



Butte Environmental Council

Educating and advocating for the land, air and water

Butte Environmental Council e-News *Your Environmental Sentinel*

November 2013

November Notations

Upcoming Events

WATER Concert, Groundwater Forum

"Reading Water" Film

Climate Action Planning

An Appeal for the Trees

BEC Holiday Party

Preserving Aq & the Greenline

Greening Oroville

Attitude of Gratitude

Quick Links

BEC Website

BEC Event Calendar

Renew BEC Membership

Dear Robyn,

We hope you like all the work we're doing to protect the land, air, and water of Butte County and the surrounding region. We couldn't do it without support from hundreds of members like you. Thank you for reading!

Upcoming Events

TONIGHT: Nov 14 **BEC Land, Air, Water Concert**

Th, Nov 21 **Code Blue Workshop: "Reading Water"**

Fri, Dec 13 **BEC Holiday Party & Annual Member Meeting**

Fri, Jan 17 **BEC Angel Social at Wine Time**

Fri, Feb 14 **Love & Bicycles: A Fundraiser for the Chico Bike Music Festival**

Mar 6-8 **CSU Chico's** **"This Way to Sustainability" Conference**

BUTTE ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

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Tonight at the Women's Club Water Concert for BEC

The LAND-AIR-WATER benefit concert series' third and final show concludes at the Chico Women's Club on

Thursday, November 14th. Headliners are Funk and Jam group **The Bumptet**. The Bumptet's music runs the musical gamut, moving from deep funk grooves to epic rock crescendo into high energy, improvised jams with jazz caliber execution. Check out the **Facebook event** **--Shaboing!**

Opening up the night will be local music collective **Jiving Boar** with funky horns, rock guitar, and jazz/hip-hop vocals. Plus special guest **Brian Rogers** who'll be laying down the music with an acoustic set. Be sure to join us November 14th at the Chico Women's Club for a night of funky music to make you move. Don't go to the gym--go to the Women's Club this Thursday and *really* get a workout, in those hard-to-reach places that standard gym equipment has never even *heard* of.

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The Land-Air-Water concert series is a benefit supporting the Butte Environmental Council's ongoing advocacy to protect the land, air and water of Butte County and the surrounding region. Tickets are available at Chico Natural Foods, Empire Coffee and online at www.becnet.org.



Also, this evening there will be a **[Groundwater forum](#)** at the Chico City Council Chambers, 411 Main St., at 6 pm, with representatives from **Butte County**, the **City of Chico**, and **AquAlliance**. This event is an opportunity to get an update of groundwater conditions, trends, and future research areas. Speakers include:

- **Christina Buck**, PhD., Water Resource Scientist for Butte County
- **Paul Gosselin**, Director of the Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation
- **Ed McLaughlin**, former Butte County Supervisor and Durham farmer
- **Barbara Vlamis** and **Jim Brobeck** of AquAlliance

You can attend the Water Forum and then head on over to the Water Concert afterwards. Perfect!

Code Blue Film & Panel Discussion: "Reading Water," Thursday, Nov. 21

By Nani Teves

Join us for the year's final Code Blue event, a locally produced documentary of north state water issues, ***Reading Water*** features local water experts. This event will show the 25 minute film followed by a panel discussion of water experts featured in the film, with opportunity for audience participation. **The event takes place from 6-7pm at the Blue Oak School community room, 450 W. East Ave in Chico.**

2013 really brought the current water issues in California and the United States to the forefront of north state residents' attention. ***"Unquenchable: America's Water Crisis and What To Do About it"*** by Robert Glennon was chosen as the Book in Common, and Butte Environmental Council (BEC) hosted the year long Code Blue water engagement campaign.

Numerous organizations including Butte College, CSU Chico, BEC, Citizen's Water Watch, Butte County, and more collaborated to organize dozens of events, presentations, workshops, and debates. The purpose for all this activity and conversation was to inform and engage north state residents about timely and controversial water topics.



BEC's year-long series included workshops and presentations on

- **Ethical Issues in Water**
- **Bay Delta Conservation Plan and the Twin Tunnels**
- **Water Exports**
- **Greywater and Rainwater Catchment installations**
- **Fracking and Groundwater**
- **Science & Policy of North State Water**

In an effort to capture this year long conversation and reach a larger audience, local Brooks Thorlaksson, with the help of the Osher Institute and Dan Carter, produced a film called **"The Biggest Book Club in the North State: Reading Water"**. Brooks synthesized the experience of the 2013 Book i Common discussions, Code Blue presentations, and interviews from proponents of sustainable local water supply.



Robert Glennon in "Reading Water"

Highlighting the perspectives of those deeply involved in the water issues and solutions in the film made clear: We are in a time where involvement in water issues needs to go beyond turning off the tap water when brushing our teeth, to participating in the protection of water quality and

quantity through political and legal action, as well as through a continued personal education about the issues.

For more information, contact
Nani Teves, Water Outreach Coordinator
 Butte Environmental Council
530-891-6424 (office)

Climate Action Planning steps forward

Did you know that one acre of ag land converted to urban development is estimated to produce nine times more carbon emissions than if it remained in agricultural production? That's just one of the nifty factoids presented in the draft of the **Butte County Climate Action Plan**

that is now available for public review. The draft is available online at www.buttecap.net. It is tentatively scheduled to be heard at the Planning Commission on December 12, and at the Board of Supervisors January 2014. BEC is reviewing the plan and will submit comments.



Meanwhile, **you may have heard that BEC was behind an effort to persuade the City of Chico to move forward on its Climate Action Plan after a year of delay.** On November 2nd, [a Chico ER article reported](#) that a meeting of the



Sustainability Task Force would be scheduled for December. We're still waiting to hear when that meeting will actually be held...



An Appeal for the Trees

BEC has filed an appeal to the Chico City Council to reconsider approval of a building project that **would remove several mature trees, including two Valley Oaks in particular that qualify for Heritage Tree status** under the Chico Municipal Code. The project at the corner of Salem and West 8th Streets is a worthy urban infill project, however, we believe the City has not given adequate consideration of alternate site designs that would preserve the two largest trees on site, measured at 48 and 24 inches DBH (diameter at breast height).



Our appeal will likely be heard at the second City Council meeting in December. **Interested in helping?** A small group of concerned citizens is working with BEC to make the case for preserving these trees. Call 891-6424 or email staff@becnet.org. We would also welcome donations to help cover the cost of filing the appeal.



BEC Holiday Party *Plus...*



Can you believe it's almost time for some year-end reflection and holiday festivities? It's been a great year and we'd love to celebrate with all of you.

BEC's Holiday Party will take place on **Friday, December 13th** and will be conveniently combined this year with a brief and painless **Annual Membership Meeting**.

What are your priorities and suggestions for BEC in the year ahead? What did we do well last year? What can we do better?

And, as with last year's holiday party, there will be **handmade crafts for sale**, with **25% of proceeds** to be **donated** to BEC.

We currently have a potter and a jewelry-maker participating; **we're looking for a couple more folks to offer some different wares**. If you have art or craft you'd like to show and sell, contact staff@becnet.org or call the BEC office at **891-6424**.





The party is being hosted at the home of BEC board member John Howlett at **1819 Citrus Ave in Chico.**

If you'd like to bring a **dish or beverages to share**, that would be most welcome; however, the critical element is **You**, so bring your sweet self on by. We look forward to spending festive time together!



Preserving Agriculture & the Greenline

The final draft of the **Ag Mitigation Ordinance** will be present as a public workshop on Thursday, Nov 21 to the Butte County Planning Commission. **BEC has weighed in over the past year** on this plan, participating in stakeholder meetings and submitting comments on drafts. We'd like to see this as a positive step toward the goals of preserving ag and open space. Unfortunately, **as currently written, the ordinance wouldn't have any meaningful impact for at least a decade because it**

exempts currently proposed development projects from the mitigation requirements. This essentially delays any meaningful protections for ag and open space. We are hopeful that **an Ag Preservation Policy being drafted by Butte County LAFCo**, the Local Agency Formation Commission would prevent these exemptions and require more meaningful mitigation. *Stay tuned...*



Watching out for the Greenline - Also at the Nov 21 Butte County Planning Commission meeting will be a public hearing on a draft **Special Events Venue Ordinance**. How would this impact the Greenline, you might ask? Well, property zoned for Ag have the potential to host events such as wedding or wine tastings - something that could be great for regional "agri-tourism". But what if that property was primarily an event venue just masquerading as Ag? The impact of traffic, sewage noise, and other "non-ag activities" have a real potential to degrade the viability of neighboring ag properties.



SAVE NORTH STATE WATER
STOP THE TUNNELS
WWW.BECNET.ORG



Protecting the Greenline is of paramount importance to BEC and we'll be watching and weighing in to make sure this



ordinance does not pose a threat to the viability of agriculture.

Oroville Urban Greening Plan: Community Workshop #2, November 18

The **Urban Greening Plan** in Oroville is making headway! Join your neighbors at this workshop at the **Oroville Veterans Memorial Hall, 2374 Montgomery St. in Oroville**, to envision a more bike-friendly, pedestrian-friendly, tree- and open space friendly version of this venerable town. The Greening Plan "**will help Oroville get funding for improvements--without imposing new regulations.**"

One of the improvements BEC seeks to promote is a scientific rigorous testing plan to identify and address the dioxin contamination left by 60 years of industrial carelessness. Funding exists at the state and Federal EPA to meet this need, we move forward as a coalition to procure it.



Claudia Stuart, lead County Planner on the Greening Plan project, describes the project timeline:

*The final workshop for the Urban Greening Plan will take place next spring, when we will review the draft Plan developed as a result of this fall's community input. Please feel free to **contact me** with any questions about Monday's workshop, or about the Urban Greening Plan; or visit our website at **www.butteorogreen.net** for more complete information.*

Oroville has had its share of challenges, but the essential beauty of the land shines through whatever mistakes humans could make there. Orovillians are moving, taking action to improve their community and their lives. It's an exciting process, and Butte is proud to be a part of that!

Protect Butte County's Most Valuable Resource

By Dave Garcia

Water is the foundation of life, a finite resource that must be vehemently protected. Our lakes, rivers, and wetlands are the

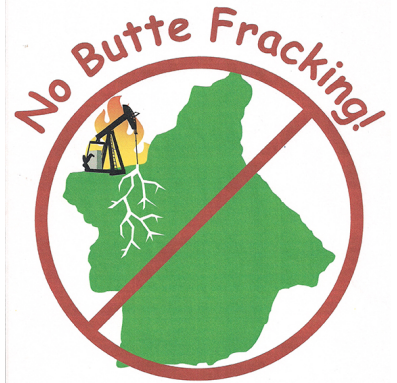


Beautiful *Endangered Species* *Faire* images (interspersed throughout) courtesy of Alan Schechter. Thank you Alan-- your eye is top-notch!

For more great pics from this event, [visit BEC's Facebook page](#).

life source of our county's natural and scenic beauty, bringing i millions of tourism dollars. Surface waters feed, nourish and replenish our Tuscan Aquifer, making them both vital components of Butte County's precious water supply. Maybe th is why Butte County chose the motto "**Land of Natural Wealt and Beauty.**"

But south of the North Valley, where water is scarce, corporations (along with the federal and state governments) are devising schemes to transport and take our water via projects like the **Twin Tunnels**, the **Conjunctive Water Management Plan**, and the **building and raising of dams**. These are schemes that would provide water for corporate desert farming, growing municipalities, and the oil and gas-extraction process known as **fracking**.



These are schemes that do not consider the deleterious effects and consequences imposed on Northern Californians or on their livelihood, welfare or on the environment as a whole ecosystem

[...Read the rest of the article here.](#)

Dave Garcia is a retired state parks ranger and the political chair with the Yahi Group Sierra Club. He was recently recognized by BEC as Environmentalist of t Year for 2013. He can be contacted at rangerdave@mynvw.com

Attitude of Gratitude: Thank You's

Every month there are people who help us; folks who go out of their way to give BEC time, money, expertise, love, aid and succor. We wouldn't want to be doing this without them--well, really, we *couldn't* do it without them, is the truth of it. But, dang! You all make it so much more **fun...**

Huge, stupendous thanks to **Cameron Scott** for his huge, stupendous work putting together the **Land-Air-Water concerts**. Cam, we love you! Your hard work, hustle, and savvy putting together ridiculously great musicians in stellar combination for our benefit...makes the wiggly puppy feelings commence. Thank you also to James Stonich for putting in so many hours to help make these shows successful. And to the sponsors of the concert series: Chico Natural Foods Cooperativ Chico News & Review, KZFR radio, and to **Sierra Nevada Brewery**--Thanks for doing what you do best and being generous with it, to our eternal delight.

We'd also like to give thanks to **Greg and Elena Hvzid**, **Tim Elliot**, and to **Robert and Julia Murphy**. Greg and Elena host the Code Blue Graywater Workshop, taking the leap of faith wit their home to allow **Tim Elliot (Greywater Guerilla)** to instal the system. Robert and Julia likewise trusted **Nani Teves (Co Blue Guru)** and **Jonas Herzog** to retrofit their gutters and



downspouts for the Rainwater Catchment Workshop. In exchange for opening up their homes to these small alterations, the Hvzids and the Murphys made out like bandits, getting greywater and rain catchment systems out of the deal. Win, win, and for the people that attended and learned how to make their own--more win.

We also want to recognize the folks that are participating in the panel for the final Code Blue event of the year "Reading Water," see above.

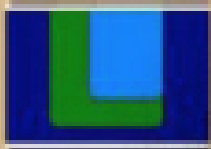
Protecting North State water, and educating the community on how to help, is a never-ending and -let's be honest--sometimes thankless job. So we want to shout it from the rooftops--**THANKS, Water Wonks and Warriors, for all you do and keep on doing.**

Thank you again for your continued support of BEC's efforts. Your input participation is always welcome. Simply reply to this email to tell me what's on your mind.

Hope to see you at our upcoming events. Together we can accomplish what is impossible alone.

Robyn DiFalco

Executive Director
Butte Environmental Council



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