

Considering natural burial?

Join a conversation with the earth



“I’ve tried to walk lightly on the land my whole life. I’ve volunteered my time to help restore habitat for local wildlife. I’ve donated money to organizations that work to conserve wilderness. But I want to give one last gift to preserve the landscapes I’ve loved.”

You might, of course, leave a gift of money in your will – but think a little wider, a little deeper. What if you gave the gift of your body itself?

- What if you allowed your body to return to the earth in humanity’s oldest rituals while protecting conserved land in perpetuity?
- What if, instead of adding chemicals to the soil or burning fossil fuels for cremation, only your own biodegradable elements returned naturally to the soil?
- And what if your choice of final resting place also gave your family and friends the gift of a place where trees and wildflowers replace regimented marble headstones, where birdsong replaces the sound of lawnmowers?

Maybe it makes you smile to imagine friends or grandkids remembering you as they explore nature’s beauties, perhaps gathering for a family picnic or taking a solitary walk... Long after your passing, you’ve left them free to enjoy places that are dedicated to preserving and restoring prairie, meadows, piney forests and palmetto woodlands.

This is the essence of conservation burial. It’s about making a choice that lasts long past your lifetime.





“Our hearts were already given to the wilder places. Natural burial just gives the rest of us.”

a conservation burial family member



What makes conservation burial different

Any burial that forgoes embalming, a concrete vault or grave liner, and a conventional casket designed to be long-lasting, can be considered “a natural burial.” Burial in a dedicated conservation cemetery goes further, bringing humans back into the natural world’s embrace.

The land is managed with defined conservation goals, often to preserve or restore rare or threatened habitats. The cemetery operates on protected land affiliated with a land trust or other conservation organization. And the number of burials or interment space for cremations is limited, to touch the land lightly and minimize our human effect on nature’s balance.

Choosing burial in a conservation cemetery can also offer those you’ve left behind a more meaningful opportunity for honoring your life as they honor your memory in a deeply personal way.

Opening the conversation about natural burial

Some conversations are easier to begin than others, but few are more important to have with the people entrusted with honoring your final wishes. Make time to let your loved ones know you desire a simpler last chapter, in harmony with nature. You might begin by sharing your desire to leave a legacy of environmental care in line with your actions while you lived. Perhaps share information about natural burial practices, so they can convey your intentions to those who care for your body after death.

Best of all, see if you can arrange a walk through the burial preserve you’ve selected accompanied by the cemetery stewards. They can answer questions or concerns – yours or your loved ones’ – knowledgeably and with empathy.

I’m ready to learn more...

Visit the website of the Conservation Burial Alliance for a wealth of information and resources! The CBA is a collaborative of conservation burial grounds and invested allies that fosters the conservation and sustainable management of land with natural burial for the benefit of people and the planet.



To learn more about conservation burial and how to locate and engage with a natural burial cemetery in your area, visit ConservationBurialAlliance.org, or email us at info@ConservationBurialAlliance.org.