

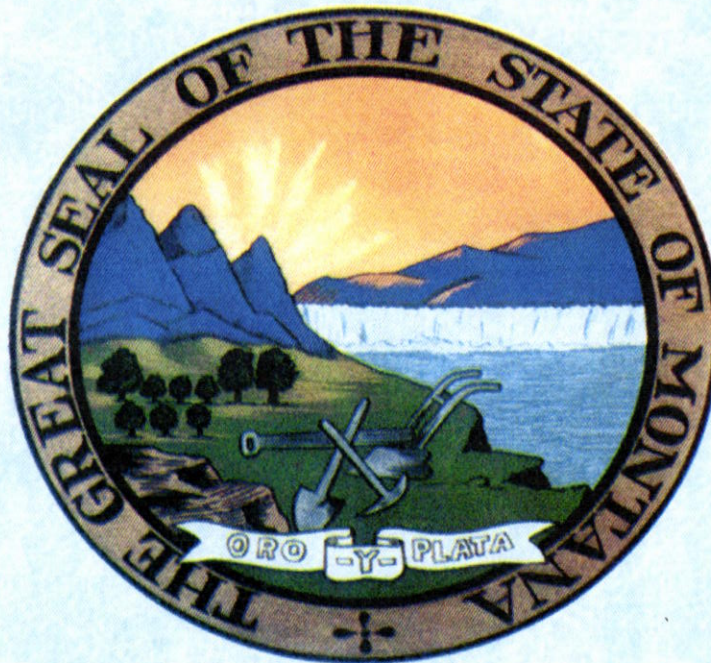
# Montana Board of Veterans Affairs

*“The people declare that Montana servicemen, servicewomen, and veterans may be given special considerations determined by the legislature”*

Article II, Section 35, Montana Constitution

## Biennial Report – July 1, 2014

Prepared by: Joe Foster, 324-3741, [jofoster@mt.gov](mailto:jofoster@mt.gov)  
Administrator – MT Veterans Affairs Division





# Montana Board of Veterans Affairs

## *- Mission and Composition -*

**Mission: Oversee the State of Montana's provision of veterans services, as provided by the Montana Veterans Affairs Division.**

**<> 20 members; 11 voting, 9 non-voting.**

+ **11 voting members**; 10 appointed by Governor, 1 appointed by Montana's eight Tribal Councils (consensus).

- 5 represent geographic regions of the state. \*
- 1 is an "at-large" veterans' representative. \*
- 1 is the Native American veterans' representative. \*
- 1 is Montana's Tribal Councils' consensus appointee. \*
- 3 have training, experience or education related to veteran issues.

\* **Must be an honorably discharged veteran.**

+ **9 non-voting members** representing: Governor's Office of Indian Affairs / State Dept. of Military Affairs / State Dept. of Public Health and Human Services / U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs / U.S. Dept. of Labor / Montana's Congressional Delegation (3) / State Administration and Veterans Affairs Interim Committee.



# Montana Veterans Affairs Division

## - Mission -

*Promote the general welfare of Montana veterans  
and their families.*

### THRU:

- Establishment of a statewide network of service for military veterans and their families.
- Provision of services and assistance for all Montana veterans and surviving spouses and dependents; in coordination with associated federal and state agencies, veterans services organizations, private organizations and individuals.
- Management, operation and maintenance of Montana's state veterans cemetery program.
- Assist and advise the general public, governmental agencies, and elected officials regarding veterans services, programs, initiatives and policy.



# Montana Veterans Affairs Division

## - Major Program Initiatives in FY13/14 -

### Veterans Services Outreach:

- ◆ **Board of Veterans Affairs** – Six meetings conducted: 3 in Helena, 1 in Butte, and 2 via teleconference. All supporting the Governor's energy conservation efforts.
- ◆ **Community Outreach** – 10 veterans service office locations with consistent, statewide outreach services provided to 40+ Montana communities, state institutions and Tribal Nations.
- ◆ **Media** – Agency website including service office/cemeteries contact information and outreach schedules, Board meeting minutes, federal VA contact information and "feature" items. Fielded Facebook connection to agency.

### State Veterans Cemetery Program:

- ◆ **Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery (Missoula)** – \$507,000 improvement construction project completed (960 niche columbaria complex). VA grant funded.
- ◆ **Montana State Veterans Cemetery (Fort Harrison)** – \$1.7 million improvement construction project completed (800 niche columbaria complex, committal shelter, entrance features, fenced/paved equipment compound, roads). VA grant funded.
- ◆ **Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery (Missoula)** – Inaugural inspection by National Cemetery Administration IAW national veteran cemetery standards yielded superior rating; cemetery qualifies for *National Shrine Status*.

### Veterans Services Operations:

- ◆ **VetraSpek** – Fielded state-of-the-art benefit claims production and electronic submission operating system; enhances the speed/accuracy/security of claim products. Federal VA approved for integration into its "D2D" initiative.
- ◆ **Veterans of Foreign Wars** – As requested and approved by the Montana VFW veterans organization, the division is absorbing the VFW's veterans services (claims production) program. Division service officers in process of formal VFW accreditation, and division is requesting resource augmentation.



# Montana Veterans Affairs Division

## - Organization -

### ◆ Organizational Personnel and Facility Locations

29 FTE:

- 1 - administrator
- 1 - office manager
- 1 - administrative/veterans services assistant
- 21 - veterans services officers
- 5 - veteran cemetery program

#### 10 Veterans Services Offices:

Belgrade – Billings – Butte – Great Falls – Havre – Helena  
Kalispell – Lewistown – Miles City – Missoula

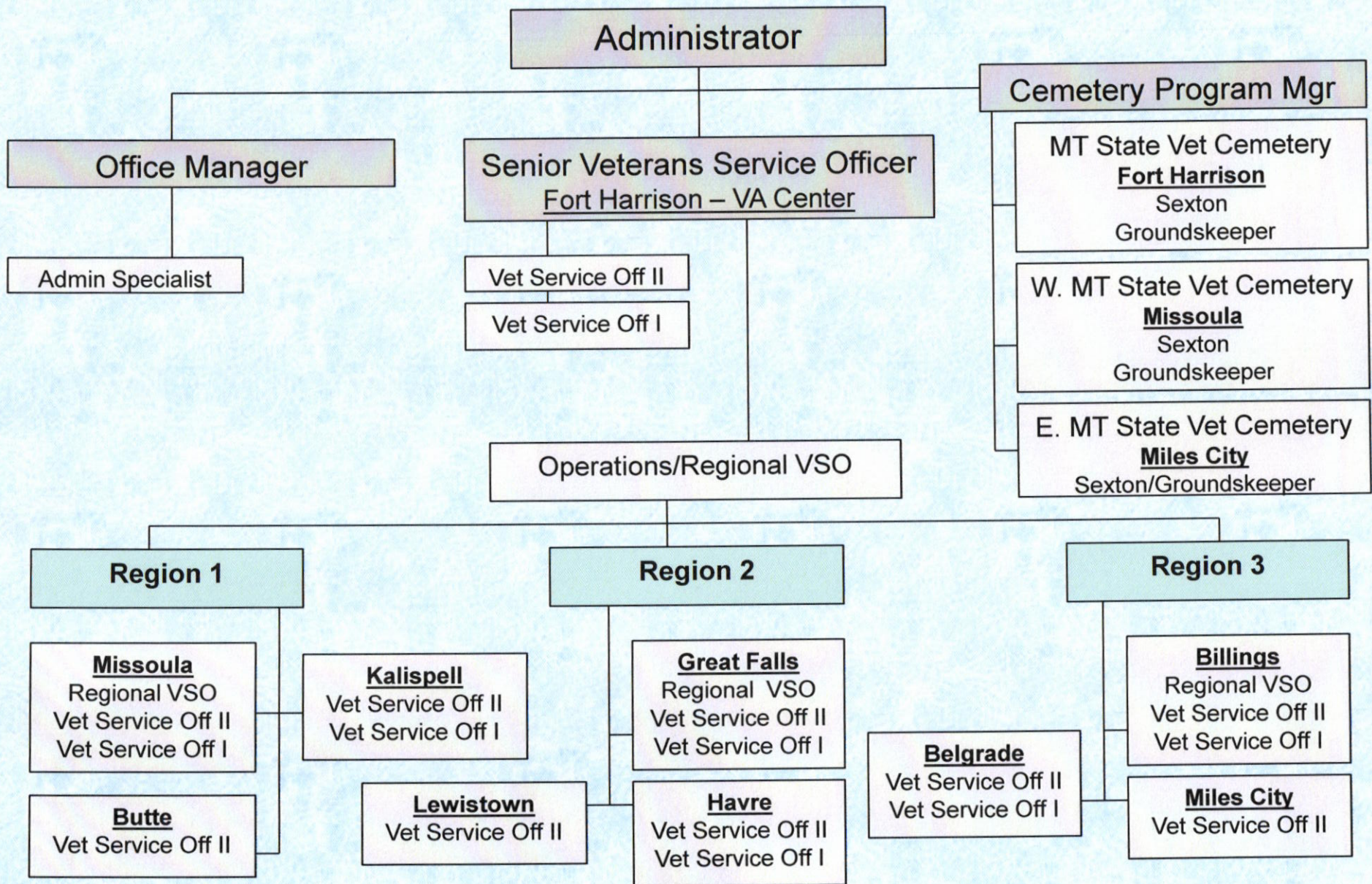
#### 3 State Veterans Cemeteries:

Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Fort Harrison (Helena)  
Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Miles City  
Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Missoula

Administration Office: Fort Harrison (MT National Guard HQ)



# Montana Veterans Affairs Division Organizational Chart





# Montana Veterans Affairs Division - Veterans Service Offices and Cemeteries -

## Veterans Service Offices:

### Belgrade

350 Airport Road  
388-4601

### Billings

2795 Enterprise Ave.  
248-8579

### Butte

600 Gilman Ave.  
533-0910

### Great Falls

600 Central Plaza, #300  
452-2265

### Havre

232 1st Street W.  
265-4225

### Helena

Ft. Harrison VA Center  
495-2081

### Kalispell

2989 Hwy 93 North  
755-3795

### Lewistown

505 West Main, Ste. 217  
538-3174

### Miles City

210 S. Winchester  
874-5869

### Missoula

1911 Tower Road  
542-2501

## State Veterans Cemeteries:

### Montana State Veterans Cemetery

Ft. Harrison (near Helena)  
324-3742

### Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery

Miles City  
853-6963

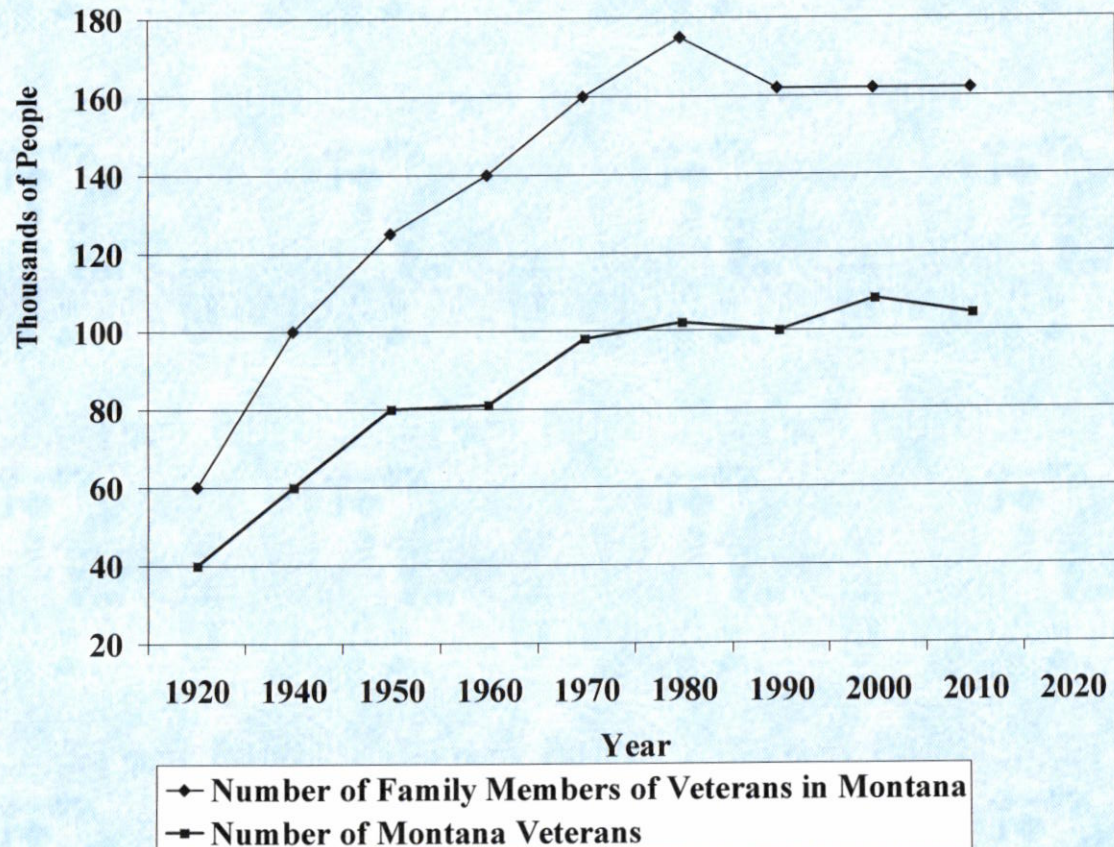
### Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery

Missoula - 531-1105



# Montana Veterans Affairs Division

## - Montana Veterans and Family Members -



Statistics as of 2007 VetPop –  
U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs

#2 Per Capita – Montana’s  
veteran population national  
ranking.

Veterans Montana  
104,391

See Report’s Map for County-Level  
Veteran Populations

NOTE: Veteran family members  
statistics no longer available.



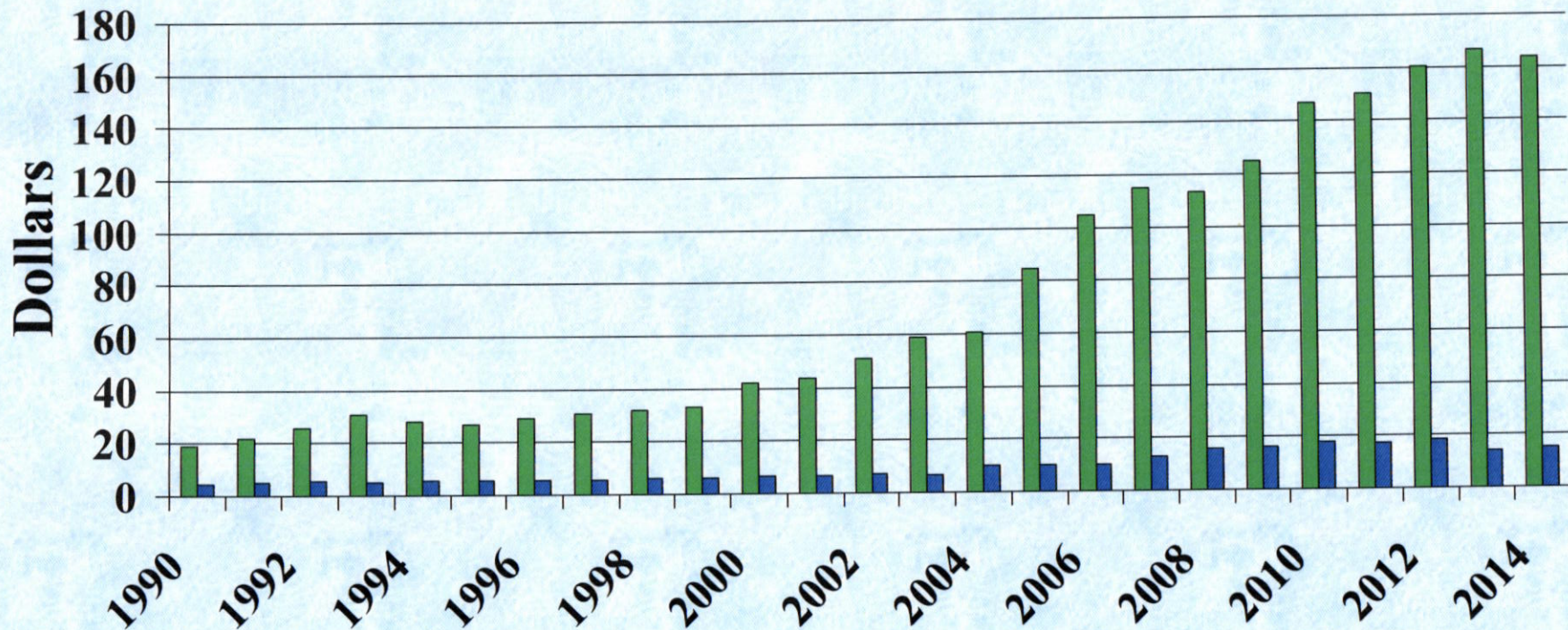
# Montana Veterans Affairs Division

## - Economic Impact of Agency Work Effort -

For every \$1 of state General/Special Fund invested into the Veterans Services Program, agency staff attained \$107 in federal VA monetary payments to Montana veterans.

FY14 MVAD Budget (blue) = \$1,528,618    FY14 Fed VA Payments (green) = \$163,596,310

■ Millions of \$    ■ Hundreds of Thousands of \$





# Montana Veterans Affairs Division

## - State Veteran Cemeteries -

### Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Fort Harrison / Est. 1988

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Burials</u>
2013	178
2014	176

Total since 1988: 3389

### Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Miles City / Est. 2002

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Burials</u>
2013	45
2014	32

Total since 2002: 457

### Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Missoula / Est. 2008

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Burials</u>
2013	135
2014	125

Total since 2008: 765



## Montana Veterans Affairs Division Services Offices and Montana State Veterans Cemeteries

