



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

January 2015

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Dear Robyn,

We strive to make the Environmental Sentinel newsletter your premier source for environmental news in Butte County and we are excited to share the first issue of 2015 with you.

As a member of BEC, we know that you are a champion of the environment and a supporter of conservation. We thank you for support and for standing with us and over 700 members who defend and protect Butte County's precious resources.

Sincerely,
Robyn DiFalco

Upcoming BEC Events

Thursday, January 15 5 - 7 p.m.

BEC Angel Social

Home of Sharon Wallace, 2805 Oak Way, Chico

Friday, February 6 6 - 10 p.m.

Climate Rally Art Party

The Habitat Lab, 199 E 13th St, Chico

Saturday, February 14

Love & Bicycles Bike-in-Date Night Movie

GRUB Cooperative Great Room, 1525 Dayton Rd, Chico

Thursday, February 19 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

BEC Annual Member meeting

Annie K Bidwell Parlor, 956 Salem St, Chico

Friday, March 27 5:30 - 8 p.m.

Environmental Community Gathering at C.A.R.D.

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

New Year, New Ways to Get Involved

Get involved and help us strengthen our voice by [becoming an angel](#) today!

A BEC Angel is a donor who supports BEC with either a monthly or quarterly donation, helping us to continue the amazing work we do, and eliminating the need to remember to mail in the renewal slip each year!

We celebrate every contribution that is made to BEC, and each year we celebrate our angels at the [BEC Angel Social on Thurs., January 15.](#)

This year we are delighted to have our current board member and Angel, Sharon Wallace, open her home to host this event. We love taking the time together and taking a moment to say a heartfelt thank you to our angels.

This year we welcome all 174 of our Angels to come eat, drink and be merry on January 15. Combined, these supporters contribute almost \$30,000 annually to support the efforts of BEC. This support is larger than most of our grants and is vital to BEC's success.

Angel donations are the easiest and most cost efficient way to show your support for BEC's work.

As an Angel, you support the mission of BEC with your consistent donation of as little as \$5 per month via either check, credit card, or electronic funds transfer. To become an Angel today, call us at (530) 891-6424 or email ashleyp@becnet.org.



Save Oroville Trees!

Citizen activists in Oroville have been making headlines with their efforts to prevent PG&E from removing mature trees along Feather River Blvd. If you haven't been following the story developments, we've provided a couple links to recent news articles (see below) that will help catch you up.

So far **PG&E has removed 227 mature sycamore trees that are estimated to be 127 years old. Thirteen of the trees remain and activists have been holding daily vigils to stand in the way of tree** crews.



Check out this late breaking update from [Save Oroville Trees](#) (SOT) spokesperson Bill Bynum coming to you directly from yesterday's direction action:

"Save Oroville Trees (SOT) had their third confrontation with PG&E [yesterday] at the Oroville Cemetery. This happened even though the judge told them that he would rule on our court case against them on January 21. [District Attorney] Mike

Ramsey said after the judge ruled that PG&E would be "stupid" to show up to cut the trees. Well, they did.

"SOT has someone stationed at the cemetery from 5 am to 1 pm everyday, and [Tuesday] morning that person was Jill Allen. She called me at 5:10 and told me that the work crew was there. **I called our phone tree and headed down to the cemetery** which is 8 minutes from my house. In about 20 minutes around 5:45 about a dozen more trucks showed up and they mobilized a block from the trees. By that time we had about **20-30 of our people there to protect the trees**. As soon as it was light, around 6:15, they started setting down cones and closing one of the lanes. **They had chainsaws and private security folks from Yuba City and Sacramento and they numbered about 20-30 also. They walked around trying to hand out subpoenas**, no one would take one, and they taped them to the trees..." ([read more](#))

We need your help! If you would be willing to be added to the phone tree list and get a phone call some morning around 5:15 a.m. to come down to the cemetery, please let us know. Even if you live an hour away, you would still be able to get to the cemetery in time to make a difference. **Please join us if you can.** You can respond to this email or call Bill at (530) 403-7401.

Save Our Trees asked for BEC's help and we are now serving as their fiscal sponsor. **[Click here to make a secure online donation to Save Our Trees](#)** and support their legal fees to protect the trees!

Jan 13, 2015 **[Oroville Cemetery Trees Remain as Parties Return to Court](#)** (ChicoER)

Jan 12, 2015 **[Letter to the Editor: Money Talks so Council Can't Hear Tree Advocates](#)**

Jan 10, 2015 **[Save Oroville Trees Continues Protest Despite Restraining Order](#)**

Dec 18, 2014 **[Pre-Dawn Rally Held to Save Oroville Cemetery Trees But No Cutting Thursday](#)** (Oroville Mercury Register)

[Stay tune on this issue and join the Save Oroville Trees Facebook page.](#)

Love Makes Life A Beautiful Ride

Treat your special Valentine to an intimate bicycle lover date night at **[Love & Bicycles Date Night!](#)** This special event is a fundraiser for the **[7th Annual Chico Bicycle Music Festival](#)** and will include a bicycling-themed movie and food from the scrumptious [Wander food truck](#).

All this takes place on Valentine's Day, **Saturday, February 14, at the GRUB Cooperative (aka Heartseed Farm) at 1525 Dayton Rd in Chico.** If there's a better way to spend Valentine's Day, we're having a hard time thinking of one.

The [Chico Bicycle Music Festival](#) is a non-profit event to promote human scaled transportation through local music, innovation and community and takes place the first Saturday in June.



BEC's Year of Climate Action

On Sat, December 6th, BEC hosted a climate rally in the downtown Chico plaza to bring attention to the UN climate talks taking place in Lima, Peru. The effort was organized by Kaitlin Haley, a long-time Chico State activist and former BEC intern. There was a turnout of about 100 people, most of them under the age of thirty. They listened to music and speeches by Mark Herrera, Lucas RossMerz, and BEC Board Member, Melody Leopard. This event **launched BEC into a year of climate action leading up to the Paris Climate Summit in December 2015.**



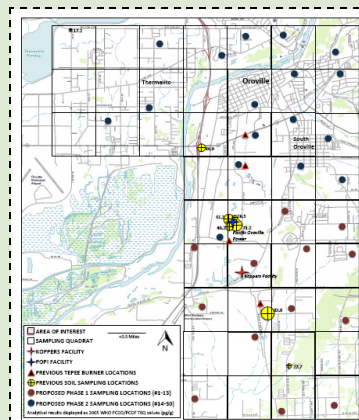
Our next action event will be on **Friday night, Feb 6th at 5pm** to kick-off the big "Action on Climate Leadership" march in Oakland the following day. BEC Board members Lindsey McDonnell and Kevin Killion are working with (former BEC Board member) Michael McLaughlin of Frack-Free Butte County to organize charter buses to take local folks down to Oakland on Saturday, Feb 7th for a statewide **March for Real Climate Leadership**. Kaitlin Haley has put together a send-off party of art and music at the Habitat Lab (199 E 13th St in Chico) the night before to get other local folks involved and to make signs for the march. It will be an infectious evening of activism and art.

[Check out the Facebook event page](#) for more details. **To reserve your seat on the bus, contact Mike at macvolt@gmail.com or call 877-1996.**

New Funding for Dioxin Testing in Oroville

The Oroville Dioxin Education Committee (ODEC), with BEC acting as fiscal sponsor, will pursue comprehensive testing for dioxin in soil samples in Oroville in the coming year.

The goal of the project is to determine the **level of toxicity and distribution of dioxins** in the Oroville community which will guide policy makers in determining the appropriate future use of the land or identify remediation or cleanup opportunities. Our efforts have been made possible with the help of some recent funding awards from the Rose Foundation and the Clif Bar Family Foundation.



[Click for full map of dioxin testing.](#)

On the last day of 2014, **John Lane and Jess Kolstad of Chico Environmental collected five soil samples for dioxin testing.** Three sample sites were around the old Koppers plant and the other two were SE of there towards Lincoln Blvd. The results from these samples will help determine where the next five samples will be taken.

In related news, **Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey's office recently settled the lawsuit filed against the Covanta Energy Co. that operated the Pacific Oroville Power Inc. (POPI) plant.** According to [a recent article in the Chico News & Review](#), the total settlement was for \$825,000, with Butte County getting \$136,000 of this. **We are hopeful that some of the settlement funds will be shared with Oroville Dioxin Education Committee**

(ODEC) since BEC helped with some of the original dioxin testing for this case in 2012. We are also working with Butte County Public Health who has agreed to give some funds for additional testing efforts.

Calling All Teachers: The Nature Bowl Comes to Butte County!

The Butte County Resource Conservation District (BCRCD) is excited to announce their partnership with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in coordinating the 30th annual Nature Bowl event.

The Nature Bowl is a science based educational program designed to increase students' ecological knowledge and conservation literacy.

The program is based off of California's "Next Generation" Science Standards and offers a great learning experience while allowing students to engage in friendly competition.



Registration for this event is now open and the BCRCD would like to encourage local students, grades 3rd through 6th and their coaches to represent the region and participate.

Any youth group can form a team; coaches can be teachers, parents, club leaders, student teachers or any other adult who wants to mentor a team. During registration, participants will have the opportunity to choose a Semi Final's site they would like to attend. This selection is on a first come, first serve basis so it is advised that interested participants register as soon as possible. The BCRCD will be hosting a Coaches Orientation and a Semi-Final event at the **Chico Creek Nature Center** in Chico, California. The Coaches Orientation is on **January 29, 2014 from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. at the Chico Creek Nature Center** located at 1968 E 8th St Chico, CA 95928. The Semi-Finals event will be on April 25, 2014, the time has yet to be determined.

For more info, Contact: Alyssa Cordova, AmeriCorps Conservation Associate (530) 534-0112 ext. 125 or buttecountyracd@gmail.com

Join us for the Annual BEC Member Meeting: February 19

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our members for their support and share all of BEC's recent achievements and highlight the efforts to come in the new year. The member meeting is free for members, and there will be door prizes!

The meeting is on **Thurs., February 19 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

at the Annie K Bidwell Parlor, 956 Salem St., Chico (near W. 9th St.)

Appetizers and beverages will be provided.



All members or anyone interested in becoming a member is welcome.

This is a great opportunity to meet the staff and board of the Butte Environmental Council and learn more specifics about the work we are

accomplishing on your behalf! We're also seeking your input. So please save the date and plan to join us February 19.

By the way, where is the Annie K Bidwell Parlor anyway?

Here's a link to a [Google Map](#).

Parking is available but the facility is also very accessible by bike and public transit.

Sustainability Conference and Environmental Gathering

Mark your calendars for the annual [This Way to Sustainability Conference X](#), Thursday - Friday, March 26, 27, 2015 at CSU, Chico.

This year's conference will focus on **Community Resilience**. Community resilience is a measure of the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations.



[Conference registration](#) is open now through March 20.

Students are free but must pre-register and fees for non-students are about as affordable as any conference out there.

BEC is proud to again host the closing reception of the conference.

Whether or not you attend the sustainability conference, the entire environmental community is invited to join this free event.

Environmental Community Gathering

5:30 p.m. at the C.A.R.D. Center, 545 Vallombrosa Ave, Chico

The newly renamed Environmental Coalition of Butte County invites you to a Community Gathering on Friday, March 27th following the last keynote presentation of the conference. This event brings together local environmental organizations and their supporters for a night of conversation and celebration. By gathering together we hope to strengthen relationships and improve communication between the organizations to develop more viable strategies and alliances for a safer, healthier and more vibrant community. There will be free appetizers and adult beverages for sale.

All from the local environmental community are encouraged to attend. The C.A.R.D. Center is located at 545 Vallombrosa Avenue, Chico. For more information about this event please contact Butte Environmental Council staff at (530) 891-6424 or visit the BEC website at www.becnet.org.

This event is sponsored by the Butte Environmental Council.

Chico Tree Advocates

Great news! Chico Tree Advocates was awarded a **Pollination Project grant of \$1000!** Bringing our season fundraising total to **\$5856**.

We are now able to offer **FREE TREES** to qualified

Chico property owners. **If you know of a spot that needs a tree, get us the property owner's contact info and we will see about getting them a tree.**

All we need now is more volunteer planters and more volunteer team leaders. If trees have ever inspired you, this is your chance to pass on that energy. Attend our **Tree Planting Party planning meetings** on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 4 p.m. at the Chico Peace & Justice Center (526 Broadway).

CTA got some national notice and director Charles Withuhn was quoted in the [Huffington Post](#).

Chico Tree Advocates have been on the job. The first week of January, we got a jolly group of five of us together and **planted trees in the Avenues and downtown**. You can see them on Spruce Ave. at E. 2nd Avenue and on Citrus at W. 6th Avenue and around that corner, and downtown on 3rd Street near Tomfoolery. It is so, a-may-zing, to get to participate in the continuous web of life that is our urban forest. You put the sapling in the ground; get to see it become stately; know that kids that are not born yet will enjoy the shade and ambiance of our arbored streets. Then on Jan. 9th, CTA did a tree planting on 3rd Street in downtown Chico.



Environmental Events in the Community

For more information about upcoming local events please visit **BEC's Environmental Events Calendar** at: <http://www.becnet.org/events>



Wed.-Sun., January 21 - 25 2015 Snow Goose Festival

Masonic Community Center, Chico, CA <http://www.snowgoosefestival.org/>

Tues., January 27

Forum: What Real Climate Leadership Looks Like

6-8pm, CSUC campus, in BMU room 210

This is one of seven forums to be held throughout the state on the community impacts of the gas and oil industry.

Sat., February 14 Love & Bicycles

A Valentine's Day fundraiser for the Chico Bicycle Music Festival at GRUB Cooperative / Heartseed Farm

<https://www.facebook.com/events/838457782883897/>

Thurs., February 19 BEC Annual Member Meeting

5:30-7:30pm at Annie K Bidwell Parlor on Salem St

Wed., February 21 Environmental Coalition of Butte County meeting

9am-10:30 at Chico Peace & Justice Center.

Sun, Mar 1 6th Annual Spring Seed Swap

Where: Chico Grange Hall, 2775 Nord Ave, Chico, CA.

When; Sunday, March 1 (notice date change), 2pm-6pm

What; Seeds, seeds, seeds! Bring your seeds, plant divisions, cuttings, scions,

envelopes, pens, and ? to the swap. As always there will be tables open for giving and/or receiving, vendors with garden and food related goodies, and presentations.

Looking for volunteers. Please email sherri@grubchico.org if you would like to help out.

March/April Series: "Bidwell Park: What's There and Its Care"

A weekly lecture series on Tuesday afternoons in March and April available to retirees who are members of OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute).

Register at: <http://rce.csuchico.edu/osher/register>

Thurs.-Fri., March 27-28

This Way to Sustainability Conference at CSU, Chico

<http://www.csuchico.edu/sustainablefuture/conference/>

Fri., March 27 Environmental Coalition Community Gathering

C.A.R.D. Center, 545 Vallombrosa Ave., Chico

For more information, please contact Butte Environmental Council staff at (530)891-6424 or visit the BEC website at www.becnet.org

Sun., April 12 BEC's Garden Party Fundraiser

5-8 p.m., Arc Pavilion www.becnet.org/events

Sun., April 12 7th Annual Walk4Water

Bridging the Gap Foundation, 8:30 a.m., Bidwell Park <http://btg4water.org/>

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