



NEWS RELEASE
City of Chico
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Contact: Lynda Gizzi, lynda.gizzi@chicoca.gov or (530) 353-5816

Linda Herman, linda.herman@chicoca.gov or (530) 896-7241

*****MEDIA ALERT*****

CULTURAL BURN TO OCCUR IN VERBENA FIELDS

(Chico, CA – March 1, 2022 –) The Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) program in collaboration with partners in the Butte TRES (prescribed fire training exchange) and the City of Chico will be conducting a cultural burn in Verbena Fields, located at East 1st and Verbena Avenues, on **Wednesday March 2, 2022** from approximately **11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** The burn is dependent upon optimum weather conditions.

For the public's safety, areas of Verbena Fields may be temporarily closed during burning operations. A Burn Plan is on file with the City of Chico, a Burn Permit has been issued, and a Smoke Management Plan has been approved from the Butte County Air Quality Management District for this cultural burn.

The event is an opportunity for the Chico community to see wintertime cultural burning on small patches of deergrass in Verbena Fields. The Mechoopda Tribe's ongoing TEK work and the applied fire ecology and wildland management research being carried out by the California State University (CSU) Chico Wildland Management students both on City lands and the CSU Chico Ecological Reserves help lead a cultural shift toward a better public relationship with good fire. The importance of expanding the use of prescribed fire is recognized in the City of Chico's Vegetative Fuels Management Plan (VFMP, 2021).

The primary purpose of this cultural burn is to achieve the following:

1. Use prescribed fire as a management tool to protect and enhance habitats and reduce the risk of catastrophic fires.
2. Eliminate undesirable or invasive plants that compete with or reduce native vegetation, and/or degrade wildlife habitat for endangered or threatened species.
3. Manage cultural resources using fire to stimulate fresh growth and reduce thatch in deergrass.

For more information, please contact Linda Herman, Parks & Natural Resources Manager, at (530) 896-7241.

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