



# Bidwell Park

Quarterly Newsletter of the City of Chico's Park Division

## Monkey Face Gets a "Facelift"

# Pulse

Many Park visitors have observed changes on Monkey Face lately. Park crew started working on Monkey Face in the fall of 2012 and have continued through this past Spring to rehabilitate areas and create a new trail. In the months to come, you will witness some ambitious "face lift" techniques to stabilize soil and protect the most sensitive areas of Monkey Face. The goal is to provide an enjoyable, designated, sustainable trail for visitors and to rehabilitate and properly display the proud profile that this park landmark is known for.

Before last fall's heavy rain event, Park staff and California Conservation Corps members installed basic erosion control measures. You will notice the mesh matting that is called jute that was laid last fall and helps to hold seed, plants, and soil in place. Jute is biodegradable and acts as a soil nutrient. The work has been extremely effective in healing some of the scars on Monkey Face even during an extremely dry year.

The Bidwell Park Master Management Plan's (MMP) Trail Plan lists the area as a priority, and describes that "the Monkey Face area suffers from severe erosion, improper trail design, multiple unofficial paths, and wet season use." The MMP recommends that multiple trails be consolidated and should utilize measures to reduce erosion.

The Bidwell Park and Playground Commission's Natural Resources Committee met several times in 2012 to discuss the Mon-



*Bidwell Park's "Monkey Face" In the foreground, the installation of jute matting and native grasses to repair scarred eroded trail.*

key Face reroute project and to offer the opportunity for public input which has been taking into account for the routing and measures on Monkey Face.

Look for a healing landscape and new trail by Spring 2014.

*~Shane Romaine, Park Ranger*

## Breaking News: Budget Reduces Park and Street Tree Services

Due to staffing reductions associated with budget cuts. Parks Staff will focus on maintaining normal hours on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday; however, several gates and restrooms will be closed during the week. As of July 8, park gates will be closed to vehicles Monday through Thursday, except for 1) the gate to Upper Park at Wildwood Avenue, and 2) the 4th St. entrance on the south side of Lower Bidwell Park. Non-vehicle access will be available. Restrooms (except at S. One Mile) and Capers Acres will also be closed Monday through Thursday. Parks staff are trying to develop solutions to allow for additional access, please stay tuned for more updates.

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**The Bidwell Park Pulse**

The Bidwell Park Pulse is a quarterly newsletter of the City of Chico's Parks, Open Spaces, Greenways, and Preserves Division. The Parks Division is part of the General Services Department, and is responsible for maintaining and operating City parks, open space, and recreation areas including Bidwell Park, Children's Playground, Depot Park, City Plaza, Lindo Channel, Little Chico Creek Greenway, Teichert Ponds, and other preserves. Parks Division programs include: Maintenance, Ranger, Lifeguard, and Volunteer Programs. Printed on 100% recycled paper.

**City of Chico Mission**

To protect and enhance our community's quality of life for present and future generations.

**Bidwell Park and Playground Commission (BPPC)**

The BPPC is vested with the supervision, control and management of many public parks and playgrounds within the City. **Commissioners:** Mary Brentwood, Lisa Emmerich (Chair), Mark Herrera, Jim Moravec, Richard Ober, Janine Rood, and Drew Traulsen. **Staff Liaison:** Lise Smith-Peters, Park Services Coordinator.

**Contact**

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**Staff Spotlight:****Head Lifeguard  
Lindsey Anderson****How long have you been a Bidwell Park Lifeguard?**

This summer will be my eighth season as a lifeguard in Bidwell Park, and third season as the head lifeguard.

**What is a typical day at the pool like?**

A typical day at Sycamore Pool begins at 10 am. We workout, practice drills/saves, and beginning guarding the pool at 11 am. Usually there is a rush of swimmers around noon and things get very busy. As head lifeguard, I walk around and provide customer service to patrons, check on my guards, make sure everything runs smoothly and we have no issues in the pool and surrounding area.

**Any humorous incidents at the pool?**

There have been plenty of memorable moments at the pool throughout the years. We had to clear the pool once because a muskrat was swimming among the patrons. One summer there was a man who would frequently walk his goats on the pool deck on leashes.

**Best thing about being a lifeguard in Bidwell Park?**

We don't have to work inside since the park is our office! Evenings at the pool are something out of a Bob Ross painting.

**What is your favorite thing about Bidwell Park?**

I love the difference in terrain that Bidwell Park has to offer. In Lower Bidwell Park you can swim at Sycamore Pool or walk/run the six mile loop. In Upper Bidwell Park you can take a long hike or find a quiet spot to swim in the creek.

**What hobbies and interests do you have outside of work?**

I love being outdoors in my free time and day trips to nearby attractions. My boyfriend and I did the Feather Falls hike a couple weeks ago and that was a lot of fun. I also love to spend time with my family at our cabin in Lake Almanor, it's my favorite mini vacation spot!

**What do you do in the Off-Season?**

For the last 8 years, I have worked as a "Instructional Paraprofessional" at Loma Vista Innovative Pre-school with special needs pre-schoolers. We work with them on basic skills to prepare them for entering kindergarten. The kids are a lot of fun to work with and see how they progress.

**Park Postcard:**

*Ranger Eric points out petrified wood revealed after a recent rock slide in Upper Park.*

Street Trees:

## Downtown Street Trees Replaced

In recent weeks, five large sycamore trees have been removed in the downtown area and replaced with new young maple trees. The large sycamores were overwhelming their planting sites (at the corners of Main Street and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>), and creating tripping hazards. In addition, the Yarwood sycamores were prone to dropping branches, thereby causing hazards to downtown visitors and extra maintenance for the city crews. The best alternative was to remove and replace the trees.

Most of the other trees downtown are a variety of red maple (*Acer rubrum*), although they have green foliage. They are expected to mature at about 40'. The sycamores were planted as a "focal point" at the corners of each block. Their height and the colorful white bark distinguished them from the surrounding trees. In order to retain that same sense of a focal point, the Urban Forest Manger decided to replace the sycamores with a 'Crimson Sunset' maple that has distinctly red colored foliage.

The tree is known for resistance to sunburn and intense summer heat. So far, they appear to be doing quite well. The trees will mature at about 35' so as the trees grow, the canopy height should be fairly uniform in the downtown business district.

~Denice Britton, Urban Forest Mgr

*Acer truncatum x A. plat. 'JFS-KW202'*



Zone: 5  
 Height: 35'  
 Spread: 25'  
 Shape: Upright oval  
 Foliage: Deep purple  
 Fall Color: Maroon to reddish bronze

Heat tolerance distinguishes this remarkable new hybrid. Deep purple foliage resembles that of Crimson King, but its form is more upright and compact. Thanks to *Acer truncatum* parentage, it flourishes in summer climates where heat and humidity prevent most purple leaved plants from thriving.

Park Rules:

## Smoking Ban in Place for City's Parks and Greenways

The Chico City Council adopted smoking ban in February to cover all city owned and operated parks. The Chico Area Recreation District, (CARD) passed a similar ordinance two years ago. The ban also applies to visitors inside vehicles in the park.

As with other cities, the new law will be enforced mostly by park users themselves. Voluntary compliance is the goal of the ban; however, if someone refuses to stop smoking, patrons are encouraged to inform a Parks Division employee and a Ranger can issue a citation for an observed violation. A sign campaign throughout the park is planned as well as flyers, and Ranger presence in high volume areas to help educate park users about the new law.

Health impacts were a driving force behind the new legislation. Members of the American Lung Association attended several Bidwell Park and Playground Commission meetings and partici-

pated in Policy Advisory Committee meetings.

Research has shown that no level of second-hand smoke exposure is safe. Everyone is affected, especially children, the elderly and those with chronic health conditions. Second hand smoke is known to trigger asthma attacks, increase the risk of blood vessel damage and blood clots. A non-smoker sitting within three feet of a smoker while outdoors suffers the same second-hand exposure as if sitting indoors with a smoker.

By supporting this law, park users improve the beauty of the city's outdoor spaces and ensure a healthier and cleaner experience for all who enjoy our parks, greenways, and open spaces.

~ Lisa Barge, Park Ranger

## Homeless Camp Cleanups



*Maintenance workers, joined by Rangers removed enough debris to fill 4 dump trucks last April during a homeless camp cleanup. For the first time, the crew used the grapple truck, which effectively lifted up debris to the roadway.*



### Places:

## Teichert Ponds

Park Volunteer of the Decade, Susan Mason led the very successful privet and olive tree removal project at Teichert Ponds, a City greenway, this past fall and early spring.

As part of the CA Native Plant Society, Mt. Lassen Chapter, Susan led over 50 work sessions totaling some 630 volunteer hours over a 5 month period. Their work resulted in the removal of 15,000 privet and about 5,000 olive trees with 25 hours devoted to removing trash. Volunteers also gave \$925 toward six 30-yard roller bins. Park Division staff helped arrange property access, loading tree debris into 2 bins and marketing work sessions.



CA Conservation Corps Crew, Susan Mason, John Meehan and Liz Stewart next to one of 6 vegetation bins filled with privet and olive trees removed during the project.

# SATURDAY, July 20, 2013



## BidwellPark BirthdayBash

One Mile Recreation Area July 20, 2013

- 5K Run Dash • Games & Activities at Sycamore Pool •
- Open Houses with Park Partners • En Plein Air Art • Chico
- Velo's Drawing for a Bicycle & Prizes • CARD Movie •

*All proceeds support Bidwell Park!*

### Major Sponsors



Peter Tichinin



Laura Burghardt

Upper Crust Bakery

Ginno's Kitchen & Appliance, Inc.

Bidwell Perk Coffee

Target

Law Offices of Spencer M. Gysin

Monk's Wine

Costco

The Dog House One Mile Concession

CSU, Chico's RECR 323 Class

Chico Art Center

Volunteer:

# Volunteers Recognized!



Bidwell Park and greenway volunteers come from all walks of life and represent all ages and skill sets. Some are in school, some teach school, some are retired, while others work. But most important, our volunteers are individuals who give up time from their busy lives to come out and make the Park and the City's greenways better for all of the Chico community.

Whether it is cleaning up trash (left by others); wearing the Green and helping Park visitors; removing invasive weeds (some huge!), trail work, painting benches or planting native plants — our volunteers are one of a kind who simply care about the treasure our City possesses.

Volunteers work in the Park through partnerships with the Park Division, such as with Community Action Volunteers in Education at CSU; Chico High School Horticulture Class; CSU Upward Bound; Fraternities, Sigma Chi and Alpha Sigma Phi, who have adopted sites for restoration; or through community groups like Friends of Bidwell Park, CA Urban Alliance Stream Team, Friends of Comanche Creek and CA Native Plant Society. The newest Park Volunteer Program includes training for Crew Leaders to help guide other volunteers work in the Park. The longest running volunteer program is Park Watch, whose members help with special events and provide information to visitors. In 2012, volunteers logged 19,801 hours of help for Bidwell Park and City Greenways.



Even more, they just get it—that it takes many hands to keep Bidwell Park healthy and sustainable for future generations.

*Top: Susan Mason received a "Volunteer of the Decade" award for her long and diverse volunteer efforts on behalf of the Park. Left: Ranger Bob and Susan Donohue volunteered to cook!; Below: Ranger Shane Romain, Park Crew Leaders: Carla Moreno, Mary Brentwood, Elizabeth Daniels, Jo Schreiber, Susan Mason, Tom Barrett, Janet Ellner and Ann Schwab*

## A BIG THANKS TO OUR MANY DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS!



*Feature: Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP)*

# *Oxidation Ponds Wildlife Sanctuary*



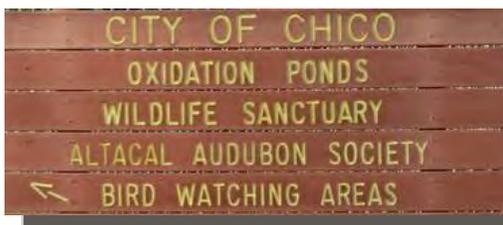
As part of the WPCP 12 million gallons per day expansion project, the Oxidation Ponds Wildlife Sanctuary has been made available for public use. The City of Chico incorporated an existing 32-acre Oxidation Pond which is used for emergency storage of treated wastewater effluent and constructed a wildlife sanctuary.

Constructed wildlife sanctuaries offer the potential to create habitat for waterfowl and wildlife populations. The Sanctuary not only serves as valuable habitat, but also provides an opportunity for public wildlife viewing, education, and recreation. A handicap accessible, half mile, crushed granite trail, leads from the sanctuary parking area off Chico River Road, to an Altacal Audubon Society provided bird blind, located at the northwest corner of the oxidation pond. A portable toilet is available.

Some features of the constructed wildlife sanctuary include planted California native vegetation for wildlife habitat/cover, shallow water zones for shorebirds and deeper water zones for migrating birds, bird nesting islands, and tree snags placed in the pond as spots for bird roosting.

Along with many mammals, about 160 species of birds have been identified at the sanctuary. Late fall and winter are the best times to visit the sanctuary but birding is great year-round. In the winter months, look for Mallard Duck, Ruddy Duck, Gadwall,

Canvasback, Shoveler, Green-wing Teal, Bufflehead, along with many other ducks and geese. Also watch for Western Bluebird, Song Sparrow, Marsh Wren and Audubon Warbler. Sora, Virginia



Rail, Snowy Egret, Great Egret, Green Heron and Great Blue Heron are present year round, along with Belted Kingfishers, fishing from the power lines. Owls nest in early February and there is often a Great Horned Owl nest on the south end of the sanctuary. By early May, many of the ducks have left but the spring migrants arrive. Look for Bullocks Oriole, Black-headed Grosbeak, Blue Grosbeak, Wilson's Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Yellow Warbler. Red-wing Blackbirds nest in the reeds. Yellow-headed Blackbirds are also sometimes nesting here and some years, Great-Tailed Grackle have nested here as well. Late summer brings Lazuli Buntings and, when the water levels are low, Greater Yellowlegs, Western Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers and other shorebirds will show up in abundance to the ponds.

Along with many California Brown Turtles, look for Muskrats, and maybe even a River Otter or a Beaver might be seen.

- Lynda Cameron, City of Chico Staff  
(Photos courtesy of Steve King, Altacal Audubon)



**To get there:** West 5<sup>th</sup> Street from Highway 32 to 4827 Chico River Road the Parking lot is approximately 500 feet past the main WPCP entrance.

**Field Trips:** the Altacal Audubon Society hosts fall, winter and spring trips every other month (Please see [www.altacal.org](http://www.altacal.org) for details).

**Hours:** Oct - Mar 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and Apr - Sept, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Contact:** the WPCP at 530-894-4300.



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## Annie B's Community Drive Starts August 1st!



*A NVCF matching grant makes your  
Bidwell Park gift go even farther!  
Fund Drive starts  
August 1 and ends on September 30, 2013*



For more information about the Annie B's Community Drive,  
contact the Park Division at (530) 896-7831 or the  
North Valley Community Foundation, at (530) 891-1150.

Donate online at [www.nvcf.org](http://www.nvcf.org) – look for  
Bidwell Park, City of Chico