

# Save Deer Hollow Farm

Deer Hollow Farm, located in Rancho San Antonio County Park and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, is threatened with closure. Friends of Deer Hollow Farm, a non-profit 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization, is fighting to save Deer Hollow Farm.

The Farm is one of the last working homestead farms in California and is faced with a possible cut to its funding. It could be closed by July 1, 2010. The animals will be sold, the Farm buildings closed to visitors, and its outstanding education program shut down.

## You can help!

E-mail the Mountain View City Council with your opinion about this. If you are a Mountain View resident, this could impact their decision.

Mountain View City Council: [www.mountainview.gov/city\\_council/email\\_council.asp](http://www.mountainview.gov/city_council/email_council.asp)

## Deer Hollow Farm Operations and Funding Background

More than 5,000 children come to the Farm on field trips each year and hundreds more attend Summer Camp. More than 125,000 children have participated in Farm programs in the past three decades. More than half a million people from local communities have visited the Farm over the past three decades. It is treasured community asset, loved by families, students, and hikers.

The Mountain View City Council is considering withdrawing its funding of the Farm, which could result in Farm closure. Mountain View is facing a \$4-\$5 million budget shortfall. Mountain View City Council views the Farm as a nonessential service and a service not normally provided by most cities. The City has born the cost of managing the Farm for nearly 35 years without funding assistance from neighboring cities, whose residents use the Farm but don't contribute to its daily operations.

Friends of Deer Hollow Farm is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization founded in 1994 to save and support the Farm. Friends donors have provided \$400,000 to the Farm since its founding. Friends' mission is to:

- Preserve Deer Hollow Farm, an historical area and working farm
- Support the Farm's environmental education program for the benefit of schools and the community by raising funds through donations, grants, and public events.

The Farm has been funded and operated by a unique and successful partnership of government agencies for nearly 35 years. The City of Mountain View provides \$110,000, net of cost

recovery and fees for school trips and summer camp, for the operation of Deer Hollow Farm. Farm costs include 2.5 employees to manage the farm, summer counselors, and office and vehicle expenses. Santa Clara County provides \$50,000 in cost recovery to the City. The nonprofit Friends of Deer Hollow Farm provides approximately \$15,000 for Farm improvements as well as paying the school trip fees for 2,280 lower-income students from public donations and corporation and foundation grants. Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, which owns the land and buildings, provides 1.2 employees for Farm maintenance. Animal food and care are provided by targeted donations and sales of farm goods. More than 80 volunteers work under the direction of 2.5 City employees, teaching 5,000 children on field trips and in Summer Camp and caring for the animals. These volunteers also maintain the Farm's orchard, garden, and replica Ohlone Village used in field trips. Last year this group of hard-working volunteers gave more than 6,400 hours to the Farm. The City of Mountain View has said volunteer labor is worth \$20.25 per hour, so these volunteers gave \$129,600 worth of labor to the City last year.

Friends of Deer Hollow Farm's immediate focus is to preserve Deer Hollow Farm, by persuading the Mountain View City Council to not cut Farm funding. The Farm's management budget is threatened, since the City of Mountain View is seeking to delete these positions due to its budget shortfall. Sharing the net cost of \$110,000 among the Farm's neighboring cities is a future action that could help. Residents of these cities, who live adjacent to the Farm, probably visit the Farm as frequently (and perhaps more frequently) than Mountain View residents. It is reasonable for Mountain View Council Members to approach the City Councils of these cities to help share in Farm management costs. However, securing \$110,000 funding from these sources in less than two months is very challenging. The City of Mountain View must decide by May or June about whether to delete Farm funding, because their decision must be implemented July 1, 2010. By the same token, raising fees for the Farm's educational program and Summer Camp could help the City of Mountain View in the future, but changing that fee structure immediately would also be very challenging.

Please contact your Mountain View City Council and tell them your opinion. For more information contact Friends of Deer Hollow Farm at [info@fodhf.org](mailto:info@fodhf.org)