



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

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Upcoming BEC Events

Saturday, Sept. 19 - [Bidwell Park and Creeks of Chico Clean-up](#), 9am-12:30pm, Hooker Oak Recreation Area -or- 10th & Salem St.

Sunday, Sept. 27 - [Water-Wise and Habitat -Friendly Garden Tour](#), 10am-2pm, The Gateway Science Museum Garden or Chico Creek Nature Center

Saturday, October 24 - [BEC 40th Anniversary Gala](#), Doors at 5pm, Dinner at 6pm, Sierra Nevada Big Room

Announcing BEC Award Winners for 2015

We are proud to announce this year's award recipients which will be presented at the BEC 40th Anniversary Gala and Awards Banquet on **Saturday, October 24** at the Sierra Nevada Big Room.

The **2015 Environmentalist of the Year award** goes to [Kaitlin Haley and Kevin Killion](#) who successfully led a student campaign last year that got the CSU, Chico Research Foundation to commit to divesting from fossil fuels, making it the first public university in the nation to do so. These two recent CSUC graduates are leading their generation in the fight against climate change.

The **Barris Farms Service Award** is being presented to [Lesley Kuykendal](#), long-time BEC member from Oroville who has led the Oroville Dioxin Education Committee and efforts to seek remediation for the legacy of industrial pollution that disproportionately affects the community of Oroville. Lesley has also given her service to other local efforts such as banning fracking in Butte County and the Save Oroville Trees campaign that fought against PG&E Tree removals this year.

The **Michael McGinnis Lifetime Achievement Award** will recognize [Karl Ory](#) for his decades of work to establish and protect the Chico Area Greenline, advance public transit, helping close the Rancho Seco nuclear plant in Sacramento, defeat downtown parking structures, and "save" the farmer's market. Ory also served on Chico City Council from 1977-85 including two years as mayor.

We are proud to work alongside these shining examples of local environmental activism. Please join us in recognizing their dedicated efforts.

Annie B's Campaign Lends Support to Local Non-Profits

This year, the support that BEC receives through the Annie B's drive will have an even greater impact. **BEC has been chosen by the City of Chico to receive an additional 40-60% in matching funds for our neighborhood cleanup program - "Block Parties with a Purpose"** - where neighborhood groups tackle the illegal dumping and



invasive plants that have become too common in our urban creeks. Your donation (and the City's match) will enable BEC to provide even more tools, lunch, and logistical support, empowering more neighbors to come together and become stewards of the creeks that run through our community.

[Please take time to send your donation before September 30](#) to be included in this wonderful fundraiser. This is a great time to renew your membership or give that second gift, as matching campaigns stretch every dollar just a little further.

You can donate on our website or **make checks payable to NVCF/BEC at:**
North Valley Community Foundation, 240 Main Street, Suite 260, Chico, CA 95928

**Butte
Environmental
Council**
is Turning...

40

Celebrate!

October 24, 2015

- Live Music
- Delicious Dinner
- Silent Auction
- Beer & Wine

Tickets:
\$50 - Standard Ticket Until Oct. 10
\$60 - Standard Ticket After Oct. 10
www.becnet.org • 530.891.6424

You Don't Want to Miss this Event!
At the Sierra Nevada Big Room

Raise Your Voice to Save the Trees: PG&E Proposed Tree Removals in south Chico area

At least two dozen concerned citizens spoke out at a public forum held on August 31 at the City of Chico Bidwell Park and Playground Commission (BPPC) meeting. The forum was to provide info about Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) plans to remove 86+ trees from above a gas pipeline in South Chico, near Comanche Creek from the Midway at Hegan Lane to approximately Estes Road.



Comanche Creek area
proposed tree removals.
Photo by Karen Laslo.

BEC has been meeting with City staff and PG&E officials since February 2015 and we feel we've made significant headway because of our efforts behind the scenes. The proposed project has been modified from the original proposal and now you'll see the media reporting "as few as 33 trees" proposed to be cut. However, we still fear as many as 100 trees may be threatened (including baby trees under 4" diameter) and we question the criteria for removing any trees at all.

After the massive public outcry over PG&E's removal of 250 historic trees along the Oroville Cemetery last winter, BEC urged the City of Chico to provide a citizen forum to allow for input before any final plans were approved. August 31 was the first phase for input and **the next opportunity will be Monday, October 26** at the Bidwell Park & Playground Commission meeting, 6:30pm at City Hall, where more specifics will be presented.

Here are ways you can help us save these trees. First, mark your calendar for **October 26** at 6:30 pm and join us at the Park Commission meeting. Second, **make your voice heard by sending letters and emails:**

- ☐ email Park Commissioners at parkinfo@ChicoCA.gov and request that your letter is forwarded to all Park Commissioners.
- ☐ City Manager, Mark Orme - mark.orme@chicoca.gov
- ☐ City Council members - debbie.presson@chicoca.gov (Email the City Clerk to reach all 7 council members)
- ☐ Or email individual council members, listed here: http://www.chico.ca.us/city_council/home_page.asp
- ☐ Send in Letters to the Editor:
 - ☐ Chico ER: (<250 words) dlittle@chicoer.com
 - ☐ CN&R: (<200 words) melissad@newsreview.com

The best hope for these trees is that the citizens of our community speak out loud and clear. Massive public concern (and outrage!) is the best tool you can give local decision makers in their dealings with PG&E.

Sign up To be A Clean Up Volunteer or Leader September 19

The annual Bidwell Park and Chico Creeks Cleanup is **coming soon!** On Saturday, **September 19th**, BEC and the City of Chico will host this annual community event as part of the broader [Great Sierra River Cleanup](#) and Coastal Cleanup Day events. It's almost time to gather up your work clothes, grab your boots, water bottle, and your friends, and join us for the Cleanup!

Hundreds of volunteers will help pull tons of trash and recyclables from our waterways and beloved parks. Last year along The creek needs our help! Each year, we clear out TONS of trash, scrap metal, furniture, and recyclables, and we expect this to be a record-breaking year!



Check in begins at 9:00 AM in two locations:

- **965 Salem Street at 10th Street**
- **Hooker Oak Recreation Area** (off Manzanita Ave.)

You can pre-register at <http://www.becnet.org/bidwell-park-clean-up>, or just show up on Saturday ready to work! "Early Birds" will get a free T-shirt and BBQ lunch (while supplies last), and a sense of pride and accomplishment! We will be having some fun **social media photo contests** going on, and are looking forward to seeing what unusual items people find!

Groups are encouraged to wear your company or organization logo on the day of the event, and [you can pre-register your group at http://www.becnet.org/bidwell-](http://www.becnet.org/bidwell-)

[park-clean-up](#). We'll have a **photo contest on social media** and you'll be encouraged to get shots of your group in action, helping to clean our beloved park. As a business partner to The Bidwell Park & Chico Creeks Cleanup, your company will be recognized for your generous efforts and your willingness to set an example of excellent community service. This can also be a great team-building opportunity.

Would you like to be more involved? We are looking for some super volunteers to act in the role of Field Site Captains along Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, and Lindo Channel. Do you know an area of the creek really well? Would you be able to provide some direction on-site to a team of volunteers that day? Please call the BEC office at 891-6424 and let us know if you can help in this way.

We also need more trucks and drivers! If you have a truck and can help haul trash loads from the creek back to the dumpsters, please indicate that on your registration form, or call 891-6424 and speak with Danielle.

We have some great sponsors this year for the Cleanup! The [City of Chico](#) and The [Butte County Fish and Game Commission](#) are once again covering the costs of essential supplies and promotional materials. [Orchard Supply Hardware](#) has contributed 250 buckets and supplies that will be used by volunteers to collect recyclables, keeping them separate from the trash! [Klean Kanteen](#) has not only supported the event financially, but they are also providing a "hydration station" for all of the volunteers. Other generous support has come from [Tri Counties Bank](#) and [Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.](#) Both [ChicoBag Company](#) and [FISHBIO](#) are also providing financial support, as well as bringing enthusiastic teams of volunteers. Our volunteers will keep energized thanks to the coffee, pastries, bagels, and cream cheese provided by [Upper Crust Bakery](#) and [Brooklyn Bridge Bagel Works](#). Pizza will also be provided by [Woodstock's Pizza](#); pre-event volunteer work. And after working hard, hungry volunteers will enjoy a BBQ lunch provided by [Madison Bear Garden](#) and organic rice chips from [Lundberg Family Farms](#). [Butte County Public Works](#) waives the fees at the [Neal Road Recycling & Waste Facility](#) for all of the waste collected. The [Printed Image](#) has again provided T-shirts for volunteers at a discounted rate. Special thanks also to the [Chico Area Recreation District](#) for allowing us the use of Hooker Oak Recreation area as a dispatch site and as the site of our volunteer picnic. Thanks also to our media sponsor [The Chico News & Review](#) for providing ad space.

Water-Wise & Habitat Friendly Garden Tour of Chico

The event will take place on **Sunday, September 27, 2015 from 10am-2pm**. This free event is co-hosted by The Butte Environmental Council, the Mt. Lassen Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and the Altacal Audubon Society's Neighborhood Habitat Certification Program. Get inspiration for your garden, just in time for fall planting. The gardens on this tour demonstrate a variety of techniques for conserving water and creating wildlife-friendly habitat.

This tour will show effective techniques for replacing lawns, conserving water, and creating wildlife-friendly habitats in their own gardens. Some of the techniques that will be shared include the incorporation of native and drought-tolerant plants and grasses, drip irrigation, bee and bird habitats, and more.

Register online at <http://www.becnet.org/events/water-wise-habitat-friendly-garden-tour>. Online registrants will receive an email confirmation of their registration, as well as guidelines and a tour map. Participants can also register on the day of the event at the Gateway Science Museum Pollinator Garden or the Chico Creek Nature Center. Garden maps will be provided at both of these starting locations and tour participants are free to visit as many of the gardens in

whichever order they prefer. Extended tour hours will also occur at the Patrick Ranch Demonstration Gardens and the Floral Native Nursery Demonstration Garden. For more information about this event, please contact Ann Elliott at 530-521-4402.

Calling All Volunteers: Oak Watering & Acorn Collecting

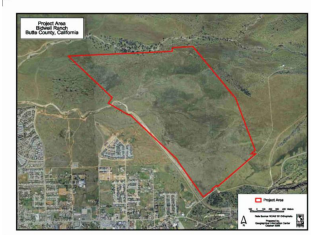
Acorns are early this year! With the drought, trees are setting and dropping acorns already. For BEC's Oak Planting Project in Upper Bidwell Park, we need your help **collecting Blue Oak and Valley Oak acorns on special collection days.**



Every Sunday morning we are at Upper Park watering the 200 oak saplings we planted last year with funding from the California Wildlife Foundation. **Watering takes place from 9-10 am every Sunday.** But we also need help collecting acorns for our next round of planting this winter. **Acorn collection will take place on Sundays from 10 am-noon** on three consecutive Sundays starting Sept. 20-Oct. 4th. Please call our office to sign up to be a volunteer acorn collector, and/or planter.

BEC's Other Recent Advocacy Work

Bidwell Ranch -- The Chico City Council is considering options for the Bidwell Ranch property in northeast Chico, adjacent to Upper Bidwell Park. The City's proposed plans include an interim "management plan" with limited public access. Then in 2016 there is the potential for the property to be purchased through the Butte Regional Conservation Plan (BRCP) and managed as a mitigation bank through State Agencies for its sensitive habitat and biological resources. We have concerns the City doesn't fully understand the complexity and uncertainty of this approach. The goal is ultimately for the property to achieve a state of permanent protected status and never again be faced with the threat of potential development. BEC is meeting with environmental allies and will remain engaged as the City considers its options.



Excessive groundwater pumping - The proposal by Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District (GCID) to install 5 new deep water wells is "on hold" due to a recently adopted moratorium on new wells by the Glenn County supervisors. **BEC's water policy advocate** Carol Perkins helped support Glenn County residents and the **Save Our Water Resources** group who pushed for this moratorium that will be in place for 6 months. Meanwhile, BEC is meeting with local farmers based in Butte and Glenn Counties who have been directly affected by excessive groundwater pumping. In these unprecedented times, farmers and environmentalists are seeking common ground to protect our precious water resources.

The Right-to-Farm Ordinance, the 300 ft ag buffer, and the Chico Greenline

- Several policies are interconnected and being reviewed by County Supervisors at this time. The latest was a hearing at the Board of Supervisors meeting on 8/25/15 about whether residential zoning west of the Greenline was appropriate and should be reconsidered. BEC attended the hearing and spoke in favor of revising the zoning from 2.5 acre minimums to 5-acre minimums to better "buffer" residential development from the neighboring Ag parcels. The topic comes back for a decision at the 9/15/15 Board of Supervisors meeting where they will also consider the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposal to reduce the current 300 ft buffer between ag and residential. BEC is advocating in favor of "Alternative 3"

proposed by the EIR, which would maintain the 300 ft buffer and have the County "go back to the drawing board" on the appropriate zoning for areas between ag and residential.

Chico Bicycle Master Plan -- Check out www.chicobikeplan.com for local efforts that are underway to update/revise this plan.

Welcome New BEC Board Members

We're happy to announce that four new board members have stepped up to serve BEC including **Sarah McConnell, Seth Derish, Paige Gimbal, and Jessica Vandehoven**. They collectively bring a diversity of experience, history with BEC, enthusiasm, and community connections to the BEC team.



We also wish to recognize the service of board members who recently stepped down at or near the end of their terms. **Steve Handy** gave so much time and energy to supporting the Humboldt Community Garden and contributed some impressive fundraising for BEC. **Grace Marvin** chaired our Advocacy Committee and worked on so many important issues, especially water and fracking. **Skye Li** led our Events Committee and continues to support BEC events with her time, ideas and community connections even after her term has ended.

We have one remaining vacancy on the board and BEC members are encouraged to submit an application. To see a complete list of BEC board member bios or to learn more about serving on the BEC board, please visit www.becnet.org/board-directors

RARE is Ready for Back to School

The school year has started, and [BEC's Recycling And Rubbish Education Program \(RARE\)](http://www.becnet.org/RARE) is up and running! We are now scheduling interactive recycling and hands-on composting presentations for classrooms all over Butte County, in K- 12 classrooms and even for after school programs. This year we are going to out-do ourselves and **give even more free workshops to schools in Butte County than last year!** The Recycling and Compost presentations emphasize the 4R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot.



Our RARE Program also offers [field trips to the Neal Road Landfill](http://www.becnet.org/RARE) to add to each lesson the ultimate message "there is no away." Tell your favorite teachers about BEC's recycling education program! To book a workshop or field trip call our office or or sign up online, at www.becnet.org/RARE

Upcoming Environmental Events in the Community

Thurs, Sept 17 - Sierra Club meeting 6:30pm at Chico Public Library - Jim Brobeck from AquaAlliance will give a free presentation about groundwater substitution and transfer/sales of water from the Sacramento Valley. Takes place at Chico Branch Library 1108 Sherman in Chico. For more info contact Suzette Welch 342-9214 or booksontape@rocketmail.com.

Sat, Sept 26 - Salmon Festival in Oroville - BEC will have a Recycling Education booth, and an Energy Conservation booth, at the Festival. Enjoy a Street Fair, Kids Zone, art activities, free Tours of the Fish Hatchery, free shuttle bus service, BCOE Family Fun Day, free live music, a Beer & Wine Garden and lots of GREAT FOOD.



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