

April 20th, 2020



BUTTE ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL PROVIDES SUPPORT TO KEEP CREEKS CLEAN AND IMPROVE RIPARIAN HABITAT HEALTH ALONGSIDE LOCAL GROUPS LEADING MUTUAL AID FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS:

Recent state funding (**Executive Order N-32-20**) has spurred local efforts to temporarily shelter most at risk among homeless populations, and Chico City Council has taken emergency steps to comply with CDC guidelines and enact a short-term ban on evictions of those with nowhere else to go in encampments of 10 people or less. As people are allowed to move encampments out of hiding in waterways and into open spaces, an opportunity is presented for us to help our local creeks and riparian habitats recover. Butte Environmental Council (BEC) will assist in the mutual aid response to the COVID-19 pandemic by offering physical and educational resources to keep our local creeks and parks clean.

Every year, BEC organizes and hosts the largest community wide cleanup in the North State to mitigate harmful ecological impacts on local waterways and riparian habitats, and has done so for 32 consecutive years. Over these years, and alongside roughly 500 community volunteers each year, we have removed **426,736 lbs.** of refuse, scrap metal, recycling and large items that obstruct creek beds and cause severe soil erosion. What might our natural spaces look like today without this annual BEC event? This opportunity to provide relief and assist efforts alongside local groups on the front lines, is no different than what we've done since our origin. The support we will provide includes materials: trash bags, gloves, buckets, pickers, sharps containers, and receptacles as well as education: creek dispatch information, disposal information and safety information.

BEC's mission is to protect and defend the land, air and water of Butte County through action, advocacy and education. An integral piece of our contribution as a non-profit who cares deeply about the health of our parks and creeks is stepping forward into opportunities that allow us to utilize our resources, and the knowledge we've gained over the years, to support our community in times of distress.

Solidarity, in a time when communities should come closer together, not only aligns with our mission but it is also at the heart of our vision to cultivate a community where citizens are engaged, empowered and organized to advocate for environmental interests. **We believe that building resilience is the first defense we should lean on in a time of crisis which probes us to retreat into our personal fears and act as individuals. Those in need and on the front lines are asking for help, and BEC is committed to step forward.**

If you are healthy, able and inspired to support these efforts with us, please contact [danielle.baxter@becnet.org](mailto:danielle.baxter@becnet.org) for further information and direction on how to become involved.

In solidarity with our community and for the ongoing support of our creeks and riparian habitat,

*Danielle Baxter*

Danielle Baxter, General Manager  
& Board of Directors  
Butte Environmental Council