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Butte Environmental Council to Open New Community Garden in April

CHICO, Calif. (March 19, 2014) — The ground is tilled, the fence is up, and the Oak Way Community Garden is ready to open April 5. This is BEC's second community garden, which is located adjacent to the Oak Way Community Park off of Nord Avenue. Similar to the Humboldt Community Garden, which opened in 2012, BEC has entered into a no-cost lease with the City of Chico for the use of the land. After installing water lines, fencing, and other improvements, BEC will begin to lease plots to members of the community in April 2014.

Garden plots will be available in two sizes, which are 15 feet by 15 feet and 25 feet by 25 feet, and each plot will come with its own water spigot. Plot leases will run from March to February, with the smaller plots costing \$55 and the larger plots costing \$115. The rates and rules for the new garden will align with the Humboldt Community Garden.

BEC is partnering with Independent Living Services of Northern California to design the garden in order for it to be universally accessible to all gardeners in the community. An area with elevated or vertical garden beds will be created for gardeners who have their mobility limited by age or disability.

Evan LeVang, Executive Director of ILSNC, looks forward to the opening of the garden.

"We're excited to have this opportunity to explore various designs and methods of accessible gardening", said LeVang. "Rather than taking a 'one size fits all' approach, we plan on working with our gardeners to personalize and innovate their plots in order to meet their specific needs. We hope to make our section of the Oak Way garden a model of affordable accessibility that can be replicated throughout our community."

To raise funds for the irrigation, tools, and other items for the garden, BEC will hold a fundraising dinner on Sunday, March 30. The "Breaking Bread Breaking Ground" dinner will be held at the ARC Pavilion in Chico, and is designed to help raise money for the infrastructure of the new community garden.

Tickets for the event will be \$30 per person, and attendees will be provided with a classic Mediterranean dinner prepared by Donna Garrison. The meal begins with an array of Greek appetizers featuring spanikopita, hummus with fresh veggies and pita, and crispy zucchini fritters with tzatziki dipping sauce. The main course will consist of warm and comforting moussaka, layers of organic lamb, local

vegetables and feta, creamy mashed potatoes, and a Mediterranean-style lemon chicken with fresh herbs.

The evening's entrees will be accompanied by a refreshing Greek salad, roasted sweet potatoes, and grilled seasonal asparagus. Local homemade Baklava will be served for dessert. Sierra Nevada beer and organic wine by La Rocca vineyard will be for sale at the event.

In addition to the meal, there will be live music by Steve Cook and John Seid, with special guest Diane Garner. A silent auction will feature garden supplies, tools, plants, gift certificates, and other items from local retailers.

BEC is currently soliciting private donations for the start-up costs of the garden. Community members can contribute by donating on the BEC website at becnet.org or mailing donations to the BEC office at 116 W. 2nd St, Chico, CA 95928. For more information about the Oak Way Community Garden, visit becnet.org/oak-way-community-garden.

The Butte Environmental Council is a non-profit environmental organization based in Chico, California. BEC's mission is to preserve the Earth's natural resources, with an emphasis on environmental issues in Northern California. Since 1975, BEC has played a significant part in shaping the environment and policies of Butte County and surrounding areas.

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For further information, visit becnet.org or contact Executive Director Robyn DiFalco at (530) 891-6424 or robynd@becnet.org.