



# Environmental Sentinel

Your source for Butte County's environmental news and events

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Protecting Butte County's land, air, and water since 1975

May 2014

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## Dear Robyn,

Happy Bike Month! The start of summer is packed full of great events; this month specifically a **Wine Tasting** fundraiser for BEC at the Crystal Room! It's a chance to mingle with your BEC member friends and an opportunity to **bring a new friend and introduce them to BEC's** work in the community that your contributions make possible. As always, we are grateful for your continued support and we look forward to seeing you at our events!

Sincerely, *Robyn DiFalco, Executive Director*

## Upcoming BEC Events

### [BEC Wine Tasting at the Crystal Room](#)

Thursday, May 29, 5:00pm - 7:00pm

### [Water Conservation Workshop: Lawns to Native Landscapes](#)

Saturday, June 1, 9:00am - 2:00pm  
(pre-registration required)

### [Chico Bicycle Music Festival](#)

Saturday, June 7, Noon - 10pm  
Camellia Way Park & Silver Dollar Fairgrounds

### [Water Conservation Workshop: Greywater from Washing Machines](#)

Saturday, June 14, 10:00am - 3:00pm

### [BEC Annual Member Meeting](#)

Tuesday, June 24, 6-7:30 pm

## Local Fracking Achievements face a Counter-Offensive

In recent weeks we've seen **a well-funded campaign to derail our local grassroots efforts to ban fracking in Butte County.** State Senator Jim Nielsen is explicitly behind these efforts and has apparently formed an organization called "Californians for a Safe, Secure Energy Future, including Energy Companies who Produce Gas, Oil, Jobs and Pay Taxes". (Seriously! You can't make this stuff up!)

This counter-offensive by the pro-frackers is no surprise, but it means **local organizers are now working that much harder to push for the local ban**. The ordinance to ban fracking has not yet been placed on the Board of Supervisors agenda for the final vote, and we're wondering whether partisan politics and the upcoming election may be behind that delay.



Frack-Free Butte County recently launched their [Indie Go-Go campaign](#) on Mother's Day (appropriate for saving Mother Earth). Their goal is to raise \$40,000 with only 46 days remaining! They raised over \$100 in the first day but will need to keep it up in order to hit their target. [Watch the inspiring video here.](#)

Organizers are working every day to gather the 7,600 signatures required to get the fracking ban on the November 2014 ballot. They still need to get 107 signatures per day to reach their target by May 18! [If you can help, click here to sign up on the Frack-Free Butte County website.](#)

In other news, **Aramenta Hawkins** has been selected as the campaign coordinator for Frack-Free Butte County and everyone's favorite local frack-tivist, **Dave Garcia** was recently recognized in Sacramento for the Sierra Club's Organizer of the Year Award. (You may remember Dave was also awarded BEC's Environmentalist of the Year award last fall for his tireless efforts on fracking.)

## **BEC Wine Tasting only \$5!**

Join BEC on **Thursday, May 29th** from 5-7pm at the [Crystal Room](#) to sample wines from around the world. This is a great opportunity to **introduce a friend to BEC** and show your support for only \$5 admission! All funds benefit the Butte Environmental Council and our work to protect and defend the land, air, and water of Butte County and the surrounding region.



**Help spread the word and share this event with your friends on Facebook .** We will see you there!

## **Chico Bicycle Music Festival June 7**

As a fitting grand finale to the national **May is Bike month** campaign, the popular and fun [Chico Bicycle Music Festival](#) will be Saturday, June 7th from 12pm till 10pm.

This is a great event to promote human-scale transportation and talented local musicians through innovation, bicycles and community. The audience runs the amplified sound, by bicycling to generate power. This gets people moving to the music and participating in a new way of thinking of energy. **The music festival is for all ages and free to the public.** Bicycling to two different venues also gives the community a feel for moving themselves on a bicycle and realizing how fun and easy it is. Local organizations will provide activities and services including a **Bike Valet by Chico Velo** and the **Up-Cycle Lounge by BEC**.



This year the event will begin at the lovely **Camellia Way Park** (across from Morning Thunder Cafe) with a fabulous musical line up of **Kyle Williams, The Railflowers and Bunnymilk**. At 3 pm join **Evin Wolverton** live on bike as

hundreds of happy bicyclers pedal over to **The Silver Dollar Fairgrounds**. With the popularity of this event in past years, the larger venue within the fairgrounds is sure to meet our needs as we dance and bike into the night with **performances by Chikoko, Marya Stark, Western Divide, Mark Growden, Wolf Thump, and DJ Hocus Pocus**. Festivities end at 10pm.

## **BEC Annual Member Meeting & June Election**

Our Annual member meeting will take place **Tuesday, June 24 at 6pm**. [Location TBA]. This will be an opportunity for BEC members to learn about BEC's current priorities and advocacy focus, meet the board and staff, hear about upcoming events, and socialize with each other. It will be a fun, casual evening and an opportunity to bring a friend who may be interested in joining BEC.



**We are currently accepting applications for the BEC board**, with the application deadline of **Friday, May 23**, right before the Memorial Day holiday. This is a great way to support BEC's mission of protecting the local environment, and only requires about 5 hours/month. [Visit our website to download the application form](#) and review details about serving on the board. If you have questions, please contact Robyn DiFalco by [email](#) or phone at 891-6424.

**The BEC Election** also takes place over two weeks from **June 2 - 14**. If you are a current BEC member, you will receive either an email ballot (unique to your email address) or else a paper ballot for those who do not have email. Three current board members are up for election, John Scott, Michael McGinnis, and Sharron Wallace, while there is also one vacancy.

## **BEC's Watershed Program Presents Water Wise Workshops**



### **Lawns to Native Landscapes: Sunday, June 1st from 9am-2pm**

Participants will learn the water conservation and wildlife benefits of converting lawns to native landscapes, and will be involved with landscape design, actually converting a small lawn, gathering plant recommendations, and testing personal soil samples. Everyone will leave with a native plant to start a new garden and enjoy an organic lunch on a great Chico deck.

### **Greywater Installation: Sunday, June 14th from 10am-3pm**

Greywater Action out of Berkeley is coming to Chico to lead a washing machine greywater workshop, where participants will learn the basics of greywater, design and actually install a system from start to finish. If you are a plumber, landscaper, contractor or DIYer and want to learn how to install a system register now. Also, enjoy a delicious lunch among new friends.



## Special Thanks To All Our Wonderful Sponsors



### Endangered Species Faire 2014 Was Great Fun

Thank you to the sun and the rain that greened the leaves and filled the creek. Thank you to **Sue Hilderbrand, the Queen Bee MC**, the talented musicians, and the strong CCC's. Thank you to the activists working the booths and to John Hooper's Environmental Students so enthusiastically engaging kids. Thank you to the sponsors and supporters for money, food, and good vibes. Thank you to the alligator for not biting any children. Thank you to the puppet team, **Susan and Stephen Tchudi and Jessica McDougal**, for 6 weeks and 400 kids worth of art and parading, and to dozens of teachers who took class time and their personal time on Saturday to give the kids a lifetime memory. Thank you to **Chico Velo** for the bike valet. And of course, thank you to the earth we call home and to this amazing community of people we call friends.



*Save the date for Saturday, May 2, 2015 at One Mile!*

### Helping Hands

We have some fun **Volunteer Opportunities** coming up!

**Tuesday, June 3, 2 - 5 pm**

Volunteer Day in the BEC office. Stop by the BEC office to help fold and label BEC's mailer, or help with other office projects. We crank up the tunes and make it fun and social. Contact [Justina](#) for more information.



**Saturday, June 7, 12 noon - 10 pm**

Lend a hand for a variety of tasks at the [Chico Bicycle Music Festival](#).  
**Sign up to volunteer for the festival and get a free meal.**

We are always so very grateful for the time our volunteers contribute. Please join us when you can, for however long you can. Thank you!!

## YOU help keep RARE in the Classroom

If you were able to attend our Earth Day fundraiser at the Sierra Nevada Big Room, a film screening of *Plastic Paradise*, then you are well aware that Butte County is full of environmentally conscious individuals.



The event, sponsored by ChicoBag and Klean Kanteen was a wonderful gathering of over 300 people who care wholeheartedly about the sustainability of our planet. RARE was one of three lucky nonprofit programs selected as the recipient of donations from the evening's generosity.

**Thank you to Andy Keller and everyone at The ChicoBag Company, to Klean Kanteen, and the fabulous staff at Sierra Nevada for supporting RARE and helping us raise funds during the event.** We raised over \$800 and these funds will go directly into educating the children of Butte County on the importance of conscious waste reduction, creative reuse, recycling and rot -- composting!

As the school year comes to a close, we're pleased to report that RARE's first year back in action has been a resounding success! **We visited 60 classrooms this school year -- that's roughly 1,500 children!**

Although RARE does receive funding from Butte County to implement the programs, **we rely on fundraising efforts like the *Plastic Paradise* event that make it possible to reach even more children**, perform additional outreach and community education and most importantly, these funds ensure that RARE is able to sustain as a program into the future. YOUR generosity keeps us in the classroom and we are grateful! Thank you! For more information on RARE visit our [webpage](#).

## Chico Tree Advocates plant trees on Arbor Day

*We are proud to announce that BEC is now the fiscal sponsor for **Chico Tree Advocates**, which means they are able to do their local tree advocacy work under BEC's non profit status. Local organizer and tree hero **Charles Withuhn** had this to report about CTA's recent tree planting:*



### **Chico Tree Advocates were on the job last**

**Arbor Day April 25.** Thanks to over ten sponsors

and our five volunteers. We received a great seminar about tree planting from Dave Bettencourt, City Street Tree Supervisor. Thanks also to the Butte Environmental Council for their encouragement and help as our fiscal agency and providing the bright orange vests for our volunteers; thanks also to GRUB and Rental Guys.

**Our goal was to plant ten trees.** I bought eight, but when the day came, we had just five sites ok'ed for planting. So we planted five trees and we're still looking for homes for the other three. Since this was our first foray planting City street trees, and because the sky was threatening, I was OK with a short day. As it turned out, minutes after we finished, there was a downpour.

Discussing the day, we agreed that **you feel something wonderful, powerful, and almost spiritual, about planting trees.** It felt good. We look forward to getting these last three planted and for an even larger tree planting event in the fall.

To participate call Charles 343-3152 or attend a meeting, 4 pm, the second Tuesdays at 526 Broadway.

## May is Bike Month - Community Events

These events and more are all posted on BEC's Online calendar at [www.becnet.org/events](http://www.becnet.org/events)



### **GRUB Garden Bike Tour**

**Saturday, May 17, 9:30am - 12:00pm**

This is a GRUB Fundraiser and you must pre-register. All proceeds help support new community gardens, school gardens, and educating the community around food. Snacks will be provided at each stop as well as a brief talk about the garden. The Butte Bicycle Coalition is providing a tour guide for the bicyclists who will leave together as a group. Tour takes 2 hours, starts at 9:30-10:00 gather at the Chico Peace & Justice Center, take off at 10:00 end at Market at 12:00. Tickets are \$10 and available at the Chico Natural Foods Co-op. ***One of the featured gardens is BEC's new Oak Way garden!***

### **5th Annual Children's Bike Swap at Boys & Girls Club**

**Sunday, May 18, 11am - 3pm**

Boys & Girls Club-Chico, Wall Street, Chico

Great for swapping and upsizing your kids' bikes. Your child can be fitted to a larger size bike for more comfort and safety. Have knowledgeable mechanics fit your child properly. No cost to swap unless a significant upgrade is made.

### **Sierra Club Presentation: Stop Clearcutting Presentation**

**Thursday, May 22, 7:00pm - 8:30pm**

Sierra Club Yahi Group Program Meetings are held at Chico Branch Library on the corner of East First Avenue and Sherman. The meetings will start at 7PM with refreshments served. Non Sierra Club members are always welcome. On May 22, 2014 the featured speaker will be Juliette Beck, Sierra Club's Stop Clearcutting Campaign Coordinator, will be speaking on "Clearcutting, Cap and Trade and Real Climate Solutions". She will be showing the two films that she has produced "King Clearcut Gets Award for Cashing in on Cap and Trade" and "Is Clearcutting Trashing Crystal Basin?" (We will not be showing the video "Green Fire" as previously announced).

### **Groundwater & Surface Water Public Meeting at Chico City Hall**

**Thu, May 22, 6pm - 8pm**

**Chico City Council Chambers, 411 Main Street in Chico** Butte County, the City of Chico, and AquAlliance will host a forum to provide the public with an update on state local ground water monitoring, surface water supplies, and the challenges and opportunities to sustain our water resources. The main feature of the program will be the current ground water conditions compiled from over 100 wells monitored on a quarterly basis. Speakers will provide some historical, political, and policy perspectives from the vantage point of local government, agricultural surface water districts, ground water dependent farmers, and non-governmental organizations. Speakers include:

- Paul Gosselin, Director of the Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation
- Christina Buck, PhD., Water Resource Scientist for Butte County
- Bryce Lundberg, Lundberg Family Farms and Thad Bettner, Glenn Colusa Irrigation District
- Barbara Vlamis, AquAlliance
- Ed McLaughlin, former Butte County Supervisor and Durham farmer

### **Bike In Movie Night Out**

**Friday, May 23, 7pm - 10pm**

Senator Theater, Main Street, Chico

Family and Friend fun! Gather at 7 pm to socialize and visit displays, munch popcorn, and get settled in to watch Triplets of Belleville projected on the outside of the Senator Theater wall once it gets dark. At intermission, Greenline Cyclery is

hosting a bike limbo and bunny hop contest. Bring your lawn chairs or a blanket-- it's a concrete parking lot!

**Vet's Garden plant give-away**

**Saturday, May 24, 9am - 10am**

The Veterans' Garden Project will be handing out hundreds of vegetable plant starts to U.S. Veterans and their families. The vegetable plants will include tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, zucchini and much much more. The plant give-away will take place Memorial Day weekend- Friday, May 24, 2014 beginning at 9:00 am **at BEC's Humboldt Community Garden** - 2253 Humboldt Road, across from Marsh Junior High.

**Old Spokes Home Bike & Gear Swap**

**Saturday, May 31, 11am - 3pm**

Heartseed Farm, 1525 Dayton and Macintosh Roads (the Old Palms)  
Mark the date! The biggest day of the year for all of you bike geeks in Chico! Old Spokes Home Bicycle Swap Meet. Come Swap, Sell, Buy bikes and bike parts. For info about vending, Contact Ron Toppi at [ronbikes4peace@gmail.com](mailto:ronbikes4peace@gmail.com) to reserve a spot for swapping.

**Bike Chico Historical Tour & Bike Show/Party**

**Sunday, June 1, 12pm - 4pm**

TBD- must pre-register

Limited to 200 bicycle lovers, this ride will begin together and then branch off to visit 4 different historical sites in Chico. At each site, docents will recite the historical importance and stamp off your passport. When you finish, head directly to Sierra Nevada Brewery where you may purchase drink and food tickets and view the Bike Show. Categories for best of show are wide and creative: Original WTF Ratrod Road bike/ fixie Peoples Choice This event will cost you and you must register online to ride and to show, but the proceeds for the Ride will benefit the Butte Bicycle Coalition who, like you, wants to see a lot more bicyclists on the road safely.

**Stream Team water quality monitoring**

**Saturday, June 14, 9am - 12pm**

Volunteer to Monitor Water Quality in Big Chico Creek. Water Quality Monitoring events in 2014: 2nd Saturday of each month: 9AM-12PM April 12th, May 10th, June 14th, July 12th, August 9th, September 13th, October 11th Contact: 530-342-6620, or visit [www.thestreamteam.org](http://www.thestreamteam.org)

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