



Cuchara Mountain Park Fund Raising Q & A

1. What is this park thing we're hearing about?

Answer: Huerfano County has purchased approximately 42 acres (most of Tract A, but not including the large base buildings) at the defunct Cuchara Resort contingent upon receipt of grant funding, raised from the community by the Cuchara Foundation for this

purpose. The new Cuchara Mountain Park will be created for year around public use and enjoyment. This parcel was the base area of the "old ski area" and includes "lift 4", the bottom of "lift 3", and some of the buildings that were used in the base area. A map of the area may be found at: www.CucharaVillage.com Click on Cuchara Mountain Project and then on Map.

Since the initial purpose the county has acquired 8 adjacent to Tract A making the park almost 50 acres.

Huerfano County has ensured that the park will remain a public recreation area in perpetuity when they passed this motion: *"In the event the County is unable or is unwilling to retain the property as a public park in the future, the County will transfer title of said property and all improvements and equipment to the Cuchara Foundation or its assigns, or other public land management agency to be operated as a public park for outdoor recreation and education in perpetuity."*

2. Why is this a good thing for the county to own?

Answer: 1. The park in Cuchara will provide summer and winter activities for residents of Huerfano county and visitors to the Valley. 2. This parcel is contiguous to San Isabel National Forest and provides good access to the forest. 3. Public ownership protects this valuable piece of property for a variety of recreational purposes as the resort is divided into multiple parcels due to unpaid taxes. 5. The park will be developed with the culture, ecology, and history of the Valley in mind. 6. The park will attract visitors that will help local businesses in the entire valley.

A fund raising plan developed by the Cuchara Foundation, with input and approval from the County Cuchara Mountain Park Committee and the BOCC, identifies stages of development for the park which allows for improvements to be made over time and in a controlled manner.

3. What's in it for me?

Answer: First, if there are things you would like to see happen at the future park, please participate in opportunities for community input. Every voice in our community is important, as there are many possibilities for this mountain park.

Clearly, if you enjoy outdoor recreation, the new park will be great for you! Think sledding/tubing, mountain biking, hiking into the National Forest, picnics – and more. Like music in an outdoor wonderland? This could be possible at the park, too! Are you a lifelong learner? There could be opportunities to participate in classes, seminars, workshops. You can see why community input and a careful plan will be important to maximize the potential of the park.

4. Why is the Cuchara Foundation involved in this?

Answer: The Foundation is a 501 (c) 3, founded whose mission is “to provide education and resources to increase the welfare and knowledge of the Cuchara Valley, its history, environment and activities. The Foundation was formed in 2012 and has donated over \$30,000 in grants to help various organizations in the Cuchara Valley. With our mission and history in mind, the Cuchara Foundation agreed to undertake a fundraising drive to raise the money for grants to the county to purchase of the land.

Tract A is an important property that provides opportunities for year around recreation, and cultural and educational events at the park. The Cuchara Foundation, working with the community, is committed to an all-out effort to raise the funds. To demonstrate what a high priority this is, the foundation has provided a \$25,000 grant to the county for the first payment on the land. In addition, the Foundation is undertaking a fundraising effort to encourage and enable the community to contribute to the purchase the land by the

county. The critical dates for payments are July 30th when \$75,000 is due for the second payment and November 30 when the last payment of \$50,000 is due. Success will depend on all of us pulling together to make this happen!

5. Who will be responsible for decisions about how the park is developed and how it is maintained?

Answer: The County is very aware of the potential opportunities that can be developed with the design and use of this parcel. With that in mind, the County intends to seek a Department of Local Affairs planning grant to utilize professional planners to work with the community and develop a specific plan for the best uses of the park and for how to implement the plan. This will be a helpful blueprint for all as the park is developed. The plan will reflect consideration of various environmental and economic conditions, and with community input, will create a plan including recommendations and costs for future development.

6. Who will be in charge of decisions for and care of the park?

Answer: Huerfano County will own the park and have ultimate responsibility for it. There is a county appointed committee set up with representatives from the community, business and governmental agencies in the area who will develop and provide direction and oversight for the park to the BOCC.

7. How is the park to be paid for?

Answer: The Cuchara Foundation is conducting a fundraising effort to raise the money for subsequent grants to Huerfano County to purchase the land. The Foundation plans to raise \$200,000 for the land with enough reserve to be used for matching funds for future grant applications. This is a big challenge, but Valley residents are already stepping up in a big way to help make this project a success.

The Foundation has provided a \$25,000 grant to the county and is now seeking support from the community to meet the challenge of paying for the rest. We are asking you to make contributions for the remainder. Only with the support of the entire community will this tremendous opportunity for a new park become a reality. Once the park cost is paid in full, there are grant opportunities available through GOCO and other sources.

So far, interest is high. Both the Signature News and the World Journal newspapers have carried stories about the park and Cuchara Foundation’s role in helping to make it

possible. The Foundation's blog on the project received well over 17,000 reaches, 242 likes and many positive comments. Enthusiasm is high, donations are coming in, but this opportunity won't be realized without all of us doing our part. As of the first of mid March we have raised almost \$58,000 from individual contributions. Added to the \$25,000 first grant we have about \$84,000 – more than half of what is needed to pay for the land. We have faith that our community will step up to raise the rest.

8. Sounds pretty good, how can I help?

Answer: The Foundation needs your help! Please consider making a donation to the effort and help move us further toward our goal of \$200,000. The Cuchara Foundation is a 501(c)3 so your donations are eligible for a tax deduction. The Foundation has a separate fund set up so your donations will go exclusively for the Mountain Park purchase. Please tell your friends and neighbors about this, and encourage them to contribute as well.

There are several ways to contribute.

- A. **Send a check to the Mountain Park Account, Cuchara Foundation, 137 Cuchara Avenue East Cuchara, Colorado 81055.** The Foundation will acknowledge your gift and send a receipt for tax purposes. 100% of your donation will go to this project – no overhead, no indirect cost. *Please write "Mountain Park" on your check and provide your mailing and email addresses and phone number.*
- B. **Contribute through Facebook.** Go to the Cuchara Foundation Facebook page and click on the "Contribute" button. That will take you to a secure page where you can make a contribution online. You will receive an immediate email from Facebook confirming the transaction that you can use for tax purposes. The Foundation will receive payments and records from Facebook every two weeks. There is a 5% charge for this service that will be deducted from your contribution.
- C. **Give a contribution to any Cuchara Foundation Board member or Fund Raising Committee Merchant** who will immediately turn it in to our faithful treasurer, Mike Moore. People who will gladly accept your gift are the CF board and the fund raising committee members: Lois Adams, Karen Sandbeck, Janet Richards, Danette Chimenti, Suzanne Pearce, Bernard Small, Larry Brooks, Mike Moore, Jim Littlefield, Paula Berg, Dave Conley. Merchants who will take your contribution and also have a donation jar available are: Melissa and Dave Fassiotto at the Country Store and Lisa and Larry Dasenbrock at Pieces of My Heart. Both shops are in Cuchara Village. Naturally, every penny of the money donated this way will go to the Park Fund. *Please write "Mountain Park" on your check and provide your mailing and email addresses and phone number.*

9. How will my contribution be acknowledged?

1. When you contribute directly to the Foundation you will receive a thank you letter and documentation of your donation for tax purposes directly from the Board. (Please be sure to provide your name, home address, email address and phone no. when you donate so that we can do this.) **2.** If you donate through Facebook, then Facebook will email you confirmation of your donation for your records and tax purposes. The Board will follow up with a personal thank-you.

Everyone who contributes and whose name the Board has will be honored on a permanent sign at the new Mountain Park. The county has agreed to this, however, the exact form this will take and where it will be placed have not been determined yet. So, if

you contribute in the future when you bring family and friends to the park, they will see your name right up there on the appreciation list!

If you have further questions, please email them to editor@cucharavillage.com

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