



Live Green. Die Green.

Welcome to Spirit Sanctuary. For those who honor the beauty and abundance of nature during life, there is now a way to have the choices surrounding death be aligned with those same values. Spirit Sanctuary is a private burial ground in Essex, New York, where the deceased will naturally become a part of the earth and nourish a forever-regenerating forest. It is, and forever will be, a place of protected habitat for native plants, birds, and other animals. Visitors to Spirit Sanctuary will experience life in its many forms and be comforted by the great circle of existence.

This land is owned by the Eddy Foundation land trust 501©(3) and as such is protected by the dissolution clause. We believe that investing in local conservation and education will additionally create a strong community around this wild place, to forever value and hold this land sacred.

Selecting this end of life 'green' option can also benefit the conservation organizations you care about. Spirit Sanctuary offers a greatly discounted burial price for those who have remembered a conservation organization in their end of life financial planning. Your family benefits by spending less on burial, your conservation partners benefit by having funds go to their mission, and the Earth benefits by turning bodies into forever-protected new life.

## **GREEN BURIAL**

Green Burial means doing as little as possible to interfere with the natural process of decomposition that takes place when a body is buried in healthy soil. This means that the body is not embalmed. Rather, it is placed in a biodegradable container or shroud made of natural material and buried directly in the earth without a vault or grave liner at a depth of 3 to 3.5 feet. Green burial has a minimal impact on the environment, allowing the body to return nutrients to the ecosystem in which the body is buried.

## **ENROLLMENT**

The best way is to plan ahead and complete our enrollment procedures, which allows you to become a member of Spirit Sanctuary and have access to burial. There are two options for enrollment prior to death:

Individuals can choose to enroll as a *Wildway Champion*, for the burial rate of \$1,200. This means you have included a conservation, non-profit bequest in your estate planning or will. In order to receive this burial rate, your responsible to provide a bequest donation, and receive confirmation from the conservation organization receiving your bequest. If the conservation organization is not on Spirit Sanctuary's list of partner non-profits (listed on the site and in FAQ document), you'll need to contact Spirit Sanctuary to get approval for this bequest donation, prior to enrollment for burial. If you wish to enroll at Spirit Sanctuary, please complete the included enrollment application.

Spirit Sanctuary Entrance: 304 Cook Road, Essex, NY 12936

Office Mailing Address: PO Box 42, Essex, NY 12936

Tel: 518.278.7502 Email: [spiritsanctuaryburial@gmail.com](mailto:spiritsanctuaryburial@gmail.com) Web: [www.spiritsanctuaryny.org](http://www.spiritsanctuaryny.org)



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If you or a loved one was not enrolled prior to death or has not included a bequest to a conservation organization, the *Wildway Friend* option is available. To enroll as a *Wildway Friend*, there is a sliding scale rate of \$2,400-\$4,000. Anything in excess of our operational budget will allow us to see to it that the ecological integrity of the land is kept in perpetuity and further our educational and land conservation efforts. As a private burial ground, our mission is to provide people with a burial that honors their wish to “live green, die green.” The financial gifts of people who choose to be buried at Spirit Sanctuary is a reflection of this philosophy. Nobody will be turned away due to lack of funds.

Once you have enrolled, you will be put in touch with our Coordinator, who will arrange an orientation with you. In this orientation, you’ll review procedures and options for burial at Spirit Sanctuary, and a written summary of your orientation will be provided and kept as part of our records of your preferences. We accept enrollment from anyone; however, we please ask that you consider the carbon footprint of transportation from place of death to Spirit Sanctuary. Keep these Spirit Sanctuary documents with your other advance planning documents.

As a consumer everyone has the right to change their mind about where they want to be buried. Please notify our office if you need to make this change. In the event plans change, all but \$450 processing fee will be refunded. Please note that all burials at Spirit Sanctuary are considered a final mode of disposition. This means we will not disinter a body without a court order.

### **CREMATION**

We strongly discourage cremation. If the cremation has already taken place, cremated remains can be interred at Spirit Sanctuary if a surviving loved one enrolls at either member option, which provides a space for the cremated remains to be scattered. Spirit Sanctuary uses a pH-adjusting soil mix to amend cremated remains, and donations are requested to cover the cost of the soil mix. If a person previously enrolled in Spirit Sanctuary needs to be cremated for some reason, then they may also inter their ashes under this policy.

### **BURIAL INFORMATION**

Spirit Sanctuary is open for burial year-round. We ask that you notify Spirit Sanctuary as soon as possible when death is imminent by calling the Spirit Sanctuary office or current coordinator. This allows us to prepare for the burial as it generally takes about 48 hours to coordinate and prepare the site. Spirit Sanctuary will provide everything necessary for the burial and, with advance notice, provide additional people to assist in carrying and lowering the body. At Spirit Sanctuary we value the benefits of healing and connection that this traditional way of participating in the burial experience can bring. As such, families are encouraged to assist in the process of the burial such as, assisting in the opening and closing of the grave and providing

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pallbearers. Unlike conventional cemeteries, we will generally not remove trees or other natural features to accommodate a site. There is no reason a body cannot be buried after an autopsy or organ donation.

### **LAND ETHIC**

If a marker is desired, it must be of wood or a local stone and weigh 100 pounds or less. Letters and numbers may be carved on the stone but the stone itself is to retain its natural shape and not be polished. Markers are to be situated laying 'flat' on the grave, not erected. We ask that no non-biodegradable items are buried or left at the Sanctuary. For the sake of your time and efforts, please contact Spirit Sanctuary to ensure your chosen marker complies with our guidelines.

Spirit Sanctuary will not maintain gravesites. The intention is for nature to reclaim the burial areas. Most likely this will result in a forest. We encourage letting nature select which plants will cover the gravesite. If you or your loved ones want to choose a plant for the grave you will need to work with a Spirit Sanctuary Steward to determine what plants are allowed (only native) and a steward will need to be present for the planting.

### **BEST PRACTICE/RISK**

Everything has a potential risk and burial at Spirit Sanctuary is no exception. Our main paths will be maintained via mowing and removal of debris but holds the lands natural contours. The rotating cycle of insects resides in and around Spirit Sanctuary including ticks. Winter offers its own risks with ice, slush and snow being present. Burials taking place off our main trail and within the seasonal wet areas may not be accessible to all based on terrain and ability. In respect to these and other factors, we ask that those attending the burial dress accordingly to the weather, season and terrain. Sturdy shoes are recommended as well as micro spikes in the winter and any insect repellent you find helpful. Although we will do our best to accommodate for all those attending burial, we ask that you take into consideration these factors when deciding on attendance and/or participation.

At Spirit Sanctuary, we support participation from those attending the burial as this can offer healing in this time of grief. There are many ways to participate including but not limited to, grave digging and filling in, pall bearing, lowering, sharing in song/words/poem, etc. The different ways of participation can come with their own risks and we ask one reflects on what is doable for them and decide accordingly.

In accordance with our policy, Spirit Sanctuary is released from liability in the unlikely chance that any markers are removed from the grave. In addition, Spirit Sanctuary stewards have the right to remove any materials that are not permitted, including non-native plants.

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## Application for Enrollment at Spirit Sanctuary

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (*please print name*) am choosing to enroll for a burial for myself or a family member at Spirit Sanctuary, a private cemetery in Essex, NY. I have read and am familiar with the philosophy and procedures of the Spirit Sanctuary Cemetery.

\_\_\_\_\_ In order to receive the burial rate of \$1,200, I have chosen to enroll as a 'Wildway Champion,' which means I have included a bequest to a conservation, non-profit organization in my estate planning. I will have the organization send Spirit Sanctuary a confirmation letter or email. If the conservation organization is not on Spirit Sanctuary's list of approved nonprofits, I will contact Spirit Sanctuary to get approval, prior to enrollment being complete. To finalize enrollment, I will pay \$1,200 directly to Spirit Sanctuary.

Bequest Organization(s) chosen: \_\_\_\_\_ \*

\_\_\_\_\_ I have chosen to enroll as a 'Wildway Friend' without a conservation bequest and will pay Spirit Sanctuary \$\_\_\_\_\_ directly for burial, based on the sliding scale fee of \$2,400-4,000.

\_\_\_\_\_ Beloved pet burial at Spirit Sanctuary for \$200-I have read and understand these policies

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person to be buried \_\_\_\_\_

Name&Contact of person/funeral home making arrangements \_\_\_\_\_

*\*We wish to make this an accessible option for all, if finances are a limiting factor, please reach out and we can work together on a solution.*

*\*Checks should be made out to Spirit Sanctuary and mailed to PO Box 42, Essex, NY 12936 along with this form, signed and dated. Once Spirit Sanctuary receives this application form and check, you will receive steps to complete your enrollment process via Spirit Sanctuary Steward. Please retain a copy of this in your records and give to the person (or funeral home) who will be responsible for your arrangements.*

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