



Environmental Sentinel

Your source for Butte County's environmental news and events

Brought to you by the **Butte Environmental Council**
Protecting Butte County's land, air, and water since 1975

August 2015

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Dear BEC Member,

As we endeavor to gain more support this year, no one can engage a new or potential member better than you. Please think about your friends, co-workers, and other people who care about the state of our local and global environment. Encouraging them to join you in support of BEC not only increases our impact, but takes your generosity to its fullest potential. Share this newsletter with a friend and tell them why you choose to support our organization. As always, we couldn't do it without you, and we are grateful for your continued support!

Sincerely, Robyn DiFalco, Executive Director

Upcoming BEC Events

Saturday, September 19

Bidwell Park & Chico Creeks Cleanup 9 - 12:30 a.m. at two locations:

- Hooker Oak Recreation Area (off Vallombrosa) or
- 10th & Salem St (Annie K Bidwell Parlor)

Saturday, October 24, 2015

BEC's 40th Anniversary Gala & Awards Banquet

5 - 8 pm at the Sierra Nevada Big Room; Tickets are available now.

Donate through Annie B's Drive & support BEC & our Neighborhood Cleanups too!

The community-wide Annie B's drive is happening now through September 30th.

When you donate through the Annie B's community fundraising drive, the impact of your donation is magnified because it will be matched by 8-10% through the North Valley Community Foundation (NVCF).

And this year, there's even more reason to give. **BEC has been chosen by the City of Chico to receive an additional 40-60% in matching funds for our neighborhood cleanup program -- "Block Parties with a Purpose" --** where neighborhood groups tackle the trash and invasive plants that have become too

common in our urban creeks. Your donation (and match) will enable BEC to provide even more tools, lunch, and logistical support, empowering more neighbors to come together and become stewards of the creeks that run through our community.

In order to receive these matching funds, **your donation must be received by September 30, 2015.** All donations are of course, tax deductible.

There are 3 ways to donate:

1) To donate online, here's the link that takes you directly to BEC's page:

www.drive.anniebs.org/cause/butte-environmental-council

If you're searching on the site, look for "Butte Environmental Council" (not BEC).

2) You can mail or donate in-person with cash or a check directly to BEC (payable to "Annie B's/BEC").

Mail to BEC at 116 West 2nd St, suite 3, Chico, CA 95928.

3) You can mail a check (payable to "Annie B's/BEC") directly to NVCF, 3120 Cohasset Road Suite 8, Chico, CA 95973.



Butte Environmental Council
is Turning... **40**
Celebrate! **Oct. 24, 2015**

• Live Music **Tickets:**
• Delicious Dinner \$40 - Members Only - Extremely limited!
• Silent Auction \$50 - General Admission through Oct. 10
• Beer & Wine \$60 - October 11 - 24
 www.becnet.org • 530.891.6424

Not to be Missed Event at Chico's one & only Sierra Nevada Big Room!

[Purchase Tickets Online or by Calling BEC: 530.891.6424](http://www.becnet.org)

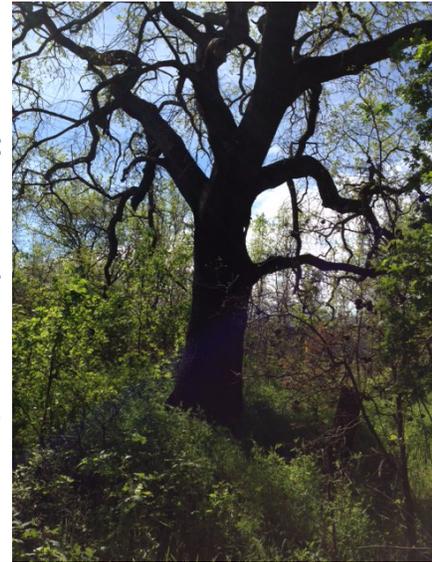
Raise your Voice for the Trees: Aug. 31

Citizens of Chico, 85 trees in the Comanche Creek greenway area need your help.

PG&E has proposed to remove 55+ oaks and 30 other trees to clear a pathway over their gas distribution lines. **The City will hear public input on this project at the upcoming [Bidwell Park and Playground Commission meeting](#) on**

Monday, August 31 at 6pm. Now is the time to make your voice heard! We need your help speaking for the trees.

BEC and our allies are organizing a huge turnout from the community voicing strong opposition to this massive tree removal. The purpose of this meeting is to hear public comments. Now is your chance to influence the City's terms and conditions for issuing a permit to PG&E for this project. **We need people to call for saving as many of these trees as possible,** especially the biggest ones with greatest habitat value. We need people to demand the tree-by-tree analysis to assess the validity of their removal criteria. We need people to call for a comprehensive replanting plan that restores the vegetation in that area and includes replanting new trees at a rate that appropriately replaces any that are removed. **We need people like you to show up at this meeting: Monday, August 31.**



This is also a good time to **write letters to the editor** and send letters to City Council, the City Manager, and Park Commissioners. [Please click here to see our helpful handout](#) that gives you some basic talking points and background info, as well as the email addresses to make it easy for you to submit your letter. We will also bring copies to the meeting.

BEC's Annual Award Nominations

Now's your chance to nominate a long-admired friend, colleague or mentor for an award. BEC Members are encouraged to nominate local environmental heroes for BEC's annual awards.

Last year, in 2014, BEC honored these local heroes for the following awards:

- **Environmentalist of the Year - Andy Keller**
- **The Barris Farms Service Award - Joni Stellar**
- **The Michael McGinnis Lifetime Achievement Award - John Merz**



The BEC Board of Directors will vote on the award recipients at our August retreat and the awards will be presented at **BEC's 40th Anniversary Gala on Saturday, October 24th.**

Please submit nominations by **August 16** simply by calling our office at **891-6424**. Include the nominee's name and a brief explanation of who the person is and why he or she merits the award.

Bidwell Park & Chico Creeks Cleanup: Sept. 19, 2015

We all appreciate the beauty of Bidwell Park and recognize the great asset it is to

the Chico community. On **Saturday, September 19th**, BEC and the City of Chico will host the **[Bidwell Park and Chico Creeks Cleanup](#)** as part of the broader **[Great Sierra River Cleanup](#)**. Each year this event brings hundreds of volunteers together to take care of our shared waterways. Last year alone, our dedicated volunteers pulled out over 60,000 pounds of trash from Chico's Creeks.



September 19, 2015 - 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
Volunteers will be dispatched from:
Hooker Oak Park at Manzanita Ave
9th & Salem, Annie K Bidwell Parlor

We appreciate our dedicated sponsors who have been supporting this event for many years. A big thank you goes out to our 2015 sponsors:

Platinum level Sponsors:

City of Chico, Butte County Fish and Game Commission, Madison Bear Garden, Orchard Supply Hardware, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company

Gold Level Sponsors:

Klean Kanteen, Tri Counties Bank, Chico U-Lock-It

Silver Level Sponsors:

Upper Crust Bakery

Green Level Sponsors:

Native Daughters of the Golden West, ChicoBag, Lundberg Family Farms, Tin Roof, Brooklyn Bagels, FishBio, and S&S Produce

Registration is now open!! This year we've made it easy to **[pre-register your team](#)** online, whether you're a business, a social club, a school group, or volunteer organization. **Everyone who pre-registers by September 1st will receive a free t-shirt.** Groups are encouraged to **wear your company or organization logo** on the day of the event. We'll have a photo contest on social media and you'll be encouraged to get shots of your group in action, helping to clean our beloved park. **As a business partner to The Bidwell Park & Chico Creeks Cleanup, your company will be recognized for your generous efforts and your willingness to set an example of excellent community service.** This can also be a great team-building opportunity.

Calling All Volunteers!

Calling all volunteers! We have two opportunities for **Bidwell Park Lovers and Oak Tree Heroes.**

1.) Get a group of 4 or more people, and come out for a wonderful morning spending time at Upper Park, and quenching the thirst of 100 Blue Oak Seedlings. Sundays at 8:15am, North Rim Trail Parking Lot. **[More details are on our website or just call of our office.](#)**

2.) Get a group of 8 or more people, and pick a day to collect the first of this year's acorns. We'll need many Blue



Valley Oak
New leaves each year
Deeply lobed "valleys"



Blue Oak
New leaves each year
Shallow or tiny lobes
Bluish-green color

Oak and Valley Oak acorns to plant next Spring! Email BeckyH@becnet.org with questions or to sign up or call 891-6424.

Water Heated by the Sun

Hello, I'm Becky, your Energy Ambassador. I think it's time I tell you about the available information out there to help you reduce your energy bill to so much lower than it is right now. I know, I know, you have conserved a lot, and your PG&E bill is already under \$50, but what if you could lower it another \$10 a month? The ideas, answers, and information is all right here, in my head. And I'm getting it from this website: www.EnergyUpgradeCA.org. This site is funded by the Center for Sustainable Energy which has the goal of helping California lower our total carbon emissions. (Not a bad platform.) Check it out, and become as Energy Savvy as me!



www.EnergyUpgradeCA.org

Of specific importance: Solar water heaters are not as discussed or understood as photovoltaic systems. So here's another link. Go to www.waterheatedbythesun.com and get started on this. If you have a natural gas water heater,* you can qualify for the 2015 rebate, and then with the tax credit, your water heater is almost completely paid for. Your water heating cost is about 30% of your power bill each month (if you're the 'average' Butte County Resident) and using solar to heat your water can cut that energy use by 80%! Systems last up to 15-20 years with little to no maintenance.

*Qualifying participants are single-family homeowners who have gas water heaters.

- Reduce your water heating bill by up to 80%
- 2015 Rebates and Tax Credits will cover 75% of the Solar Water Heating System Cost.
- Annually prevent up to 4,000 pounds of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere

Let's Talk Trash

Here is another great website:

www.Recyclebutte.net, which is a complete resource for what to recycle, who to call, and where the closest drop off spot is to YOU anywhere in Butte County.

Did you Know: There is a reason we say Reduce Reuse and then Recycle? Reducing (also called Refusing) is much more beneficial to the environment than recycling. The obvious example is a plastic disposable iced coffee cup. Yes, you can re-use it a few times before you recycle it, but the amount of energy used to melt it down is enormous. **And plastic can only be recycled once or twice before it ends up a non-recyclable piece**



of plastic headed for the trash. Now, if you graciously Refuse to take that cup in the first place, then it is not condoned by you to be part of the waste-stream. When all of the cups are used up, the store buys more. Don't fund that. Every piece of plastic you refuse is one that won't have your fingerprints on it under that midden heap we call the Landfill. Ahh, the 3R's: **Reduce** your plastic intake first, then **Reuse** what you already have, before you **Recycle** what you can't use anymore. Rant over.

Environmental Events in the Community

For more information about upcoming local events please visit BEC's Environmental Events Calendar: www.becnet.org/events

Oroville Summer Speaker Series: Lake Oroville Visitor Center, 917 Kelly Ridge Road Oroville, FREE for the Public, Wednesday evenings at 7:00 P.M.; 530-538-2219

Aug 12: Fracking: Oil and Water Don't Mix! Dave Garcia

Aug 19: McLaughlin's Wall - the whole story Michael Ochoa

Aug 26: Drought tolerant Gardening Susie Cunningham

Sept 2-3: Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Board meeting in Paradise, CA
Wednesday: Tour and presentation of SNC's mission, goals, initiatives
Thursday: Business meeting at the Elks Lodge in Paradise
Details to be posted on BEC's website at www.becnet.org/events

Agenda available here: www.sierranevada.ca.gov/our-board/board-meetings
The public is invited and an RSVP link will be available on the SNC home page. The invitation extends to anyone who might enjoy the events, and to anyone who might have ideas for projects with the SNC.

Sept 12: Wild & Scenic Film Festival, the Big Room, a benefit for Friends of Butte Creek, doors open 5:30pm. Get your tickets early. For more info go to the [Festival pages](#). Stay tuned for more info. Calling all volunteers, check in for updates.

Saturday, Sept 26: Salmon Festival in Oroville, from 10 am - 5 pm
BEC will have a Recycling Education booth, an Energy Conservation booth, and a Watershed activity (TBA) at the Festival. There will be a Street Fair, Food Court and Kids Zone, kids art activities, free Tours of the Fish Hatchery, free shuttle bus service, BCOE Family Fun Day, free live music @ Salmon Court, a Beer & Wine Garden and of course lots of GREAT FOOD.

Sunday, Sept 27: A Water-Wise and Habitat-Friendly Garden Tour, 10-2pm with Altacal Audubon and BEC. Event details coming soon. Stay tuned or call BEC at 891-6424.



The poster for the Wild & Scenic Film Festival features a central illustration of a river flowing through a lush forest. The text at the top reads 'WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL A WILD LIFE' with a SYRCL's logo. Below the illustration, it states 'September 12th, 2015 Doors Open 5:30 Sierra Nevada Brewery CHICO'. The event includes '10 FILMS', 'BUFFET/DRINKS', and a 'SILENT AUCTION'. It is a benefit for Friends of Butte Creek. Sponsors listed include Patagonia, Orion, Klean Kanteen, Earthjustice, and Mucky Winkles. Ticket prices are \$20 Advance/\$25 at Door, with Youth (17 & under) at \$9. Tickets are available at Pure Skin and online at butte creek.brownpapertickets.com.