

From the Board

Your BEC Board of Directors has a lot of good news to report since the last Environmental News issue.

The Board has faced transitional changes and challenges on personnel developments with a united approach. We have won some significant environmental victories and had a very successful 34th BEC Birthday Bash. And, we are making major changes in our office environment.

First, we now have an Administrative Director half time position being ably filled by Nikki Schlaishunt who was hired October 1st. Nikki brings a long association with BEC to the position, including a student internship and previous employment as an administrative aide and organizational consultant. Her job qualifications include a Master's Degree in Public Administration. Her duties include oversight of all administrative day to day requirements of the organization.

On the Advocacy front we are facing a variety of environmental issues in our area that demand our attention in protecting water, air quality, and input to city and county general plans. We are continuing to work with local experts Jim Brobeck and Carol Perkins on land and water issues. Board member Robin Huffman is coordinating BEC advocacy efforts until such time as we employ an advocacy director.

Several board members are directly involved in advocacy efforts. Pamela Posey is monitoring salmon runs. John Scott is continuing efforts to stop exportation of ground water and questioning the implementation of a Crystal Geyser water bottling plant in Orland. Lynn Barris continues to track BEC's involvement in state and federal water legislation and litigation.

In a most significant victory, BEC combined with the Dry Creek Coalition of home owners near the New Era Mine in winning a suit that charged the current mine operation with violating the California Environmental Quality Act. Judge Stephen E. Benson ruled in favor of every challenge by BEC and Dry Creek Coalition home owners and ordered the mine shut down.

On another CEQA matter BEC attorneys report that a demurrer hearing went very well in a landmark case to make the State of California, Department of Water Resources adhere to the California Environmental Quality Act. The judge has up to 90 days to rule on the demurrer hearing held Sept. 29th.

A very successful BEC 34th Birthday Bash was held October 23 at the Chico grange. Attendees enjoyed great foods catered by David Guzzetti, outstanding

music by MaMuse and Luke and the Delivery Boys, and a very successful silent auction. Long time environmental activist Kelly Meagher, who was the originator of the Endangered Species Faire, footed the bill for the evening so all proceeds went to funding BEC activities. Professor Mark Stemen and student interns from Chico State organized the event and handled all the arrangements including the silent auction. Nikki Robb coordinated the Bash. There was a big turnout and everyone seemed to enjoy the evening's activities which included a short membership meeting lead by Lynn Barris.

Annual awards were given out at the Bash. Carol Perkins won the Colleen Jarvis Environmentalist of the Year. Board member Heather Schlaff was given the volunteer award for her leadership in opposing the Wal-Mart expansion in Chico. Tony St. Amant was commended for his leadership in having a Water Element put into the Butte County General Plan.

Finally, under the leadership of Board Member Armeda Ferrini, a major reorganization of BEC offices has been undertaken. New furniture, painting, plumbing and other changes to the office including a conference room are almost completed.

It's been a rewarding and exhilarating last few months.

Jim Gregg, Board Chair