



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

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Dear Robyn,

Please note the following correction regarding the proposed tree removals and tree replacement by PG&E in Chico:

TONIGHT (Monday, November 16)

is the meeting of Bidwell Park & Playground Commission meeting (BPPC). Our newsletter stated that the meeting date was November 30 but we have learned that the meeting was moved up a week due to the Thanksgiving Holiday.

The meeting is at 6:30pm tonight, November 16 at the City Council Chambers building, 421 Main St, downtown Chico. [The agenda is posted online here](#) and this topic can be found in the agenda packet on pages 48-54.

Robyn DiFalco, Executive Director



Upcoming BEC Events

Sunday, Nov. 15 - Acorn Planting Day - [Join us](#) for a day of planting acorns in the beautiful shared Upper Bidwell Park.

Tuesday, Dec. 1 - Giving Tuesday - In a season dedicated to buying and getting, [Giving Tuesday](#) sets aside one day to reflect with gratitude on our privilege, and give back.

Saturday, Dec. 5 - Block Party With a Purpose - Join us in helping keep Chico's

urban creeks clean and invasive-free the first Saturday of every month. [December's block party](#) will be held for Lindo Channel, from 9:00 am - 12:30 pm.

Saturday, Dec. 12 - Chico Climate Rally 2015 Speak up about the climate! Come for music, art, keynote speakers and [ACTION!](#)

For more details about each of these events, see below or [visit BEC's website](#).

High Noon for the Planet & Climate March *Thinking globally, acting locally*

The weekend of November 28th, people everywhere are coming together for two weeks of action calling for climate justice and an end to carbon pollution. There are going to be thousands of events around the world culminating in a mass mobilization in Paris on Dec 12th. Join the global movement for climate justice and come together locally.

Saturday, Nov 28: Global Climate March at 11am, begins at 3rd and Wall St.

Chico is joining hundreds of communities worldwide and taking to the streets on November 28th, the eve of the big U.N summit on climate change in Paris. Our message is twofold. To our local leaders and our larger Chico community: climate change is an issue that Chicoans care about, that we need to urgently address. To our world leaders gathering in Paris: keep fossil fuels in the ground and finance a just transition to 100% renewable energy by 2050. Show up to show Chico that we care and be part of the worldwide movement.



In solidarity with the [People's Climate Action mass mobilization in Paris](#) on the same day, we're coming together to make our voices heard about this incredibly important issue.

Saturday, December 12: High Noon for the Planet, downtown Chico Plaza

Speak out about the climate! Come for music, art, keynote speakers and ACTION! Join BEC and Chico350.org on the afternoon of December 12th at 12:00 noon (12/12 at 12) in the downtown Chico plaza as the people of Butte County come together to address our local and national leaders in creating immediate policy addressing the effects of climate change happening in our community and our world.

Check the Facebook group [Chico 350](#), or email Chico350.org@gmail.com, and [visit BEC's website](#) to get more details about both of these events or to get involved in our local climate action movement.

It's Time to Plant Acorns!

Last winter volunteers helped BEC plant 100 acorn sites in Upper Bidwell Park. This summer volunteers helped us water those trees weekly. Those trees had a high success rate (75%) and most are thriving today.

This year the project continues and we need your help to plant more acorns this winter in Upper Bidwell Park as part of our initiative to restore endangered oak woodlands in our area, and we need your help!



There will be four community planting days from 1 PM - 4 PM in various areas of Upper Park.

Sun. November 15th | Sat. November 21st

Sun. December 13th | Sat. December 19th

This is a great activity for families, clubs, and groups of all kinds. All materials provided, volunteers welcomed to bring their own shovels and gloves.

For more information and to register click [HERE](#) or contact our oak project coordinator Danielle Baxter: daniellebaxterr@gmail.com | (530) 570-6528

Current Advocacy Issues

*** Tree Removals in Chico by PG&E** - Join us on [Monday, November 16](#) [correction] at 6:30pm to speak out for Chico's trees. The next meeting of the [Bidwell Park & Playground Commission \(BPPC\)](#) will have a proposal by PG&E to remove 32 trees in the Comanche Creek area and will include a proposed replanting and mitigation plan. (This topic was originally scheduled for October 26 but was cancelled due to a lack of quorum.) A public forum on Aug 31 had a good citizen turnout and this next meeting will be the most important because the BPPC will finally have the opportunity to vote and take a position on this issue.

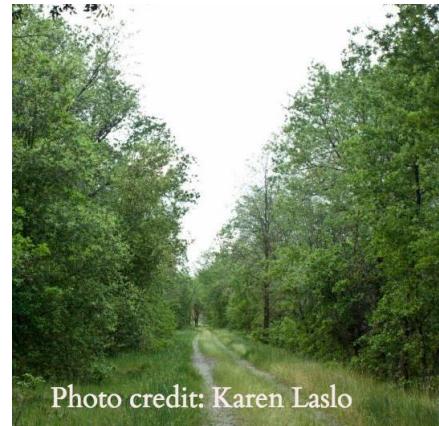


Photo credit: Karen Laslo

*** Right-to-Farm Ordinance, the 300-ft ag buffer, and the Chico Greenline** - The County recently held a public hearing on Zoning Amendments at the Oct 22 Planning Commission meeting in Oroville and will cast [a final vote at its November 12 meeting](#). This is the final stage in adopting these policies that have been debated for the past year and a half. BEC has been advocating to maintain the 300-foot ag buffer to protect residences from impacts of ag (pesticides, dust, etc) and prevent development density in rural areas where it shouldn't be.

*** Chico Scrap Metal / Move the Junkyard fundraiser** -- BEC is working with a coalition of concerned citizens on strategies to hold Chico Scrap Metal accountable for cleaning up its toxic pollution in the Chapman/Mulberry neighborhood and relocate from its 20th St. property, as mandated by City Council. A fundraiser is taking place on Thursday, November 12. See listing of community events below for more details or visit [BEC's online calendar](#).

Give Back on Giving Tuesday: December 1

You've heard of Black Friday and "Cyber Monday" when American consumers take advantage of deals online to buy even more stuff. So let's make "Giving Tuesday" a counterbalance to all that. **Make a different kind of impact this holiday season.**

Now that the holiday season is here, consider the impact your gift can make for BEC. We're thinking globally and acting locally every day and your gift to BEC could allow us to send more kids on a field trip to the landfill, plant more trees, or respond to major water transfer projects that threatens our valley's water supply. You can help BEC continue to have a positive impact in the face of all the impacts that threaten our natural resources.



[Give the gift of BEC membership this holiday season.](#) It's easy through our secure online donation page.

Thank You for Making our 40th Anniversary Great!

A milestone like this deserved to be commemorated with a really special event -- and **because of you**, this night was everything we hoped it would be!

We were overwhelmed with gratitude and all the positive comments shared by attendees. Thanks to **Ha'Penny Bridge** for providing great music, to everyone who donated great silent auction items including delicious desserts, to all the people who came from out of town to celebrate with us, and to our sponsors who helped make it possible: Klean Kanteen, AgMart, and of course Sierra Nevada Brewing Company. We also got some nice media coverage:
[Chico News & Review: "BEC At 40"](#)
[North State Public Radio: "BEC Fetes 40 Years"](#)



Special thanks also to [David Yager Photography](#) for the excellent [photos](#) capturing our event! Please check out the online album.

BEC's Citizen Science Event at the Snow Goose Festival

Join Lindsay Wood, BEC's Watershed Program Coordinator and Jon Aull, Outdoor Education and Research Coordinator for the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve, for a tour of the

Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve
Wednesday, January 27, 2016
10:00 am - 3:00 pm



The Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve (BCCER) is 3,950 acres of diverse canyon and ridge habitats, ranging from 700 feet to 2,044 feet in elevation and containing 4.5 miles of Big Chico Creek's 45 mile long channel. The Reserve is part of the larger Big Chico Creek watershed, home to a great diversity of plants and animals, including over 100 bird species. A historical ranch, the BCCER is now a place for education, research, and habitat enhancement for sensitive species such as the foothill yellow-legged frog, chinook salmon, and western pond turtles. The tour will cover a variety of habitats. We will bird the oak woodland/chaparral of the upper canyon, then we'll head down to the riparian area along the Creek. This is a special opportunity to be transported by vehicle through a steep and somewhat remote area with only walk-in access for the public. [Online registration](#) for this and other workshops will be live in December so **save the date** and check back to register.

Block Parties With a Purpose Return!

We are excited to announce the return of our Block Parties with a Purpose program! Beginning in December, we will host an event on the **first Saturday of each month**. Over the years, invasive plant species have been out-competing beneficial native plants, consequently providing fuel for fires. In addition, excessive garbage

pollutes the water and leaves neighborhoods looking neglected. Tackling this problem is intimidating for everyone but when we get together and boost combined efforts, urban waterways can once again be the beautiful little neighborhood creeks and healthy wildlife habitat corridors that they once were.

This project is sponsored by the City of Chico and supports residents joining together to clean up sections of Chico's urban creeks filled with invasive species and garbage. [Click here](#) to find out when we'll be in **your** neighborhood!



Go Green and Support BEC in One Step!

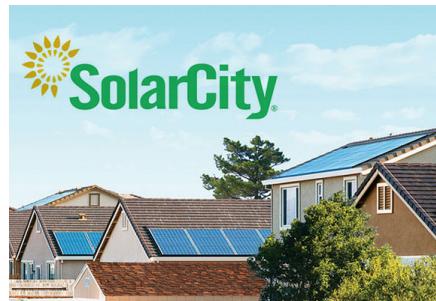
Send funds back to BEC by going solar with SolarCity, America's #1 full-service solar provider.

For more information, visit www.becnet.org/solar



4 Solar Installations = \$1000 donated to BEC this year

We're so excited that solar installations are happening in BEC's name. So far this year, 4 homes have signed up through this program and that means not only are these families making the shift to renewable energy, but with each installation Solar City donates \$250 to BEC! What a great win-win for the environment! To find out more, [visit our website](#) or call Craig Almaguer at 530-228-1895.



Spring 2016 Citizen Science Series: *An exploration of the Feather River Watershed*

This spring BEC's Watershed Program will host a three-part citizen science series exploring the Feather River Watershed. The first trip will explore indigenous peoples and their land, the second will focus on infrastructure throughout the watershed, and the final trip will be sponsored by the Forebay Aquatic Center and we will float down the Feather River from the hatchery to Riverbend Park amidst (hopefully!) many spring-run salmon. Stay tuned for [more information!](#)



Save Oroville Trees Update

Save Oroville Trees (SOT) continues to be active in the Oroville community, advocating for our urban forest. Recent projects include volunteer weeding,

pruning, and trash removal from Centennial Park; attending Parks Department and Oroville City Council meetings to provide input on a prospective tree ordinance; forming a committee to pursue grants in collaboration with BEC; and caring for 90 seedlings to be planted in designated parks and other green spaces to replace the 13 historic sycamores that were removed in February. To learn more about these projects and to get involved, please visit the [SOT page on BEC's website](#).



Dreading Your Holiday Season Energy Bill?

It doesn't have to be like this.

Around this time of year, energy bills have a tendency to jump to levels we aren't proud of in part because we have a propensity for throwing parties and decorating our houses.) So, what to do?

Here are a few small things to do that have surprisingly big results:

- Close vents in unused rooms, and then shut the door to those rooms.
- Cover bare floors with rugs.
- Have your furnace serviced professionally.
- Check the vents once a month, and change filters as soon as they're dirty.
- This time of year, we'll wear socks, get a sweater, put another blanket on the bed before turning up the thermostat, but remember to open the drapes during sunny days to let the light and heat in.
- Take window air conditioners out of windows. While you're at it, weatherstrip your windows and doors, and put foam gaskets behind light switch and outlet faceplates (Come by the office to pick up some of these gaskets)
- Plug holiday lights, electronics and household appliances into power strips, and turn the power strips off when you aren't using them.



Oh, and did we mention you can get your very own state-of-the-art official BEC 5-minute shower timer for FREE just by dropping by our downtown office? Well, you can. Guess how much hot water that saves? (Hint: a bunch.)

For more ideas and information on preparing your home for cold weather and energy/ water conservation in general, check out www.EnergyUpgradeCA.org. Then follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and/or check out our new Pinterest account for even more.

Think you're an energy saving guru? Take our little quiz, whiz kid.

1. How much money does the average American household pay per year on Standby (devices plugged in but not in use) power?
a). \$50 b). \$70 c). \$100
2. What's the optimal temperature to keep your thermostat in the winter?
a). 58 degrees b). 65 degrees c). 72 degrees
3. What temperature should you set your washing machine to?
a). cold for clothes, hot for sheets & towels
b). warm but not hot- you want your clothes clean without wasting.
c). always cold- it cleans just as well without spending energy

4. If you were to add up all of the space the average American house has around doors, windows, cracks and other air leaks (before weatherstripping and patching) you would see a hole in each house how big across?

- a.) 3 feet
- b.) 2 feet
- c.) 1 foot

answers: 1. c); 2. b); 3. c); 4. a)

Recycling And Rubbish Education Tips

The RARE team was at Patrick Ranch last month during Parent Magazine's Harvest Festival on Oct 17th. We had a great time with the kids learning how to sort through a wagon of rubbish and find all the recyclables and reusables.

One of our most important parts of our curriculum is that we teach them **how to prevent waste in the first place**.

Instead of recycling water bottles, use a reusable water container and don't buy bottled water in the first place. Better than recycling office paper is using both sides of the page, either by double-siding your print job or using used paper for scratch paper. [BEC's RARE program](#) emphasizes the first 2 R's: Reduce, and Reuse before the 3rd R: Recycle. Many items that cannot go into the curbside recycling bin, may yet be recyclable.



For any and all recycling questions, check out www.RecycleButte.net, a convenient all-in-one informative website for all of Butte County including information about waste collection at the curbside as well as drop off locations for bulky items, e-waste, and hazardous waste.

Upcoming Environmental Events in the Community

Nov 11 Chico Tree Advocates Meeting, 4-5pm at BEC Conference room
Anyone is welcome to attend and get involved!

Nov 12 "Move the Junkyard" fundraiser

"JUST DESERTS" 5:30 - 8:30pm at 1426 Downing Ave. (corner at E. 5th Ave., across from Neal Dow school). Live music by Tom Haithcock & friends (Wounded Pickup) will entertain. \$20 per person. Beer and wine no host bar. Please help us make this a success! Make checks out to "Move the Junkyard", PO Box 5281 Chico, CA 95927.

Nov 15 Chico Permaculture Guild Monthly Gathering, Techniques & Strategies #4: Polycultures, Plant Guilds & Forest Gardens. 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'. More information: <https://chicopermaculture.wordpress.com/what-we-do/monthly-gatherings/>

Nov 15 Get To Know Your Winter Squash: Winter Squash Date Night.

3 PM - 6 PM at the Chico Grange, 2775 Nord Ave

Do you like it prepared savory or sweet or simply just roasted? Get to know your winter squashes! GRUB Ed provides the backdrop for tasting these winter wonders, with "tasting note cards" for you to scribe your thoughts. Sit, taste & compare the squash families and leave this GRUB Ed fundraiser with recipes & growing tips. We'll have squash delectables for sale, as well as beer, wine & pomegranate martini's & nonalcoholic pomegranate fizzy drinks. Join us as we get comfortable knowing our winter squash. Contact: Laurie Niles at 530-342-1995

Nov 18 The Sustainability Resource Center (SRC) presents Wildlife Refuge Hikes:

This 50 minute hike will introduce you to the refuge, local mushrooms and plants. All hikes guided by naturalist, Geoff Hall. Meet at the SRC at 12:30. Location: (SSG-101, near the Arts bldg) on main campus: 3536 Butte Campus Drive, Oroville. More details.

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In solidarity with the People's Climate Action mass mobilization in Paris on the same day, we're coming together to make our voices heard about this incredibly important issue.

Thus, Dec 17 BEC Holiday Party from 5:30 - 7:30, at BEC's offices downtown 116 West 2nd St (upstairs from Naked Lounge Coffee). All BEC members are invited. Bring a dish or beverages to share or just bring yourself.

Fri, Dec 18 Sierra Club Holiday Party at Valley Oaks Village

Dec 20 Chico Permaculture Guild Monthly Gathering, Techniques & Strategies #5: Seeds, Seed Saving and Drought Tolerant Annual Crops. 10am - 1pm at the Chico Library meeting room (1108 Sherman Ave.) Free and open to the public. 1-2 hour interactive discussion, Holiday potluck and 'Share the Surplus Swap'. More information: <https://chicopermaculture.wordpress.com/what-we-do/monthly-gatherings/>

[This gathering is co-hosted with the Chico Seed Lending Library and also completes the CPG education cycle for 2015]

2016 - Happy New Year!

Jan 27-31 Snow Goose Festival (Save the Date!)

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

Mar 24-25 This Way to Sustainability Conference XI (Save the Date!)

"Many Voices ~ Common Ground"



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