



**Foothills Forever Campaign to Preserve San Marcos Foothills
Reaches First Major Fundraising Milestone!
Site Tours Available**

"I am thrilled to announce that the Foothills Forever campaign to purchase the West Mesa of the San Marcos Foothills has reached our first milestone!" stated Marc Chytilo, attorney for the organization. "In just two weeks, the community has solidly demonstrated its commitment to preserving this property as open space." "Now is the time to act. The clock on our opportunity to purchase the property is ticking! We must reach our total goal of \$18 Million by June 2nd," said Marianne Parra, a member of the leadership team of the Foothills Forever campaign.

Ms. Parra expressed her appreciation to the community, "I want to thank the thousands of donors—large and small—who have stepped up to donate funds toward the purchase of this property so that it can remain public open space for the enjoyment of the entire community forever." Over 2,300 individual donations have been received from the community.

Ms. Parra also noted that some of the donors to the campaign indicated they had never visited the property and had only viewed it from afar or while passing on Highway 154. "In response to the tremendous interest in preserving the site, the Foothills Forever campaign volunteers will be leading tours of the area on Saturdays and Sundays at 10 a.m., starting from the North end of Via Gaitero Road. More information is available at FoothillsForever.org.

The Foothills Forever campaign was launched just two weeks ago, with the ambitious goal of raising \$18 million in just 90 days. A generous local donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, provided the first \$1 million.

With this initial funding, the Santa Barbara Foundation stepped in to be the fiscal sponsor and helped to establish the Foothills Forever Fund.

Under the terms of the purchase agreement, an additional \$4 million in cash and pledges was required to be presented to the seller by March 25th.

"We are proud to successfully fulfill the agreement's first required milestone to purchase the property, with cash, pledges from qualified donors, and a short-term loan from Montecito Bank and Trust," stated Peter Schuyler, another leadership team member. Montecito Bank and Trust's support allows the campaign the time needed to secure the necessary donations from the community. All funds received are held in a secure refundable escrow account, pending the group's ability to meet the funding milestones and complete the purchase.

While acknowledging the tremendous community support, Schuyler also cautioned that meeting the \$18 million purchase price by the June 1st deadline will not be an easy task. Many more contributions from the community, both large and small, will be needed, but the Santa Barbara community has a long and successful legacy of preserving important open spaces. An additional \$5 million must be raised by April 13th, with the final \$8 million required to be deposited into escrow by June 1st. In addition, the Foothills Forever campaign must cover administrative transactions, including title insurance, and campaign costs. To establish an endowment for the long-term stewardship of the property and to cover all campaign costs, a total goal of \$20 million is needed.

"Every effort to protect open space in Santa Barbara has faced daunting moments in the campaign's early phases," explained Chytilo. "Our community has always risen to the challenge. Today we count the Douglas Family Preserve, the Sperling Preserve at Ellwood, the Carpinteria Bluffs and Veronica Meadows as permanently protected open space thanks to community persistence. In two short weeks, over two thousand families, businesses and individuals have contributed over \$1.5 million to save the West Mesa. If people continue to step up, this campaign will succeed."

"We are delighted to assist this community effort and operate as a fiscal sponsor for the Foothills Forever Fund," stated Jordan Killebrew, Director of Communications at the Santa Barbara Foundation. As fiscal sponsors the Foundation collects contributions, which are placed in an escrow account toward the purchase. Contributions to the Foothills Forever Fund are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

For more information about the Foothills Forever campaign and how you can participate, please visit FoothillsForever.org or contact the campaign at info@foothillsforever.org.