



Butte Environmental Council

Educating and advocating for the land, air and water

Butte Environmental Council e-News *Your Environmental Sentinel*

January 2014

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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 BEC Events: Save the Date!

We're giving you the calendar out to June. Plenty of heads-up!

Friday, Feb 14 [Love & Bicycles: A Fundraiser for the Chico Bike Music Festival](#)

March 6-8 CSU Chico's ["This Way to Sustainability" Conference](#) (BEC presenting; registration is filling fast!)

Friday, Mar 7 [Environmental Coalition Gathering](#)

Sunday, Mar 30 [Breaking Bread, Breaking Ground](#)

Saturday, May 3 [Endangered Species Faire Moving!! to One-Mile Picnic Area this year!](#)

Thursday, May 29 [BEC Wine Tasting](#)

Saturday, June 7 [Chico Bicycle Music Festival](#)

Love & Bicycles: A Fundraiser for the Chico Bicycle Music Festival

Treat your special Valentine to an intimate bicycle lover date night! [Love and Bicycles](#) is a fantastic way to sweep your sweetheart off their feet--and onto the saddle. **This is a fundraiser for the 6th annual Chico Bicycle Music Festival, which takes place June 7th, 2014.** Tickets are \$50 for ride and dinner, \$40 for dinner only.

We will meet at the **Habitat Lab, 199 E. 13th St. in Chico at 4pm and start our ride around 4:30pm to the Humboldt Community Garden.** There we will have a coffee and chocolate tasting and a tour of

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the garden.

When we arrive back at Habitat Lab, we will have a phenomenal dinner by Blush Catering:

French Carrot Soup with **Garlic Parmesan Baguette**
Kale and Chard Salad, with torched orange segments, spiced almonds, marinated shaved fennel, and fresh herb crusted fromage blanc.

Braised lamb, Pork, or Polenta Root Vegetables - Potatoes, carrots, fingerling potatoes, smashed garlic, roasted onion, extra virgin olive oil, and fresh herbs.

Grilled Broccolini

Dessert: Creme brûlée, Mini Tiramisu, Cannoli, plus one glass of **wine, beer, or beverage**

... all while listening to the dulcet melodies of **The Railflowers**. A photo booth and hand-made valentines will be available for couples to enjoy.

We also hope to have childcare available (for an extra fee) only a block away so your drop-off and pick-up will be effortless -- and your offspring will be nearby -- but not TOO nearby.

Interested in Volunteering, with all the goodies it brings?

[Click here to sign up as a volunteer.](#)

[Click here to join or share the Facebook event.](#)



GMO Education Event Thurs, Jan 30

4:00 PM Chico Grange, 2775 Nord Ave., Chico

7:30 PM Thermalito Grange, 479 Plumas Ave., Oroville

Don't miss this opportunity to learn and ask questions about GMOs!

Howard Vlieger is a third-generation family farmer. He works and teaches as an independent crop nutrition advisor, helping crop and livestock farmers all across the US. Howard also works with scientists and researchers around the world to develop effective solutions for the real-life problems farmers are experiencing because of GMO crops and the chemicals used in growing them. He is a **co-author and the primary coordinator of a first-of-its-kind scientific study: the feeding of GMO and non-GMO grain to hogs for their lifetime as a meat animal.**

Get in the know about GMOs



He believes people deserve to be educated and know what is in their food. **Come hear him speak at two Butte County locations on Thursday, January 30.**

BEC's New Watershed Program

While water advocacy has long been a priority for BEC, this new program focuses on watersheds as an ecological planning unit that can



guide local land use planning.

Toward the end of 2013, the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance (BCCWA) approached BEC seeking a way to consolidate efforts. After several decades of watershed protection work, the BCCWA board felt that the best way to re-energize watershed protection efforts was to merge with a larger organization that encompassed the Alliance's mission and goals. After meetings between the boards of directors for the two organizations... [\(read more\)](#)



Community Garden at Oak Way Park

It's in the mix! Due to the wild (well, OK, cultivated) success of our Humboldt Community Garden, we're preparing a new community garden site!

Located at 8th Ave. and Highway 32, the Oak Way Community Garden is adjacent to the Oak Way Community Park. Like the Humboldt Community Garden, BEC is entering into a no-cost lease with the City for the use of the land. After installing water lines, fencing, and other improvements, BEC will in turn lease out plots to members of the community. [Read more...](#)



The garden will be self-supporting through the annual plot fees, but we need to raise the funds to build fence, lay the irrigation and install the other components of a community garden- tool shed, benches, compost bins, etc. BEC is currently soliciting donations for the start-up costs, and community members can contribute by donating here or volunteering. And you can **support the Garden** and meet some of your Garden neighbors at our [Breaking Bread, Breaking Ground](#) silent auction coming up on **Sunday, March 30!**

Local Fracking Initiative: Opportunities to Get Involved

The Citizen Action Network is moving forward with a ballot initiative for November 2014: a moratorium on fracking in Butte County! CAN is gathering citizen support and momentum to protect Butte County from the risks and social costs of fracking and other extreme energy extraction.

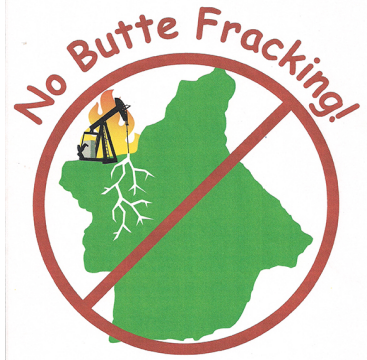
On Wednesday, February 5th, the Water Commission will discuss and vote on the potential for a Fracking Moratorium in Butte County. This will be a lively discussion in Oroville at the County Chambers. The meeting begins at 1:30 and the agenda item on fracking will likely happen around 3pm. Concerned citizens will carpool from all areas of the county so if you'd like to attend, call BEC to see about ride sharing.

Many California residents have noted the questionable wisdom of using a technology that irreparably fouls clean water in the midst of a severe drought. We believe that, even when we're not in the driest year on



record, we can't afford fracking's negative impacts.

So visit the [Frack-Free Butte County Facebook page](#) for more info on how to get involved; they've got a fundraiser party coming up at the Chico Women's Club to meet and network with like-minded, concerned citizens who support a moratorium on fracking. As they say on their website, "Come celebrate the luck of the Underdogs! Never underestimate! Let's have some FUN!" And keep watching their page to learn more and get involved. Frack-Free is the Way to Be!



How the Drought Changes Everything and Nothing

Governor Brown was right when he quoted George Santayana in his State of the State Address: **"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it"**. Here are some reminders for him as he and other representatives attempt to manage water by building a huge engineering project, ignoring environmental laws when expediting water transfers; and fracking in communities that lack reliable clean water.

- The Twin Tunnels project is a 50 year old idea that was defeated by voters in the 1980's.
- In 2009, Butte Environmental Council and others won a lawsuit against the California Department of Water Resources when the agency exempted the State from following environmental laws regarding water transfers because of Emergency Drought.
- Oil companies have been polluting water in California for over 100 years and downplaying the effects.

Meanwhile, regressive legislation is being proposed as a "drought

solution" misleadingly entitled "Central Valley Project Water Reliability Act". In summary, this radical legislation preempts state water law, eliminates environmental protections for salmon and other commercially valuable species, guts the 1992

Central Valley Project Improvement Act, and overturns the broadly supported, court approved settlement to restore the San Joaquin River. As a result, this bill threatens thousands of salmon fishing jobs and communities in California and Oregon, water quality in the Bay-Delta, and the reliability of California's water supplies. It is essentially another water grab to serve the perceived needs of San Joaquin Valley agriculture, to the detriment of the rest of the state of California.

BEC and our allies in the Environmental Water Caucus of California reject HR 3964 and call for real solutions to California's water crisis including water conservation and recycling.



BEC at This Way to Sustainability XI

In March, BEC will again participate in **CSU Chico's This Way to**



Sustainability Conference IX. This year's topic is "**Food and Farming**," a subject near and dear to us. BEC will be presenting two panels this year, both on **Thursday, March 6.**

Our Recycling and Rubbish Education Coordinator Tanya Parish will offer a panel on **Recycling Education at 2:00 in BMU 204;**

and then Carol Perkins and Nani Teves will present a session on water entitled "**Oops, I Did It Again: Overbuilt, Overallocated and Drained CA Water Systems.**" This session is in **BMU 211 at 3:00** (so you can catch both BEC panels!).

Registration is open and panels are filling up, so **register** for your panels now!

And be sure to stop by our **Environmental Coalition Gathering** on **Friday, March 7.** It's a great opportunity to meet the people who are working on creating a more sustainable Butte County -- and some of the visiting panelists from the Conference!

By the way: the young woman pictured here is Avalon Brown, who volunteered with us as a senior at Pleasant Valley High School. Now at CSU Chico, she continues to use skills she acquired at BEC. *Go Avi!*



Environmental Coalition Events

Sunday, Feb. 9 Chico Velo Rice Tandem

Featuring rides of 40, 65 and 100 miles; starts in Gridley and all routes include a loop of the Sutter Buttes, "the world's smallest mountain range" and incredible birdwatching, spring scenery while passing through Greylodge preserve, and Chico Velo's world-class support including SAG, rest stops and post-ride meal. \$40 pre-reg, \$50 day of registration

Saturday, Feb. 1 Sacramento River Preservation Trust "Adopt-a-Highway" Cleanup

SRPT will be conducting cleanups at Scotty's Landing, Indian Fishery, River Road, Washout, the Big Chico Creek Access Area, and along West Sacramento Avenue, on the first Saturday of February and continuing on the first Saturday of every month after in 2014. The Sacramento River is a great office to enjoy on Saturdays. See you at the river!

Tuesday, Feb. 4 Cultivating Communities "Building and Sharing Sustainability Success Potluck, Show and Tell"

Share a potluck meal at the Grange with community members and gardeners involved in the Cultivating Communities project.

Tuesday, Feb. 19 Sierra Club Yahi Group Informational Program: CLEARCUTTING

Local Activist Chris Nelson will give an update on the practice, extent, and impacts of clearcutting on private land in Northern California. Trish Puterbaugh is the Yahi Group's action contact for forest issues and will



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attend and be available for questions as well. This talk is FREE and open to anyone, and will be held at **7 pm on Tuesday, Feb. 19**, at the **Chico Branch Library at 1108 Sherman Ave.** (corner of East 1st Ave and Sherman in Chico). For more information, call **Suzette Welch** at **342-9214**.

For more fun and informative community events, see our [calendar](#).

Attitude of Gratitude: Thank You's

It's a pleasure to look around at people in our community that deserve a **big golden star and a hug**:

This month, we want to thank **John and Michelle Howlett** for hosting the BEC Holiday Party last month at their beautiful house!

And a huge and prolonged **Thank You to our Angels**--we were honored to spend time with you at the Angel Social;

Thanks also to **Wine Time** for providing a lovely venue for BEC's Angel Social.

Thanks to **Graphic Impressions** for the donated business cards! You certainly make a good impression on us.

Thank You to **Cal Organic Flowers** for their donation in support of the new Oak Way Community Garden--*we dig you!*



We are grateful for the constant attention and indestructible smile of **Bernie Buta, the Copier Doc**--we gotta stop meeting like this, Doc.

A huge Thank You to our **CPA John Burge** who consistently makes our taxes a cinch.

Thanks for infinite piles of crunched numbers to **Cameron Milligan**, our trusty bookkeeper. Cameron is consolidating her clients and bidding us adieu--we'll see you around, dear person, and we'll miss you every time we look at Quickbooks.

Grateful thanks to our grant funders: **Patagonia, Rose, and Clif Foundation**. The emotional boost of a funder recognizing that your work is valuable...is sweeter by far than the money--but the money is also pretty cool.

These are just some of the many people who we're lucky enough to make up a community with. **We are grateful to all of you for your continued support and trust.**

Thank you again for your continued support of BEC's efforts. Your input or 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.

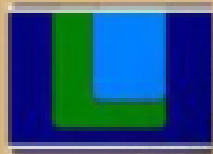
Robyn DiFalco

Executive Director
 Butte Environmental Council



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

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



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