



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

Butte Environmental Council Newsletter

May 2015



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Dear Robyn,

This Saturday is the 36th annual Endangered Species Faire (May 2) at One Mile. May is Bike Month! And there are so many other important things to tell you about in this month's newsletter. Find out about the proposed tree removals by PG&E, our Citizen Science Outings on Big Chico Creek, the upcoming visit by Bill McKibben, the Chico Bicycle Music Festival, BEC's Board elections, and BEC's wine tasting fundraiser.

I hope that when you read this newsletter, and see **all the ways BEC is enhancing our community and working to protect our local environment,**

you are reminded of all the reasons you support BEC. Just think, who would do this work if not for your support? Your membership is the heart and soul of BEC and we are so grateful to have you on our team. THANK YOU!

Robyn DiFalco, Executive Director



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Upcoming BEC Events

Saturday, May 2 11 am - 4 pm
[Endangered Species Faire](#) at Bidwell Park

Sunday, May 24 9 am - 12 noon
[Citizen Science Outing - The Meandering Middle](#)
at Big Chico Creek (pre-registration required)

Quick Links

[BEC Website](#)

[BEC Event Calendar](#)

[Renew BEC Membership](#)

[Last Month's E-Sentinel](#)

Thursday, May 28 5 - 7 pm

[BEC Wine Tasting Fundraiser](#)

at Bidwell Bar & Grill (Bidwell Park Golf Course)

Saturday, May 30 9 am - 2 pm

[Lawns to Native Landscapes Workshop](#)

(pre-registration required)

Friday, June 5 6 - 9 pm

[Bill McKibben](#) speaking at Masonic Center

Saturday, June 13 11am til dark

[Chico Bicycle Music Festival](#)

(See articles below for all event details or visit our website at www.becnet.org/events)

The Gift of a BEC Membership for Mom

Mother's Day is fast approaching and as we try to find the perfect gift for all the moms in our lives we can be overwhelmed with the "things" available to purchase. Why not buy the **gift of impact** for a mother you know, instead?

A BEC gift membership brings your mother into the BEC family, supports the **protection of the environment** and makes our **collective voice stronger**.

I encourage our supporters to purchase a BEC gift membership and for a special touch, create a basket of your favorite **eco-friendly small products** or even stop by the BEC office for some great literature, information and brochures to make a truly special package your mom will love.

You can [purchase gift memberships online](#), in person in our office, or over the phone. We can't wait to hear from you! [\(530\) 891-6424](tel:5308916424)

LOVE YOUR MOTHER...



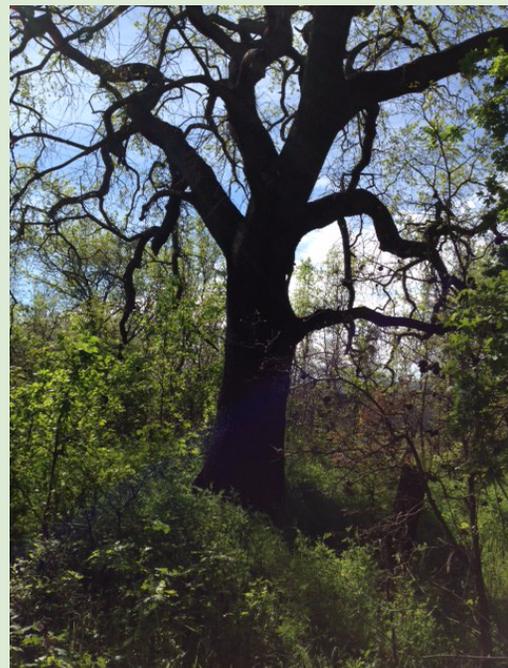
EARTH

The Latest on PG&E Tree Removals

The public showed up in large numbers and were very vocal (and even roudy!) at the recent public meetings hosted by PG&E and Butte County which was to inform the public about their **plans to remove over a hundred trees in Chico and the county unincorporated areas** as part of their "Pipeline Pathways Project" to clear natural gas transmission pipelines.

The plans include removing 85+ trees in the Comanche Creek area of Chico (55 of them oaks), 32 trees on the Midway, and 18 more trees in other county unincorporated areas. But there are **more tree removals proposed for private property** and PG&E seems intent on not sharing any info with the community about the extent of tree removals on private property.

It's important to know that private property owners have the right to reject PG&E's plans to remove trees but affected citizens





Here's some recent news coverage of this issue:

[April 27: ChicoSol.org article](#)

[April 29: Chico ER editorial](#)

[April 30: CN&R article](#)

We've been reporting the past few months that **BEC has been busy working on this issue.** We've met with PG&E several times to get information about their plans, to advocate for saving the trees and to negotiate the highest possible

standard for mitigation (tree re-plantings and re-vegetation). We feel we've made good progress in this area but nothing's done until it's in writing. And it's up to our local decision-makers to sign off on an agreement with PG&E.

And so we need your help speaking out on this issue and holding our City and County officials accountable for not allowing another massive "clear cut" like the recent removal of nearly 250 giant trees in Oroville a couple months ago. **To help you raise your voices on this issue, BEC, in partnership with Chico Tree Advocates and Chico Peace & Justice Center, published a handout for concerned citizens who want to take action and write a letter about the proposed tree removals.** We hear the City Manager has received dozens of letters so far and several concerned citizens have written letters to the editor.

Please keep 'em coming! **The best hope for these trees is that the citizens of our community speak out loud and clear.** Massive public concern (and outrage!) is the best tool you can give local decision makers in their dealings with PG&E.

[Click here to see our talking points that will help you write your own letter.](#) You can download, print, and forward this to your friends too!

BEC Wine Tasting at Bidwell Bar & Grill: Thursday, May 28

Join us on **Thursday, May 28** from **5 - 7 PM** at Bidwell Bar & Grill (at the Bidwell Park Golf Course) and we'll taste six wines from around the world. At only \$5 per person, this is a great way to support BEC and mingle with other BEC supporters.

If you've never been, this is a great chance to check out this lovely setting where we're likely to see deer, geese, and other local wildlife. If we're lucky we'll get to see an amazing sunset out there on the patio.



How do you get there? Just take Wildwood Ave like you're heading to Upper Park and head to the golf course. We encourage you to ride a bicycle or have a designated driver.

[Click here to join the facebook event and invite your friends.](#)

Special Thanks to the Chico News & Review, Bidwell Park Golf Course, and Grocery Outlet for making this event possible.

Citizen Science Outings on Big Chico Creek

We invite you to join in for a scientific exploration of Big Chico Creek. **There are two more outings in May and June** when we'll be headed on an upstream migration along Big Chico Creek; beginning at the confluence with the Sacramento River, through the valley and urban section, and ending with a hike to the forested spring headwaters.



Each event will focus on the **scientific wonders** from two fields of study to deepen our understanding and appreciation of the creek that runs through our lives. These field trips are for everyone awed by the wonders of nature and who have a spirit for learning. **This is a free event, however space is limited and participants need to [pre-register here](#)** or by calling 891-6424.

[The Meandering Middle](#) **Sunday May 24th from 9 am-12 noon**

Topic: Ichthyology and Botany (fish and plants)

Activities: Strolling, seeing the creek through the eyes of a salmon, investigating plant adaptations, and looking under rocks and in microscopes.

Scientists: Gabriel Kopp, FishBio and Kristina Schierenbeck, CSU, Chico

[Pilgrimage to the Headwaters](#) **Sunday, June 7th from 8 am - 5 pm**

Topic: Ecology and Meteorology (wild interactions and weather)

Activities: An 8-mile hike by a lake, through a forest, and to a spring.

Scientist: Randy Senock, CSU, Chico

More of BEC's Advocacy Efforts

Fracking - Butte County Supervisors voted April 21 in favor of an ordinance that bans disposal or storage of fracking wastewater and injection wells. **While it's less than the full ban on fracking we were hoping to achieve, it should still be hailed as a significant victory that is likely to prevent fracking from ever taking place in our county.** BEC worked alongside many citizen activists from Frack-Free Butte County, Sierra Club and other groups to push for this important protection for our area's groundwater.



Oroville Toxic Testing & Cleanup -- The City of Oroville is implementing another EPA Brownfields Grant to address toxic contamination left by industry. BEC and members of our Oroville Dioxin Education Committee attended a public meeting on April 1 to learn more about the project and give public comment. The DA was very vocal and we also pressed hard about the importance of including dioxin in the "Chemicals of Concern" list for testing. It notoriously gets left out of these "clean-up" projects and then the property gets a "clean bill of health" while no one ever looked for or tested for dioxin. Citizens can learn more and give input by visiting [the City of Oroville's website](#).

Groundwater Basins -- BEC's Water Policy Advocate Carol Perkins participated in a public session in Willows to learn about the state's plans for developing groundwater basin boundaries as they implement the new groundwater legislation. **It will be very important that groundwater is regulated based on water basin boundaries which straddle political boundaries**, thereby recognizing the responsibility of two jurisdictions to co-manage their water resources.

Meanwhile, we're watch-dogging the inevitable plans to transfer water out of the Northern Sacramento Valley, particularly those transfers that include groundwater substitution, a practice that is not allowed in Butte County but is common in neighboring counties.

BEC Members are always encouraged to attend and participate in our monthly Advocacy Committee meetings. This is a great way to learn more and get involved in local environmental issues. **We meet on the first Monday of each month at 5:30pm** in BEC's offices downtown. Our next meeting is Monday, May 4. To be added to the agenda distribution list and receive reminders and agendas for these meetings, email Robyn DiFalco at robynd@becnet.org

Lawns to Native Landscape Workshop

In partnership with [Altacal Audubon Society's New Neighborhood Habitat Program](#), we are hosting a [Lawns to Native Landscapes Workshop](#).

This is a **hands-on workshop** where we will be learning by doing. Throughout the day, participants will be learning best practices for lawn removal (including crabgrass), how to convert your sprinklers to drip irrigation, and responsible native plant selection.



We will also be installing a **roof run-off bioswale**, learning how to measure infiltration rate of soil, and enjoying a well earned lunch with new friends. With the drought breaking historic records and water restriction mandates coming, the timing couldn't be better for you to lose the lawn! **Space is limited and [pre-registration is required](#).**

When: Saturday May 30th from 9:00am to 2:00pm

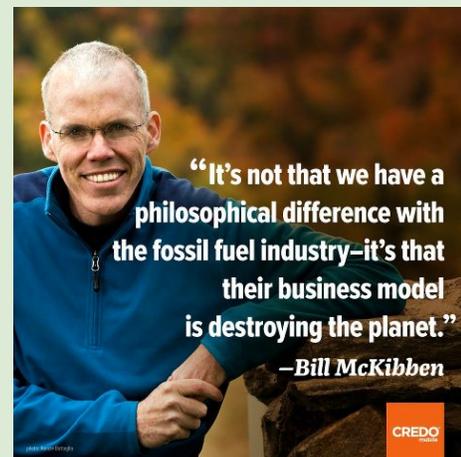
Address and details provided upon registration (private residence)

In case you missed it, [here's a great story about replacing lawns](#) with drought-tolerant plants and bird habitat, which also features long-time BEC members OJ and GeneAnna MacMillan, as well as BEC/Altacal member Melinda Teves.

Bill McKibben is coming to Chico June 5

BEC is proud to be co-hosting with [KZFR](#) a visit from author, educator, and renowned environmentalist [Bill McKibben](#) to Chico this summer at the **Chico Masonic Family Center** at 1110 W East Ave. This is a General Admission seated show on **Friday, June 5** at the Masonic Family Center from **6 - 9pm**.

Bill McKibben's 1989 book *The End of Nature* is regarded as the first book for a general audience about climate change, and has appeared in 24 languages. He is founder of [350.org](#), the first planet-wide, grassroots climate change movement. The Schumann Distinguished Scholar in Environmental Studies at Middlebury College and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he was the 2013 winner of the Gandhi Prize and the Thomas Merton Prize, and holds honorary degrees from 18 colleges and universities; *Foreign Policy* named him to their inaugural list of the world's 100 most important global thinkers, and the *Boston Globe* said he was "probably



America's most important environmentalist." A former staff writer for the New Yorker, he writes frequently a wide variety of publications around the world, including the New York Review of Books, National Geographic, and Rolling Stone. He lives in the mountains above Lake Champlain with his wife, the writer Sue Halpern.

Tickets can be purchased at the BEC office, at Chico Paper Company in downtown Chico, or online at Brownpapertickets.



Go Green and Support BEC in One Step!

Send funds back to BEC by going solar with SolarCity, America's #1 full-service solar provider.

For more information, visit www.becnet.org/solar



Clean energy can support BEC.

Go green, go clean, and go BEC!

SolarCity has partnered with Butte Environmental Council to help us raise **\$20,000** this year!! If you are ready to join the solar movement, SolarCity has many options for everyone and for each solar installation SolarCity will be donating \$250 to BEC. (Be sure to say you heard about it from BEC!)

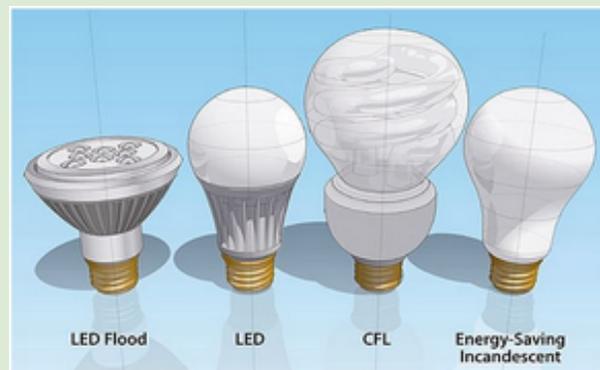
High electricity bills?

Take control of your energy costs!

For more information visit www.becnet.org/solar or email our SolarCity partner, Craig Almaguer at calmaguer@solarcity.com.

Energy Saving Tips from Energy Ambassador Becky

Heating Water: You can reduce your monthly water heating bills by selecting the appropriate water heater for your home or pool and by using some energy-efficient water heating strategies. Some simple do-it-yourself projects can also help you save money and energy on your water heating. Like insulating hot water pipes and lowering your water heating temperature.



Lighting: Consider energy-efficient lighting options to use the same amount of light for less money. Learn strategies for comparing and buying lighting products and using them efficiently. [Here is a fun video about lumens.](#)

Saving Water, Saving Energy: Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes. Consider air drying both dishes and clothing.

For more energy tips, visit www.energy.gov

Looking forward to seeing you at the [Endangered Species Faire](#). Come by the Energy Upgrade booth to **spin the prize wheel!**

Stayin' Alive, Stayin' Alive Ah-Ah-Ah-Ah...

As we gear up for the Endangered Species Faire, the RARE team has been busy sewing away and singing a few tunes while we're at it. Here are the instructions for a **fun and easy** way to make a nice gift for Mother's Day while up-cycling at the same time!

Up-cycling is when you take something with little to no value that was destined for the landfill and you turn it into a new item with new purpose and higher value. **Rather**

than letting that item die we help it stay alive! Up-cycling gives us the opportunity to keep items functional for a little bit longer rather than spending our valuable resources to recycle or 'down-cycle' that item. Recycling is great but up-cycling helps us **give life to our items** for just a little bit longer.

Stop by our recycling education booth at the [Endangered Species Faire](#) this Saturday (May 2) and pick up a one-of-a-kind up-cycled reusable bag!



BEC Board Elections this June 2015

Each June our BEC members have the opportunity to vote in our Board of Directors election. You also have the opportunity to serve on the BEC Board! We will have 5 current board members standing for election and at least one vacancy this year. **If you are interested in being part of the BEC leadership team, [please submit an application and your bio](#) for the ballot by **Friday, May 22**.**



Voting will take place over two weeks from **June 1 - 12**. Most BEC members will receive a digital ballot via email, while our "non-digital" members will receive a paper ballot in the mail. If you prefer a paper ballot, please email [Robyn DiFalco](#) or call 891-6424 and a paper ballot will be sent to you.

For more info about serving on the BEC Board or to learn about our current board members, visit <http://www.becnet.org/board-directors>

Chico Bicycle Music Festival on Saturday, June 13



BEC is proud to sponsor the 7th annual Chico Bicycle Music Festival, taking place on Saturday June 13th, 2015 **from 11am till dark** -- it's the perfect finale to BIKE

month, a national campaign promoting bicycling to work, school and play. Here's the line up for the 2015 festival:

Starting at Saturday Farmer's Market (3rd and Wall St) at 11am:

Wolf Thump, followed by Live-on-Bike performances by Erin Lizardo and Thomas Spellman as hundreds of happy people on bikes roll through the oak-covered roads of Lower Bidwell Park.

The festival sets up for the afternoon at 2pm at Manzanita Place, 1705 Manzanita Ave (aka Elks Lodge). Performances include Ma Muse, Jeff Campbell, Kyle Williams, LiveOnBike, GreenLine Cycles

6pm Manzanita Place

Smokey the Groove, BunnyMilk, DJ Hocus Pocus

The Bicycle Music Festival is a collaborative effort of local businesses, green organizations and passionate organizers/community members. The CBMF is a pedal-powered festival where bicycle powered generators provide electricity to the performers and the sound system. We will bike parade through the town to two different venues and generate active community engagement, growing festival momentum throughout the day. The entire audience/band/crew packs up everything they bring (stage and musical equipment too) onto bicycles and travel as a large group to the next festival stop, while having a LiveOnBike performance. A Live-On-Bike performance is where a performer is in a cargo tricycle and serenades the bicycle parade with the help of a wireless microphone and a fully charged car battery.



Many volunteers make this event possible! [Sign up to help out](#) and you'll be rewarded with a food voucher, free t-shirt and drink tickets.

[Please join the facebook event and invite all your friends!](#)

Earth Day Gratitude

A huge thank you goes out to the hosts of last week's Earth Day event at the Big Room. Klean Kanteen, ChicoBag, and Sierra Nevada Brewing Company generously hosted a great night of film entertainment and education that raised funds for 17 different local environmental groups in the community.

About 300 people showed up and enjoyed prizes, great beer, and even cupcakes to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of ChicoBag!

We're so grateful to work with such amazing partners in the community whose vision and values align with our own. Thank You to everyone who came out that day and to our sponsors who made the event possible.



BikeChico!

To work, school, shop & play.



Childflower-Flatflower 12 Bike Rodeo Carnival *April 26*

SeerSucker & Little Nippers and Light up the Night Ride(s) *May 3*

Pedal to the Plaza Picnic Lunch ... Food Truck Fun *Tuesdays in May*

Bike to School Week *May 4-8*

Mother's Day Ride to Wildwood Park *May 10*

Old Goats Ride & BBQ *May 10*

Resilience & Wellness in the Community, City Plaza TNM *May 14*

Bike to Work Day *May 15*

TGIF Ride to Happy Hour @ Empire Club in Durham *May 15*

Ride of Silence in honor of those injured and killed by motorists *May 20*

Bike-In Movie Night Senator - Rad *May 30*

Bike Swap *May 31* Bicycle Music Festival *June 13*



.....
Make your miles count. Take the Challenge @ nationalbikechallenge.org
COMPETE individually, with your workplace, business, school, or
team of your choosing.
.....

May is Bike Month. For details and more events visit [www. BikeChico.org](http://www.BikeChico.org)

Sun, May 31 [Children's Bike Swap](#) 11-1 pm @ Girls & Boys Club
Great place to trade bikes for growing children! Get your child fitted to a larger size bike for more comfort & safety. No cost to swap unless a significant upgrade is made.

Fri, June 5 [Bill McKibben](#), 7pm at the Masonic Family Center
Sponsored by KZFR & BEC.

Sun, June 7 [BEC Citizen Science Outings - Pilgrimage to the Headwaters](#)
8am - 5pm, must pre-register

Sat, June 13 [Chico Bicycle Music Festival](#)
starting at the Saturday Farmers Market in downtown Chico and



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