

**Green Burial Council**  
**Cemetery Certification Standards**

*Revised and adopted December 18, 2019*

	Standard	Hybrid Cemetery	Natural Burial Grounds	Conservation Burial Grounds
1.	Accurately represent earned level of GBC certification in marketing materials, websites, and conversations with the public, clients, and the media.	✓	✓	✓
2.	Provide clients and families with the opportunity to participate in the burial and ritual process, in keeping with state law and with these standards.	✓	✓	✓
3.	Accept for burial only decedents that have not been embalmed or those embalmed only with GBC-approved, nontoxic chemicals.	✓	✓	✓
4.	Prohibit the use of a vault (partial, inverted, or otherwise), a vault lid, concrete box, slab or partitioned liner in the burial plot.	✓	✓	✓
5.	All burial containers, shrouds, and other associated products made only of natural, biodegradable materials.	✓	✓	✓
6.	Develop a <i>Maintenance and Operations Manual</i> to be utilized by all staff members, contractors, and volunteers to implement site goals, policies, and best practices.	✓	✓	✓
7.	Establish an endowment fund to ensure the long-term maintenance of the site by setting aside at least 10% of all burial plot sales.	✓	✓	✓
8.	Conduct an <i>Ecological Impact Assessment</i> , starting with a property baseline document that includes existing ecological conditions and sensitive area analysis. Update periodically to assess future property/habitat conditions and plant inventory.		✓	✓
9.	Restrict access and burial operations within sensitive areas as identified in the <i>Ecological Impact Assessment</i> .		✓	✓
10.	Use operational and burial practices that have no long-term degradation of soil health, plant diversity, water quality, and ecological habitat.		✓	✓
11.	Limit the type and size of memorial markers so that they do not impair the ecological conditions and aesthetic of the natural cemetery landscape.		✓	✓

12.	Site conditions as identified in the <i>Ecological Impact Assessment</i> and sensitive areas analysis, will restrict burial density on the property; therefore, Natural and Conservation burial grounds will have limits to allowable burial density. For Natural Burial, the cemetery's average density shall not exceed 500 burials/acre. For Conservation Burial, average density shall not exceed 300 burials/acre. Burial density of sensitive areas may be transferred to less restricted areas on the property to maximum densities of Natural Burial - 600/acre, Conservation Burial - 400/acre.		✓	✓
13.	Establish and apply strategies that conserve, preserve, enhance, or restore the historic native or natural habitat and flora of the region.			✓
14.	Conserve or restore a minimum of 20 acres, or 5 acres if contiguous to other protected land.*			✓
15.	Operate in conjunction with a government agency or a nonprofit conservation organization that has legally binding responsibility for perpetual monitoring and enforcement of the easement.			✓
16.	Guarantee preservation of the burial ground by deed restriction, conservation easement or other legally binding and irrevocable agreement that runs with the land and is enforceable in perpetuity.			✓

*\*All existing certified burial grounds not meeting these changed standards shall be grandfathered and allowed to maintain their current GBC classification.*