



Butte Environmental Council

Educating and advocating for the land, air and water

Butte Environmental Council e-News *Your Environmental Sentinel*

March 2013

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Dear Robyn,

Whether you're a longtime supporter or have just recently joined BEC, your support of our work is much appreciated. There's so much to tell you about this month so please take a moment to see what we've been up to and all we've got on tap in the coming months.

Upcoming BEC Events

The clock is jumping us forward again, onward into Spring. Winter branches shyly unfurl into that gold haze beloved of poets and tree-watchers (they might be one and the same, you know).

In the spirit of roots and shoots, we offer our second annual "[Breaking Bread, Breaking Ground](#)" gathering to support Community Gardens.

Breaking Bread, Breaking Ground

A gathering in support of Community Gardens

Sunday March 24th, 5-8pm

Doors open at 4:30
Dinner at 5:00

Local Gourmet meal
silent auction, no-host bar

Music by
Los Caballitos de la Cancion
and Stevie Cook

ARC Pavilion 2020 Park Ave.

Tickets - \$25

Hosted by the Butte Environmental Council and Cultivating Community

We'll be meeting at the **Arc Pavilion, 2020 Park Ave. in Chico**, on **Sunday, March 24** at **4:30**. Dinner will be served at **5:00** by the legendary Food Whisperer, **Donna Garrison**; followed a flan for dessert by the equally gifted **David Guzetti**.

Enjoy the no-host bar while you listen to the goodtime music of **Los Caballitos de la Cancion** and **Stevie Cook**. Pick up a nifty item from a local business at the Silent Auction. And chillax with your friends and neighbors as we talk about what we're planting, swap growing tips, and just generally have a *fabulous* time.

Tickets are \$25 and are still available by calling the BEC office at 891-6424. Get more details on our [website](#) or join the event on [facebook](#), and tell your friends to come too--we love meeting people!

Then on the following day, **Monday, March 25 at 6:30 PM**, our **Code**

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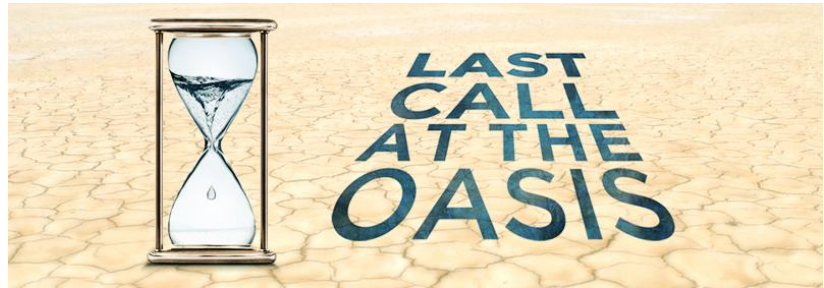
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THANK YOU!!**

Blue series is featuring a free public screening of the film "**Last Call At The Oasis**" at the **Paradise Grange, 5704 Chapel Drive**. [Click on the link](#) for a Google map.



This film outlines the primacy of water's importance to life, our current system's failings, and how communities experiencing that failure firsthand are struggling to find solutions. [Follow this link](#) for a two-minute preview of the film.

[Code Blue](#) presentations are part of a year-long series made possible by a grant from the Rose Foundation. The goal of the grant is to educate the community about water issues so that they will be able to advocate for water conservation and healthy hydrologic systems in our watershed, and beyond.

Environmental Coalition Gathering a Success!



We spend a lot of time working hard and focusing on the tasks that are right in front of us. But every now and again, it's not only pleasant, but really important, to take a moment and look around at our friends and allies, those who are doing this work with us, and celebrate our work and community. After all, we're all in this together; and it's easy to lose sight of the bigger picture with so many small fires burning so close to our feet.

After the ***This Way to Sustainability*** Conference was over, the Environmental Coalition gathering that took place at the CARD Center on March 8th was a great opportunity to do just that--celebrate the groups who are working together for the environment with us, in our home. There was a real sense of optimism. The event illustrated that ours is a community rich with civic-minded citizens. It was especially reassuring to see the complete spectrum of generations carrying out the important work of protecting the environment and transitioning our human systems to work in harmony with nature.

Here's a list the organizations represented at the gathering:

- Altacal Audubon Society
- AquAlliance
- Butte Bicycle Coalition
- Butte College, Sustainability Resource Center
- Butte Environmental Council
- California Native Plant Society, Mt Lassen Chapter



website



website

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website



- California Student Sustainability Coalition
- California Urban Streams Alliance - The Stream Team
- Center for Water & the Environment, Chico State
- Citizen's Water Watch
- Chico Creek Nature Center
- Chico Sustainability Group
- Chico VELO Cycling
- Cultivating Community North Valley
- Friends of Bidwell Park
- GRID Alternatives
- GRUB Education Program
- Institute for Sustainable Development, Chico State
- Kids & Creeks
- River Partners
- Sacramento River Preservation Trust
- Sierra Club Yahi Chapter
- The Chico Grange

But the primary focus for the Coalition is to bring us together around the most important environmental issues facing our community.

Hydraulic fracturing or "**fracking**" is finally getting some overdue attention in California with draft proposed regulations at the state level.

Unfortunately these regulations are not likely to offer increased environmental protection -- they seem designed to legitimize oil & gas industry practices and circumvent the existing requirements for environmental review!

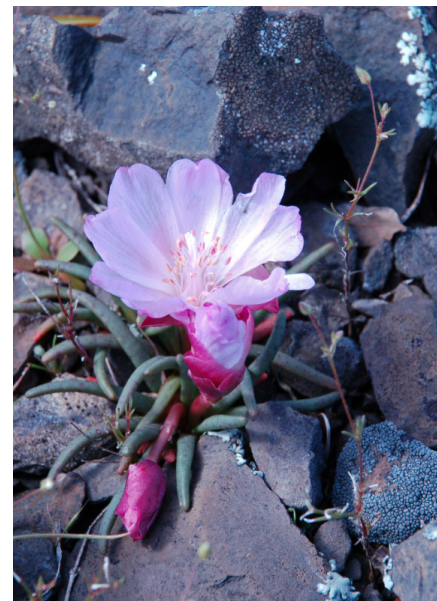
The Coalition agreed at its March meeting to sign on to a joint comment letter on these CA regulations. This is an opportunity for our community to stand together, and and get vocal about an issue that has serious implications for water, agriculture, climate change, and health. **Organizations are invited to submit suggested revisions or to sign on the DRAFT comment letter (view or download) no later than April 11.**

We'll also have an opportunity to come together in person on **Sunday, April 14th** when a statewide tour of **California Communities Rising Against Fracking** kicks off in Chico. Save the Date and be sure to **check BEC's calendar online** to stay tuned for venue, times and details.

A series of public hearings will be held across the state on these draft regulations, one of which is in Sacramento on March 21.

David Garcia, who is our local "go-to" guy on the topic of fracking, is featured in this week's Chico News & Review with a Guest Commentary article that highlights why the ag community should be concerned about fracking.





We Rocked TWTS. No, We Really Did.

On Thursday, March 7, 2013, This Way to Sustainability VIII was all about the *water*, baby. And the Water Track series was packed to the gills (pun intended) from the beginning of the day to the culminating panel, which was hosted by BEC. This collaborative effort was effective in bringing together diverse voices from the community to explore critical water issues. The day was described by BEC Water Outreach Coordinator Nani Teves as a "Who's Who of locals and exotics who are leading the way to more sustainable ways of living, working and thinking."

BEC looks forward to future partnerships on this and other issues and will continue our [Code Blue events](#) as a way to reach and inform our community about water, and to empower citizens to participate in discussions and steer policies to robust protection of our vibrant hydrologic region.

The following day on Friday, March 8th, **BEC's Dioxin presentation about the biomass incinerator in Oroville** was well-received by a full room of about 100 attendees. **Tom Gascoyne**, the journalist who has covered the story of the Pacific Oroville Power, Inc. co-generation plant issues since their discovery, attended the panel and wrote a short news item about our future dioxin work in the [Chico News & Review](#).

Robyn began with information and history on the Pacific Oroville Power, Inc. co-generation plant, bringing the audience up to the point of POPI's paying farmers to take contaminated waste ash. Julia gave background on dioxins, where they came from, how they dispersed in the environment, and potential health impacts of dioxin exposure. Mark finished by discussing the externalized costs of co-generation as an energy generating source, and making the point again that this energy source, which paints itself as "green", often isn't, with the potential for greater carbon emissions than coal plants.

After the question and answer session, it was clear that people felt the information from the panel was important, and left with the intention of guarding their community from further manipulation at the hands of corporate profiteers who were expert "greenwashers."

[Visit our website for more on this story.](#)



Endangered Species Faire Fast Approaching...

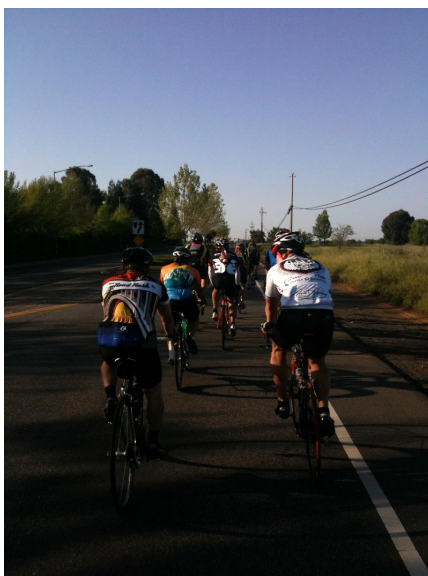


The first weekend in May is only eight weeks away; that might seem like a long time, but the time will evaporate like water on a hot rock. Be advised that the last two **FUN**-omenal puppet-making workshops for the ESF's Procession of the Species will be on **Saturday, March 30 at 9:30** at the **Habitat Lab, 199 E.13th St.** in **Chico**; and on **Saturday, April 13th**, same time and place. These dates are also on our [Calendar](#).

So: Not too late to get in with the Puppet People for the Procession; and it's also not too late to become a Friend of the Faire by donating to the ESF. If you want your business featured in this newsletter, on the back of the 2013 ESF t-shirt, or in the program, please [see our sponsorship guidelines here](#)! It's a great way to let folks know that your business values the environment and our community, and to be part of the wave of goodwill that enables us to offer the Faire to EVERYONE free of charge.

Interested in having an educational booth or a vendor at the faire? Forms are [available online](#) and are due by April 8th.

You'll be in good company: see the sidebar for our Champion Friends of the Faire sponsors.



Members: Volunteer Opportunity!

Who's afraid of a li'l stack or two?



It's not quite this bad, but we've got a challenge:

We need to reduce our storage capacity in the BEC office. We've been sorting through paper records that go back twenty or even thirty years. We've got old environmental impact statements, court documents, archived news items, and so on, et cetera.

Some of this is important to keep for historical purposes. Some of it we can part with. **We are asking for help from those of you who remember some important community history and who can help us decide what should be kept.**

We'll have a criteria for salvage that will clarify this task;

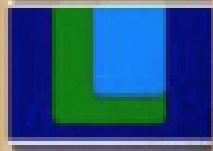
contact us and we'll work on this project together. This is an opportunity to share your institutional knowledge and help us streamline our rent-paying footprint--it could, dare we say, even be...**fun??**

Thank you again for your continued support of BEC's efforts. Your input or participation is always welcome. Simply reply to this email to tell me what's on your mind.

Hope to see you at our upcoming events. Together we can accomplish what is impossible alone.

Robyn DiFalco

Executive Director
Butte Environmental Council



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