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COUNTY ADDS CEMETERY MAPS TO GIS SERVICE

Move marks unprecedented interagency cooperation

RIGBY, ID, January 15, 2016 – Jefferson County’s online mapping system now includes a new feature – interactive cemetery maps.

The Rigby Pioneer Cemetery has completed data sharing with the Jefferson County GIS Department, and new maps are now available online. Viewers are able to view satellite and other images of the cemeteries, search for the deceased by name and zero in on specific plots. Anyone may access the information without cost. The cemetery will continue to maintain the data to ensure accuracy.

In a unanimous decision in October, the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners gave the go-ahead for County GIS staff to accept and make public data gathered by the Pioneer Cemetery Board of Directors, and other cemetery groups as data becomes available. The information includes locations of all plots in the cemetery, occupied and available, as well as ownership and interment information. Information was gathered by Pioneer Cemetery and offered to Jefferson County without charge. Such a partnership is the first of its kind in the state.

“This hasn’t been done anytime in Idaho, and is a rare occurrence other places,” said GIS contractor Eric Smith. “It is very unique to establish this sort of partnership, and it will be of great benefit to the public.”

Currently, the Pioneer Cemetery is the only one offering detailed descriptions of specific plots. However, there is a variety of information about all county cemeteries available on the site. Map users can identify cemetery district boundaries as well as contact information for the individual cemetery boards.

And, there is room for expansion. In addition to grave information, the potential exists to see plots available for sale, or to link information to websites that help genealogical researchers locate graves.

“This is of particular interest to those looking for a particular person buried there as well as those considering the purchase of a plot,” Smith said. “The time-consuming part is actually gathering the data. But Pioneer Cemetery formatted the data perfectly for our system. The integration has been pretty simple.”

Where the cemetery map goes from here is really in the public’s hands, according to Smith. Jefferson County will host the data, but it is up to the community to collect and update it.

The cemetery maps may be viewed by visiting the Jefferson County homepage at www.co.jefferson.id.us and clicking on the “Jefferson County Cemetery Maps” link.

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