

The Town of Crestone is very happy to announce that the Crestone Cemetery is the first in the State of Colorado to receive Natural Burial Ground certification from the Green Burial Council.

Green burial serves those who wish to have their untreated bodily remains or ashes buried to biodegrade in a natural area free of chemical or synthetic materials. It spares the Earth harmful chemicals from embalming and metal or treated hardwoods used in most coffins. Green burial also encourages greater involvement of survivors who may choose to prepare, transport and bury their loved ones. The age-old process of placing a body directly into the ground during a simple funeral ceremony is less expensive and far more meaningful than its contemporary counterpart.

Green burial rules dictate that bodies must remain unembalmed or only temporarily embalmed with approved natural products. Only biodegradable caskets and shrouds made of natural fibers can be used and grave markers, if utilized, must be low-profile and consist of natural stone.

In late 2007, then a Town Board Trustee, Kairina Danforth presented the idea of green burials to the Town Board of Trustees. Development of green burial grounds was wholeheartedly endorsed by the Trustees, and work began towards meeting Green Burial Council criteria standards. "Natural burial is our heritage as children of the earth, like a leaf falling from the tree", said Danforth, now the Town's current Mayor. "Crestone, revered by many over eons of time as sacred, transitional ground, now honors that tradition by becoming the first certified green burial cemetery in the State of Colorado."

The Green Burial Council was founded to provide a standard for the Green Burial movement - a standard rooted in transparency, accountability and ecological responsibility. To receive certification, a Cemetery must promote Green Burial practices, provide encouragement to the public to make environmentally responsible choices, and make Green Burial options accessible. The Crestone Cemetery and Natural Burial Ground is committed to these principles.

"The Green Burial Council is pleased that Colorado finally has a natural burial ground", said GBC founder, Joe Sehee. "It's a beautiful facility that we now know will always help to further legitimate environmental aims."

At 8,000 feet, beneath the towering Sangre de Cristo Mountain Range, the Town of Crestone is a forested, hillside haven in the San Luis Valley. In a magnificent setting, the Crestone Natural Burial Ground offers a unique return both to tradition and simplicity for our final passage.

For additional information or for directions to visit the Crestone Natural Burial Ground, contact the Crestone Town Hall 719-256-4313 or [crestone@fairpoint.net](mailto:crestone@fairpoint.net).