



## **HISTORY OF THE EL DORADO COUNTY VETERANS MONUMENT**

THE EL DORADO COUNTY VETERANS MONUMENT WAS FIRST ENVISIONED BY FORMER UNITED STATES MARINE, RICHARD W. BUCHANAN, DURING THE VIETNAM WAR, WHERE HE WAS AWARDED THE NAVY CROSS FOR UPHOLDING THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICES. ON MAY 24, 1968, AS 3RD BATTALION, 27TH MARINES MOVED AGAINST WELL-ENTRENCHED ENEMY FORCES DURING THE BATTLE OF LE BAC (1), BUCHANAN WITNESSED NUMEROUS EXAMPLES OF THE AMERICAN FIGHTING SPIRIT AND SELFLESS DEVOTION TO DUTY BY HIS FELLOW MARINES AND CORPSMEN. HE VOWED THAT THEIR DEDICATION, AND THE DEDICATION AND SACRIFICES OF OTHER MEN AND WOMEN OF OUR ARMED FORCES, WOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN.

**DEDICATED NOVEMBER 11, 2006**





## **El Dorado County Veterans Monument Criteria For Military Honoraria Options and Recommendations**

On July 27, 2021, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors heard an appeal regarding the placement of a bronze plaque on the Veterans Monument Honor Wall for Captain Paul Jacobs. At that time, the Board directed HHSA to facilitate a process for veteran stakeholders to work through revisions to the appeal process as listed in the El Dorado County Veterans Monument Criteria for Military Honoraria and Civilian Recognition.

# Stakeholder Engagement

- July 6, 2022: HHSA facilitated a Public Meeting to gather input from veteran stakeholder groups and members of the public which resulted in the recommendation of establishing an ad hoc committee.
- August 11, 2022: The Veterans Affairs Commission (VAC) motioned and approved to create an ad-hoc subcommittee. The subcommittee was formed with 3 members (1 from the VAC, 1 from the Veterans Alliance and 1 from the community), with allowance of up to 5 members.
- October 2022-March 2023: HHSA scheduled four meetings for the ad hoc committee. The committee was unable to come to consensus and was ultimately disbanded after the third meeting.
- April 13, 2023; January 11, 2024; February 8, 2024; and March 14, 2024: HHSA presented draft proposals of changes to the existing Criteria based on feedback received, to the VAC at their regular scheduled meetings for their review, feedback and approval.

# Stakeholder Engagement

- June 12, 2024: HHSA facilitated a second Public Meeting in June 2024 to receive additional input from veteran stakeholders and members of the public on proposed updates to the Monument Criteria.
- June 2024-December 2024: Upon request from stakeholder groups, HHSA Veteran Service Officer, Program Manager and Assistant Director, met individually or in small groups with several veterans to gather additional feedback and input.

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graph TD; A[HHS returned to the Board of Supervisors on January 14, 2025, with proposed updates to the Monument Criteria based on stakeholder feedback, and was directed to return to the Board within 90 days to allow staff time to further engage with stakeholders to include the Veterans Affairs Commission to develop language that encompasses recommendations for options that the Board may consider.] --> B[HHS facilitated a Public Meeting on January 30, 2025, to further receive input from veteran stakeholders and members of the public.]; B --> C[An online Public Survey was created and available from January 20, 2025 through February 5, 2025, to allow for anonymous input.]; C --> D[HHS staff attended the March 13, 2025, March 26, 2025, and April 10, 2025, Veteran Affairs Commission meetings to request feedback and develop a VAC approved recommendation to present to County Supervisors.];
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Based on continued engagement with stakeholders over a three-year period, HHSA has identified 4 areas within the existing Criteria where differing opinions exist among the veteran community:



Residency status for inclusion in the Monument



Types of Military Honoraria



Definition of Hero as it pertains to eligibility criteria for Plaques



Appeal Process for Application

## Residency Status for Inclusion at the Monument

Disagreement has focused on who should be eligible to have honoraria placed at the Monument. Concerns have been expressed regarding space limitation should any Veteran in the United States be eligible to apply to have a memorial placed at the Monument.

### Residency Options Presented

VAC  
Recommendation

Be a resident or former  
resident of El Dorado  
County

Be a resident or former  
resident of El Dorado County  
or be a veteran who was a  
friend or family member of a  
current or former El Dorado  
County resident

Be a qualifying veteran  
of the United states

## Types of Military Honoraria

Disagreement has focused on what types of honoraria should be placed at the Monument. Concerns have been expressed regarding the added use of stones that are not listed in the current Criteria. Requests have been made to limit honoraria to bricks, benches and plaques.

### Military Honoraria Presented

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graph TD; A[Military Honoraria Presented] --> B[Several types of honoraria are utilized at the Veterans Monument, including bricks, benches, and plaques ("honoraria")]; A --> C[Several types of honoraria are utilized at the Veterans Monument, including bricks, stones, benches and plaques ("honoraria")];
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VAC

Recommendation

Several types of honoraria are utilized at the Veterans Monument, including bricks, benches, and plaques ("honoraria")

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## **Definition of Hero as it Pertains to Eligibility Criteria for Plaques**

Disagreement has focused on what defines a Hero, a recipient of the Medal of Honor or a Military Service Cross, or a recipient of a Medal of Valor which could include the Medal of Honor, Military Service Cross, or Silver Star Medal. The concern revolves around inadequate space for inclusion of Silver Star recipients on the Honor Wall.

Disagreement has also focused on whether discretionary authority should be included in the criteria. The Monument is a County Memorial, not a Federal Memorial, therefore there is not a requirement to follow federally established definitions for acts of heroism.



# Definition of Hero Presented

VAC  
Recommendation

A veteran hero is defined as the recipient of the Medal of Honor, or a Military Service Cross (including Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross). (Recipients of these medals are defined per U.S. Department of Defense Manual (DoDM) 1348, Vol. 1, Sec. 3.1, and Vol. 3, Sec. 3.1.)

A veteran hero is defined as the recipient of a Medal of Valor, which could include the Medal of Honor, Military Service Cross (including Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross), or Silver Star Medal. (Recipients of these medals are defined per U.S. Department of Defense Manual (DoDM) 1348, Vol. 1, Sec. 3.1, and Vol. 3, Sec. 3.1 & 3.3.)

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The action must take place under one of three circumstances:

While engaged in action against an enemy of the United States;

While engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or,

While serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

**AND** the act to be commended must have been performed in the presence of great danger or at great personal risk and must be performed in such a manner as to render the individual highly conspicuous among others of equal grade, rate, experience, or position of responsibility.

## Appeal Process for Application

Disagreement has focused on who should review appeals to objections of an application approved for honoraria placement by the Veteran Service Officer. And whether all applications, or only applications for Benches or Memorial Plaques should be objectionable.

- The VSO's Decision shall be final. Notice of the Decision shall be made to the applicant and the Veteran Organizations.
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- Notice of the Decision shall be made to the applicant and the Veteran Organizations. The VSO's Decision may be appealed no later than 15 business days after the date of the Decision to the Board of Supervisors ("Appeal") by submitting a request to the VSO, who will place the appeal on the Board's agenda.
  - Prior to the Board's consideration of the Appeal, the VSO will place the Appeal on the agenda of the Veteran Affairs Commission (VAC). The VAC will review the Appeal and make a recommendation to the Board.

VAC Recommendation



A close-up, low-angle shot of several American flags waving in the wind. The flags are illuminated by the warm, golden light of a setting or rising sun, creating a bokeh effect in the background. The stars and stripes of the flags are clearly visible, with the red stripes appearing vibrant and the blue field with white stars being prominent.

# Questions & Comments