

California Cemetery to Exhume 1,000 Pets

Landowner to convert property to human cemetery.

Some of the 13,000 animals buried at the Pets Rest cemetery outside San Francisco must be moved because the landowner wants to use the land for human burials.

Cypress Abbey, the Colma, Calif., real estate firm that owns the land, had been leasing it out to Pets Rest cemetery, but Cypress Abbey has notified Pets Rest that it wants a portion of its land back.

Pets Rest owner Phillip Cde Baca sent letters in May to the owners of 1,000 pets buried at the eastern end of the cemetery, giving them two options: relocation or cremation, both free of charge. The owners were given 15 days to decide.

According to David Friedenber, an attorney for Cypress Abbey, the real estate firm plans to use the reclaimed land as a human cemetery.

Angry pet owners rallied at the cemetery last week and are said to be exploring legal options to stop the exhumations. They have also created a website, www.savepetsrest.org, to help spread their message.

The state of California has no regulations governing pet cemeteries, according to Kevin Flanagan of the states cemetery and funeral bureau. Posted: June 21, 2006, 5:00 a.m. EST