



MN State Veterans Cemetery – Northwestern MN

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Historical Overview

- 2008
 - Duluth State Veterans Cemetery (SVC) (NE MN) pre-application submitted to the Federal Veterans Cemetery Grant Program (VCGP)
 - 2008 MN Legislature directed MDVA to come back in 2009 and present information regarding SVCs in Southern MN
- 2009
 - MN Session Law Authorized MDVA to develop projects to build new SVCs in NE & SW MN; appropriated \$1.5M for design/property acquisition
 - SW MN project submitted to VCGP to be included on National Cemetery Administration's (NCA) Priority List
- 2010
 - Commitment of land from Fillmore County for a Preston SVC (SE MN); Preston SVC project pre-application submitted to the VCGP
- 2011
 - MN Session Law amended to include development of the Preston SVC in SE MN
- 2012
 - Preston SVC (SE MN) offered a grant opportunity from the VCGP and began design and development
- 2015
 - Duluth SVC (NE MN) offered a grant opportunity from the VCGP and began design and development
 - Preston SVC (SE MN) opened November 2015
- 2018
 - Duluth SVC (NE MN) opened November 2018
- 2020
 - Redwood Falls SVC (SW MN) offered a grant opportunity from the VCGP and began design and development
- 2021
 - The 2021 Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$4.5M to assist with the development and equipment costs for establishing the Redwood Falls SVC (SW MN)
- 2023
 - Redwood Falls SVC (SW MN) opened August 2023

MDVA's Request

- Legislative authority to:
 - Allow MDVA to submit a pre-application for a grant to fund construction to the VA's National Cemetery Administration (NCA)
 - Begin site search activities
- We are not seeking funding
 - Future funding requests will allow MDVA to submit a formal application for federal Veterans Cemetery Grant Program (VCGP) funding

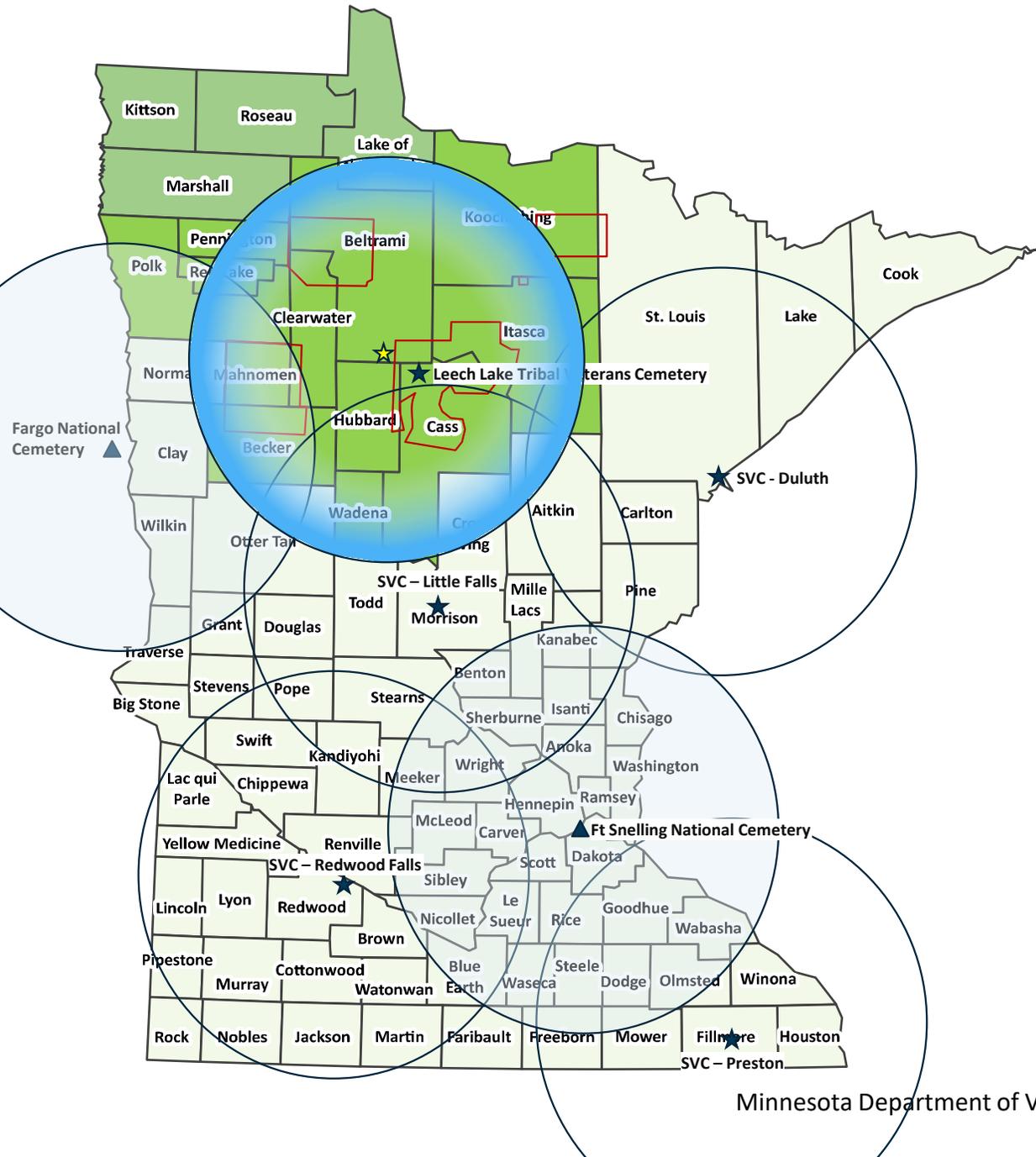
Proposed New SVC Location

Current Status:

- National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Strategic Goal: Provide 95% of Veterans with a burial option within 75 miles of their home
- NCA operates one National Cemetery (Ft Snelling) in Minnesota and some areas of western Minnesota are also served by the National Cemetery located in Fargo, North Dakota
- State of Minnesota currently operates four State Veterans Cemeteries (SVC) in Duluth, Little Falls, Preston, and Redwood Falls
- The NCA confirmed during the Fall 2021 National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs conference that there is a targeted gap in northwestern Minnesota within the network of national and state veterans cemeteries

Proposal:

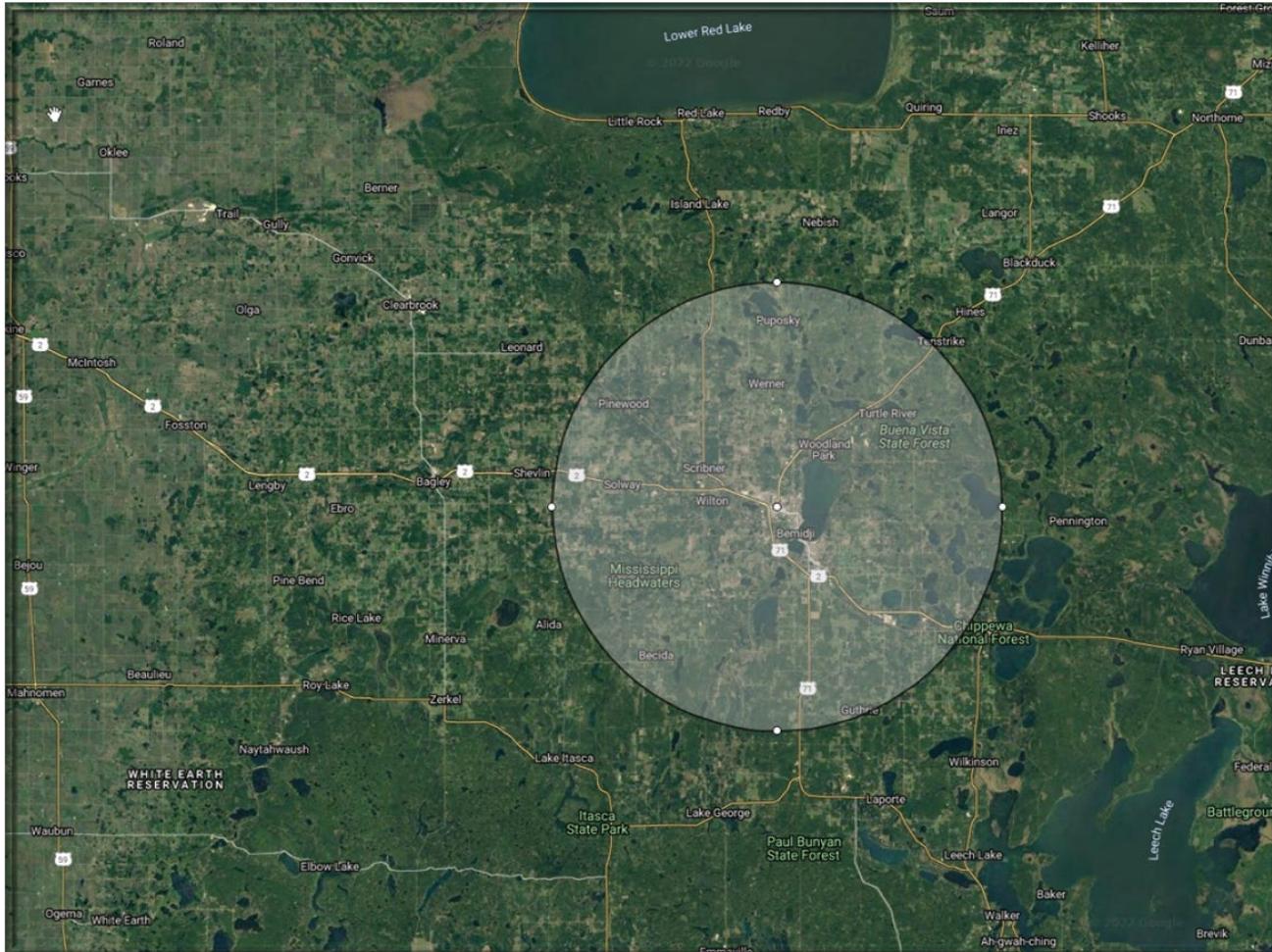
- Issue: Unserved area in northwestern Minnesota, with over 10,000 “underserved” Veterans, per NCA Strategic Goal standards
- Criteria: sufficient acreage, representative of the geographical region, and easy access for the served population
- Tribal Nation Impact: Leech Lake Tribal government operates a small Tribal Veterans Cemetery in Cass Lake. The Red Lake Nation, the White Earth Nation, and the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa are also within the catchment area





Questions?

Potential Locations

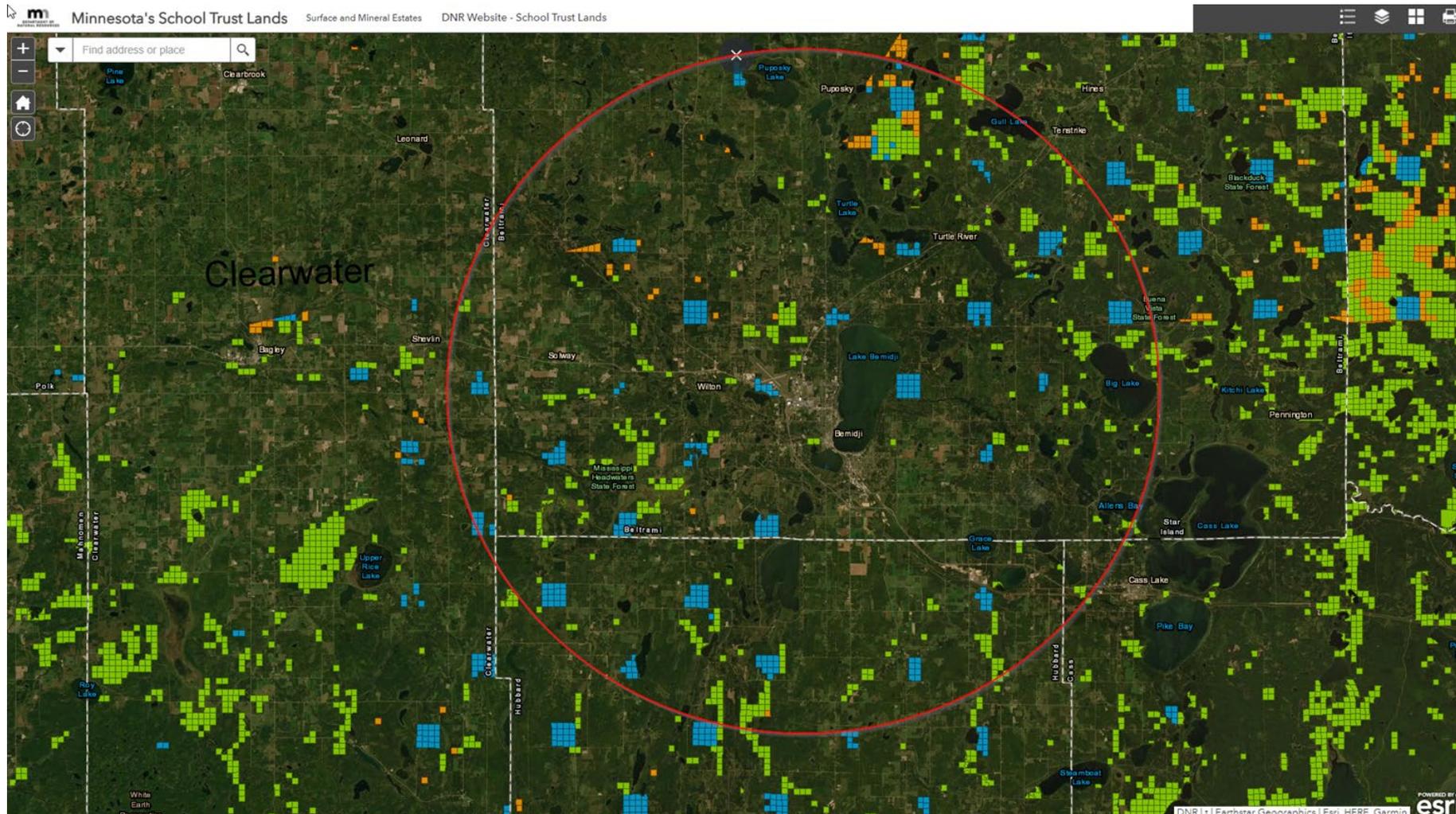


- This map shows a 15 mile radius from downtown Bemidji and the preferred area in which a State Veterans Cemetery would be located

Ideal sites would:

- Be city, county or state-owned lands to reduce land acquisition costs. There are several state-owned land options
- Represent the region it serves:
 - Wooded lot
 - Incorporate water features if possible
- Near Bemidji (within 15 mi) for workforce pool
- Direct access to a state or county highway
- 60-120 acres
- Direct access or close access to public utilities
- Provide tranquil setting (i.e. avoiding heavily trafficked areas and airports)

Potential Locations



- This map shows all the different State School Trust Lands currently managed by the DNR
- MDVA would seek a similar arrangement to the establishment of the Duluth SVC, where State School Trust Land was provided
- Note: each square is roughly equivalent to 40 acres. Ideally looking for 80-120 acres