



Membergram

An exclusive publication for BEC Members

January 2016

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Dear Robyn,

Happy New Year! We've got lots of great plans for 2016 and some other important announcements. Thank you sincerely for your support of our work. Members make it all possible!

Upcoming Events

Thursday, January 21

[**BEC Angel Social**](#)

at the new offices of Klean Kanteen, 3960 Morrow Lane, Chico

Saturday, February 6

[**Block Parties with a Purpose**](#), 9am - 12:30pm

On Little Chico Creek, specific location TBA

Wednesday, March 23

[**Community Garden Showcase**](#)

at Humboldt Community Garden, 4-6pm

Friday, March 25

[**Environmental Coalition Gathering**](#)

at the Women's Club, 5:30-7:30pm

Saturday, April 9

[**Garden Party Fundraiser**](#)

at Arc Pavilion, 5-8pm

Saturday, May 7

[**37th Annual Endangered Species Faire**](#)

at One Mile Group Picnic Area, Lower Bidwell Park

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From the Executive Director

After careful consideration, I have decided that it is the right time for me to step down from my role as Executive Director of BEC.

This February marks my 4th anniversary at BEC and I am proud of all we've accomplished over that time. I believe the best time for an organization to undergo a leadership transition is when things are

going strong.

I am so grateful for the amazing opportunity this has been -- not only as a professional career opportunity for me, but also the opportunity to serve my community, to have a meaningful impact on behalf of the environment, and to work alongside such amazing individuals. I'm humbled by the opportunity to carry on the amazing legacy of those who built the past 40 years of BEC and to carry BEC to new levels of success.

There are various reasons that factor into my decision, mostly family reasons. Primarily, this is the right time for me to make this change and I believe it is also a good time for BEC.



Everyone at BEC has been incredibly supportive of me, not only in terms of my compensation but also in being understanding about the challenges of a full time working parent. I am stepping down not because I've been dissatisfied; only because now is a good time for me and for BEC to make this transition.

I have so many mixed emotions about letting go of all that I've been working so hard to accomplish, particularly the things that aren't done yet! But BEC's work will never be done and I still plan to continue supporting BEC in many other ways -- as a member and as a community activist -- I just won't be in the role of executive director anymore. ***Instead, I'm going to upgrade my BEC membership and [become an Angel](#).***

I have committed to staying with BEC through the transition period over the next couple months. I'm working closely with the Board and the Executive Committee on recruitment and transition plans.

I'm not leaving town so I'm here to help and we will be able to avoid the pitfalls that tend to come with a leadership gap or abrupt change. Any leadership transition can be challenging. But BEC is in the fortunate position to plan intentionally for the smoothest transition process that an organization could hope to have.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for this amazing opportunity to serve BEC and I look forward to seeing you at BEC events and around the community.

P.S. I hope to see you on Saturday, April 9 at the Garden Party Fundraiser!

Climate Change Action is in our Hands

At the start of 2015, we proudly announced that BEC had been awarded a grant from Energy Upgrade California, Community Outreach Ambassador Program.

This grant enabled BEC to provide energy and water conservation outreach and education to Butte County residents, business owners, and students. After a year of hard work that included presentations at schools, businesses and at community events, **we are proud to announce that our funding for this program has been renewed**, enabling us to continue our efforts in 2016 so we can reach even more people with the message that we must continue to reduce our carbon footprints, person by person, community by community, state by state, and nation by nation.



Becky Holden is BEC's [Energy Ambassador](#) and led a team doing public outreach at events such as the Salmon Festival and the Endangered Species Faire. We also gave presentations to employees at local businesses including Klean Kanteen and ChicoBag. Our partner, local nonprofit GRID Alternatives North Valley, was also busy doing outreach and presentations to targeted populations throughout the North State.

As our program teaches that **even small steps each day can add up to significant water and power savings and thus make a positive difference in the battle to reduce emissions.**

Over the course of the year BEC and GRID **reached nearly 5,000 Butte County residents** through presentations and another 20,000 Butte County residents through social media. We are excited to continue this work in 2016, arming Butte County Residents with the necessary tools to personally lessen their energy consumption and reduce their contributions to climate change.

Watershed Program Highlights

Butte Environmental Council's Watershed program has been hard at work in your watershed! In the spring of 2015, BEC's watershed program **installed rain barrels at school gardens** in three schools throughout the county: Ophir Elementary School in Oroville, Sherwood Montessori in Chico, and Wildflower Open Classroom in Chico. The program also held several workshops on water conservation and hosted three **Citizen Science Outings exploring the Big Chico Creek Watershed.**

This past fall, we held the annual Bidwell Park and Chico Creeks Cleanup in which 530 volunteers (our biggest turnout yet!) came out to remove nearly 20,000 pounds of rubbish from Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, and Lindo Channel.



We also focused on **drought education** and **outreach** in the community, reaching over 300 people with info about indoor and outdoor water conservation strategies. You may have noticed our "Brown is the New Green" lawn signs around town.

We are looking forward to the upcoming spring season as we will be hosting monthly **Block Parties with a Purpose** events throughout Chico's waterways. These neighborhood creek cleanups take place the first Saturday of each month.

We'll also host another Citizen Science exploration series on the Feather River Watershed, focusing on indigenous peoples, water infrastructure, and Chinook Salmon and Steelhead populations.

Restoring Local Oaks

BEC's Oak Restoration Project has officially completed this winter's series of acorn plantings in Middle and Upper Bidwell Park. 100 acorn plots were planted last winter having an 80 percent success rate. We expect to have just as much success in the second year of acorn plots we've planted this winter.

During November and December, **we planted 120 acorn plots with the help of 160 volunteers** including Chico State Recreation students, CAVE Adopt-a-Park Program, Klean Kanteen employees, long time BEC volunteers, and many local families.



And we'll need more help watering our seedlings through the summer months!

Altogether we planted 50 plots at the Bidwell Park Golf Course accompanying 30 planted last year, 10 plots at 5 Mile Recreation Parking Lot, 10 plots at North Rim Trail Parking Lot accompanying last year's 20, 30 plots at the Bidwell Park Horse Arena, and 20 plots at the Rod & Gun Club/Upper Park

Parking Lot accompanying 30 planted last year.

A huge thank you to all of the dedicated volunteers, local sponsor Orchard Supply Hardware, and the project funder, California Wildlife Foundation who made this all possible.

[Enjoy the great photo album online](#) from our acorn planting days.

Community Garden Plots Available

BEC's two [community gardens](#), Humboldt and Oak Way now have plots available for new gardeners. We always have a waiting list for garden plots but this time of year we tend to have turnover and so now's a great time to sign up.

We have large and small plots available at both gardens (either 15x15' or 25x25') and we even have one group plot available (25x60') for a nonprofit or agency that would like to join the Humboldt Community Garden. Small plots are \$75 for the year and large plots are \$175 for the year.



To sign up, contact Brittany Waterstradt at becgardens@becnet.org or call (530) 354-8048.

(Current gardeners, renew your plot by February 15 to hold your place. Renewal forms are being sent out this week.)

Block Parties with a Purpose

BEC and the City of Chico are pleased to announce the return of the **Block Parties with a Purpose, a community cleanup program**, focusing on Chico's Urban Waterways: Little Chico Creek, Big Chico Creek, and Lindo Channel. **Join us in helping keep Chico's urban creeks clean and invasive-free the first Saturday of every month.**



February's Block Party is on Saturday, February 6 on Little Chico Creek from 9:00 am - 12:30 pm. (Check-in location TBA)

How this project works:

- The City of Chico and BEC collaborate to determine target problem areas within Chico's waterways.
- Neighborhood groups and community members sign up to help join the cleanup effort.
- BEC provides tools, dumpsters, and expertise.

Thanks to all the great volunteers who helped at our recent events and made a big impact:

Saturday, December 5, 2015 -- Lindo Channel: 2.15 tons of garbage removed!

Saturday, January 2, 2016 -- Big Chico Creek: 0.66 tons of garbage removed!

This Way to Sustainability Conference: March 24-25, 2016

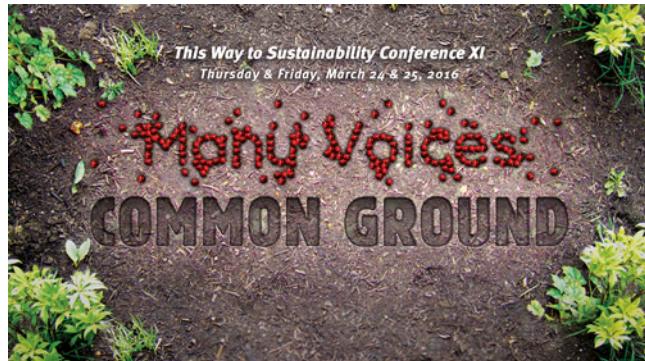
Register for the ***This Way to Sustainability*** Conference at CSU, Chico today through March 11!

Two full conference days with over 100 sustainability professionals, from across the country, daily continental breakfast, lunch made from local ingredients, raffles, competitions, a featured film, keynote presentations, awards, and more all at the Bell Memorial Union on the Chico State campus!

[See the schedule online now](#)

Admission: \$50 for two days, \$35 per day
Also enjoy our daily Local Lunch, \$13 per day
Student attendance is FREE with valid student ID!

Volunteers are always needed, if you are interested please check out the [check out the website](#) to register as a volunteer.



Energy Saving Tips for January

1. **Open your blinds** to let sunlight in to warm your house on winter days. Several hours of direct light can heat your house several degrees during the day, saving you on heating costs. Be sure to close up the curtain at sunset.
2. When you step away from your computer, **get in the habit of putting it into "Sleep mode."** Computers in Sleep mode use half the amount of energy.
3. **Check your water heater's temperature**, and lower it to save on energy costs. Heating your home and your water are the biggest uses of energy amounting to 40% or more of the bill.



Volunteers Needed & Free Trees Available

Chico Tree Advocates is offering free trees to plant along Chico's streets where tree coverage is not what it should be. If your front yard could use some more shade, contact Charles at 518-1417.

We also need volunteers and crew leaders to help plant these trees. Groups or individuals are welcome.

CHICO TREE ADVOCATES
Offers FREE Planting of
FREE TREES!
to qualified Chico property owners
Call (530) **518-1417**

This monthly digital publication is available exclusively to members. Some members have opted to receive the paper version via snail mail, others have chosen digital. We are happy to accommodate

either or both.

Please feel free to forward this to a friend who you think might be interested in BEC's work.

Sincerely,

Robyn DiFalco

Executive Director, Butte Environmental Council

[Visit their website](#)

(530) 895-9999 // 1909 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR PKWY.
LOCATED BEHIND MEEKS LUMBER AT THE CORNER OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING & E. 20TH

Now Accepting E-Waste for Recycling!

Upcoming Events in the Community

Until Jan 30 Swan Exhibit at Chico Creek Nature Center

The beauty, ecology and conservation of Tundra Swans is vividly depicted on a traveling photographic exhibit that will showcase at the Chico Creek Nature Center. The amazing migration of the Sacramento Valley's largest waterfowl is featured in addition to informing viewers of self-guided and free, guided wildlife viewing opportunities each fall and winter in the Sacramento Valley. The 20 photograph exhibit is a service of the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife. 11am to 4pm Wednesday to Saturday \$4 for adults \$2 for children and seniors. Free for members and during the Snow Goose Festival.



January 21 BEC Angel Social -- by invitation only

Jan 16 GRUB Ed & CCNV host public gleaning of citrus fruit. 10-noon.
<http://cultivatingcommunitynv.org/>

Jan 17 Chico Permaculture Guild Monthly Gathering (renewing our educational cycle)
Permaculture Ethics and Principles. 10am - 1pm at the Chico Library meeting room (1108 Sherman Ave.) Free and open to the public. 1-2 hour interactive discussion, potluck and 'Share the Surplus Swap'. For more information, email modcpg@gmail.com or <https://chicopermaculture.wordpress.com>.

Jan 25 Public Workshop on proposed Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP)
6-8pm Chico Masonic Center 1110 W. East Ave., Chico
Plan documents available online:
News article explaining this issue: <http://www.chicoer.com/environment-and-nature/20151118/plan-to-ease-development-while-protecting-the-environment-ready-for-review>

Jan 26 Public Workshop on the proposed Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP)
2-4pm in Oroville: Southside Oroville Community Center, 2959 Lower Wyandotte Road.
6-8pm in Gridley: Gridley City Council Chambers, 685 Kentucky St.

Jan 27-31 Snow Goose Festival

Registration for workshops, fieldtrips, and more began in December and events fill up fast!

Jan 30 7th Annual Seed Swap

Saturday, January 30, 2016 from 12-3pm at Trinity Church (285 E. 5th Street Chico, CA). Hosted by Chico Seed Lending Library, GRUB Education Program and Earthshed Solutions. More information: <https://www.facebook.com/events/921953441222397/>. To volunteer: <http://volunteercpq.volunteer.com/volunteer7thannualseedswap>

Jan 27-30 FREE Admission to Chico Creek Nature Center**Feb 7 Earthshed Solutions HOW (Hands-on Workshop)**

'Tree Care and Pruning Techniques'. 10am - 3pm. RSVP page coming soon.

Feb 14 Velo-Love Ride (aka Rice Valley Tandem Rally)

Take your sweetheart or friends on a 40, 60, or 100 mile adventure around the famous Sutter Buttes. Starting from Butte County Fairgrounds in Gridley, CA, this mostly flat ride takes you past the Grey Lodge Wildlife Sanctuary, through blossoming orchards and around the great Sutter Buttes! Held rain or shine. More information at the Chico Velo Website: <http://www.chicovel.org/velo-love-ride-february.html>

More events are listed at www.becnet.org/events

Butte Environmental Council, 116 W 2nd Street, Suite 3, Chico, CA 95928

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