	43%	56%	Yes
Disabled Veterans Employment Retention Rate (DVERR)	68%	76%	Yes
Disabled Veterans Avg. Earnings (DVAE) (Six Months)	\$14,200	\$19,260	Yes

PY 2014 Performance Targets for Workforce Center Services to Veterans (Source: ETA-9002D):			
	Goal	Actual	Goal Met? (Y/N)
Veterans Entered Employment Rate (VEER)	49%	55%	Yes
Veterans Employment Retention Rate (VERR)	75%	78%	Yes
Veterans Average Earnings (VAE) (Six Months)	\$14,500	\$18,462	Yes
Disabled Veterans Entered Employment Rate (DVEER)	41%	52%	Yes
Disabled Veterans Employment Retention Rate (DVERR)	71%	77%	Yes
Disabled Veterans Average Earnings (DVAE)	\$14,500	\$19,235	Yes





COLORADO

Department of Revenue

Division of Motor Vehicles

Physical Address:

1881 Pierce Street
Lakewood, CO 80214

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 173150
Denver, CO 80217-3350

July 1, 2016

Mrs. Dana Niemela, Chairman
Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
1355 S. Colorado Blvd., Building C, Suite 113
Denver, CO 80230

Dear Chairman Niemela,

Pursuant to C.R.S. 28-5-703 below you will find a list of the services that are provided by the State of Colorado, Department of Revenue.

With regard to tax services, we have no programs aimed specifically at veterans. We are aware of several statutes that speak to active members of the U.S. military C.R.S. 39-22-103(8)(b) which allows Colorado military personnel who are out of the country for 305 or more days in a year to classify their military income as non-resident for tax purposes, and C.R.S. 39-22-610 which allows a filing extension for military personnel in a combat zone. The extension, which defers interest and penalty, lasts 180 days after the particular assignment has ended.

Service Members Civil Relief Act and the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act

The Department continues to ensure that service members and their qualifying spouses under the protections of the Service Members Civil Relief Act and the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act continue to receive the services, protections and tax exemptions afforded to them by these Acts.

Deployed Military Motor Vehicle Taxes and Fees

A member of the U.S. Armed Forces is eligible for the exemption of registration fees and pays a \$1.00 specific ownership tax for their vehicles registered in Colorado while the service member is deployed outside the U.S. The service member must (1) show that he/she is serving outside the U.S.; AND (2) files a signed affidavit that the motor vehicle will not be operated on a highway while they are serving outside the U.S. If the service member has credit remaining on his/her motor vehicle at the time they are serving outside the U.S. the Department shall place that amount of credit into a "holding" account for the service member to apply to the payment of specific ownership tax and registration fees on any vehicle owned by the service member upon the return to the U.S. C.R.S. 42-3-107(10)(b) and 42-3-314

Colorado VETS-2-TRUCKS Program

This program is designed for individuals who are currently serving, are close to military discharge, or were discharged within the last 90 days. They must have experience driving heavy military trucks with a safe driving record for at least the last two years. These veterans may qualify for a Colorado Commercial Driver License (CDL) without having to take the commercial driver skills test.

On-Line Vehicle Registration

Forty-five counties allow online renewal of motor vehicle registrations. This will allow service members stationed outside of Colorado to maintain their vehicle registrations. This service may be accessed at <http://www.colorado.gov/revenu/dmv> - Vehicle Registration Renewal.

Military Identifier on Driver License

This program allows eligible applicants to have a military identifier added to their regular or commercial driver's license or identification card for no additional fee. The applicant may choose between Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, National Guard or Navy. The eligible applicant must present either his/her valid military identification card or a DD214. C.R.S. 42-2-114(10) and 42-2-303(5)

U.S. Army License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person upon presenting a DD214 form issued by the U.S. Government, an honorable discharge from the U.S. Army, or sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the applicant is an active, reserve or retired member of the U.S. Army. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(12)

U.S. Army Fourth Infantry Division License Plate

This plate may be issued to a person who supports the U.S. Army Fourth Infantry Division. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(20)

U.S. Army Special Forces License Plate

This plate may be issued to a person who has received an honorable discharge or is an active or reserve member of the U.S. Army Special Forces upon presenting proof of honorable discharge or retirement or proof that the applicant is currently an active or reserve member of the U.S. Army Special Forces. The applicant must submit orders or DD214 form that shows an awarded prefix "3" or suffix "S" or a designation of "5G", 18/180 Series MOS, Special Forces Tab, OSS, or UNPIK-8240. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(18)

Bronze Star Medal License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person who has been awarded the Bronze Star medal. The applicant must present to the Department, a copy of the military order awarding the Bronze Star and a DD214 form issued by the U.S. Government showing that the applicant received the award. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(14)(a)

Bronze Star with the "V" Medal License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person who has been awarded the Bronze Star with the "V" for valor distinction medal. The applicant must present to the Department, a copy of the military order awarding the Bronze Star with the "V" and a DD214 form issued by the U.S. Government showing that the applicant received the award. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(14)(b)

Civil Air Patrol License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person that supports the Civil Air Patrol. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(27)

U.S. Coast Guard License Plate

This plate may be issued to retired, honorably discharged, active, auxiliary, or reserve members of the U.S. Coast Guard upon presenting a DD214 form issued by the U.S. Government or other evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the applicant has an honorable discharge or proof that the applicant is currently an active, auxiliary, or reserve member of the United State Coast Guard. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(16)

Distinguished Flying Cross License Plate

This plate may be issued to a natural person who has been awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross upon presenting a copy of the military order awarding the Distinguished Flying Cross or any other evidence. The first set of plates per applicant is exempt the one-time fee normally associated with specialty license plates and by payment of the required taxes and fees. Subsequent sets of plates per applicant will be issued upon payment of a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(25)

Disabled Veteran License Plate

This plate may be issued to qualified applicants who provide documentation of authorization from either the Veteran's Administration or their branch of military service to support that they are 50% or more, permanently disabled due to a service connected injury. One set of plates may be issued without paying specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon payment of a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-104 and 42-3-213(5)

license plates shall submit a verification or retired status that is issued by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to establish eligibility for retention of the plate. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-218

Navy Seal License Plate

This plate may be issued to a natural person who has received an honorable discharge, is retired, or is an active or reserve member of the United States Navy Seals. To qualify for the plate, an applicant must submit a DD214 form issued by the United States Government and a certification from the UDT/SEAL Association, Inc., the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the UDT/SEAL Association, Inc., or a successor organization. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(26)

North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD) Command Commemorative License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person that desires to commemorate the North American Aerospace Defense Command's 50th anniversary. This plate is limited issue commemorative plate that will only be issued from July 1, 2008 through January 1, 2010, or when available inventory is depleted, whichever is later. Plates issued within this period may continue to use those plates after January 1, 2010 until they become damaged, destroyed, lost, stolen or unreadable. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(19)

Operation Desert Shield/Storm License Plate

This plate may be issued to a natural person that provides a DD214 form issued by the United States Government or other evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the applicant is a veteran of the armed services who served between August 2, 1990, and February 28, 1991. The plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(24)

Pearl Harbor Survivor License Plate

This plate may be issued to qualified applicants who were members of the U.S. Armed Services on December 7th, 1941 and were stationed and present at Pearl Harbor located on the island of Oahu, during the hours of 7:55 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. (Hawaii Time) or offshore at a distance not to exceed three miles from the island. Additionally this individual must have received an honorable discharge from the U.S. Armed Services and hold a current membership in a national organization of survivors on the attack on Pearl Harbor. Applicants may obtain one set without paying the specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-104 and 42-3-213(6)

Purple Heart License Plate

This plate may be issued to qualified applicants who have been awarded a Purple Heart medal for wounds received in combat at the hands of an enemy of the United States. An applicant must present a copy of the military order awarding the Purple Heart medal or other sufficient evidence that indicates that the applicant received the Purple Heart medal. These individual may obtain one set of plates without paying specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon payment of a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-104 and 42-3-213(2)

U.S. Marine Corps License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant that provides proof that he/she has received an honorable discharge, is retired or is an active or reserve member of the U.S. Marine Corps. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(8)

U.S. Navy License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant that provides proof that he/she has been honorably discharged, is retired or is an active or reserve member of the U.S. Navy. The applicant must submit the DD214 or other evidence to demonstrate that they are a qualified applicant. The plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees. C.R.S. 42-3-213(13)

Veteran of Afghanistan War License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant that provides proof that he/she was a member of the U.S. Armed Services between October 7, 2001 and the end of the Afghanistan conflict. The applicant



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

6060 Broadway
Denver, CO 80216
P (303)291-7377

November 30, 2016

Colorado Board of Veterans
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Duane Dailey, Chairman
1355 South Colorado Blvd. Building C, Suite 113
Denver, CO 80230

Dear Mr. Dailey:

Per your annual request, under State Statute and Wildlife Commission regulation, the Division of Parks and Wildlife offers, the following types of licenses and services to our states' veterans or active military:

C.R.S 33-12-106 - (1) Any resident who displays on the resident's vehicle a Colorado disabled veteran's license plate pursuant to [section 42-3-304 \(3\) \(a\)](#), C.R.S., shall be allowed free entrance to any state park or recreation area, not to include campgrounds, on any day of the year such park or area is open. For the purpose of this section, display of such license plates shall entitle the disabled veteran and passengers in such veteran's vehicle to enter such park or recreation area free of charge.

C.R.S 33-12-106 - (2.3) The commission may promulgate rules to allow free entrance to any state park or recreation area, not to include campgrounds, yurts, or other amenities and services offered, for veterans on one day each year. The commission may determine by rule which day veterans are allowed free entrance to state parks and recreation areas.

Commission Regulations – CCR 445 -#700-2(j) Any vehicle occupied by a current, reserve or honorably discharged member of any United States military service, on the State observance of Veteran's Day. At least one form of past or present military identification shall be presented at the Park entrance. Acceptable forms of military identification include:

- DD214;
- Active, retired or veteran military cards;
- The display of military license plates.

C.R.S. 33-12-106 (2.4) (a) The commission shall promulgate a rule to allow veterans, including active duty personnel, free entrance to any state park or recreation area, not to include campgrounds, yurts, or other amenities and services, for the month of August each year. The commission may promulgate a rule setting evidence standards to show a person is a veteran and issue a sticker or other device that identifies a person as a veteran for future entrance. The commission may also charge a fee for issuing the sticker or other device that identifies a person as a veteran, but the fee must be based on the direct and indirect cost of issuing the sticker or other device.

In addition to those very specific programs, Veterans may also qualify for:



C.R.S 33-12-103.5 (1) - Columbine annual pass - As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires, a person is "disabled" if the person has been determined to be totally and permanently disabled by the social security administration, the division of worker's compensation or pursuant to rule or regulation of the division.

The current fee for the Columbine annual pass is \$14.00 and also provides entry into any of our 42 State Parks. Again, this pass does not provide for further discounts such as camping or cabin/yurt rentals. Disabled Veteran's are encouraged to apply for a Columbine Pass even if they have the Disabled license plate. The applicant must be a Colorado resident and complete an application at either our Denver office or one of our Regional Offices. If the applicant is on VA disability, they may contact the Veteran's Administration to request a letter of documentation as to their disability. In return, The Veteran's Administration can provide a form letter which will fulfill the required documentation.

Veterans 64 years of age or older who are Colorado residents may also qualify for the Aspen Leaf (Senior Citizen) Annual Pass at a cost of \$60 per year.

C.R.S 33-4-104 - (1) Any active or retired member of the United States armed forces while stationed as a resident patient at any United States armed forces hospital or convalescent station located within Colorado, any resident patient at a veterans administration hospital ...may obtain a fishing license free of charge, valid for taking fish during the period of residency only, under rules and regulations of the commission.

(2) Any Colorado resident on active duty outside this state with any branch of the armed forces of the United States may obtain, from the division of wildlife, a fishing license free of charge, valid for taking fish while such person is in this state on temporary leave from such duty, but not to exceed a total of thirty days during any year. **(3) (a)** Any resident of this state who has received a purple heart for service in the United States armed forces or who is a disabled veteran may obtain from the division of wildlife, free of charge, a lifetime resident combination small game hunting and fishing license.

Commission Regulation #206(B)(4)(f) Wounded Warrior Hunting Licenses - The Director may make certain deer, elk, and pronghorn licenses available to qualified participants in any United States Armed Services wounded Warrior programs.

1. Applicants must be members of the United States Armed Forces, who are residents of, or stationed in, Colorado returning from post-September 11, 2001 overseas contingency operations who have been so severely injured during combat, including combat-related support activities that they will require years of intense, ongoing care or assistance. Additionally, applicants must be members of a United States Armed Services Wounded Warrior program, as defined in 33-4-102(1.9) C.R.S., and must be assigned to a military medical treatment facility at the time of application for this program.

Commission Regulation - #206(B)(4)(h)(1) (bb) In addition to the \$3 application fee, an unsuccessful applicant (except youth as defined by 33-4-117 C.R.S., lifetime license holders and Colorado resident military personnel on active duty outside Colorado), or one who applies using a first choice hunt code established for the purpose of accumulating a preference point only, for deer, elk, pronghorn or bear will be assessed a \$25 fee to receive a preference point unless they have purchased one of the following: an annual license (fishing, small game or resident combination small game/fishing license, furbearer) for the year previous to which they are seeking a preference point; any big game license for the previous year or a current draw license for the species for which they are seeking a preference point. The \$25 fee, per species, shall entitle the hunter to preference points for any unsuccessful deer, elk, pronghorn or bear application in that year.

Commission Regulation-#206(B)(4)(h)(1)(ee) In lieu of applying through the regular limited license draw, any active duty member of the United States Armed Forces who is stationed at any military facility in Colorado and actively deployed outside the United States, or any active duty member of the United States Armed Forces who is a Colorado resident and is deployed outside the United States, shall, upon their return to the United States, be eligible to apply for preference points for any limited license draw that occurred during their absence. Applications for preference points shall be made on forms provided by the Division and filed within six months upon the member's return to the United States.

Commission Regulation- #206(B) (6) (d) Any active duty member of the United States Armed Forces stationed at any military facility in Colorado and actively deployed outside the United States, or any active duty member of the United States Armed Forces who is a Colorado resident and is deployed outside the United States, shall be allowed a preference for the purchase of leftover licenses prior to their sale to the general public.

As of November 30, 2016 the Division has issued license year-to-date 721 free combination small game and fishing licenses to veterans with disabilities; we have received one request for military leftover license privileges and 4 requests for military applications for preference points and have issued 13 Wounded Warrior big game licenses.

We look forward to continuing to serve those who have sacrificed so much. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Bob D. Broscheid
Director, Colorado Division of Park and Wildlife

Cc: Bob Randall - Executive Director, Department of Natural Resources
Gary Thorson - Assistant Director, I & E Branch, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Cory Chick - Manager, License Administration, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
File