

Green Campus Sustainability Newsletter

Q1 • 2021



Announcements

Wrapping up the Science Building



Back in December, the campus community was greeted with a welcome surprise in the form of a fence-free Science building. Construction is wrapping up and the building has officially been cleared for occupancy. Although access inside the building is restricted to staff only, students are welcomed to enjoy the beautiful outdoor aesthetic, or take a stroll through the newly built breezeway.

Interested in working with Green Campus or learning more about what we do? Visit us at the [Green Campus page](#) on CSU Chico's website.

Bike Path Construction



The pilot bike path through campus is finally taking flight. In August 2019, the pilot bike path was formed spanning from east to west across campus, following the Big Chico Creek from the Bidwell Bowl Amphitheater to the train tracks on the west side of campus. Over the winter break, \$275,000 was awarded by the University Strategic Plan to permanently establish the path through campus. Improvements will include a complete repaving for riders, green paint to better delineate the path, and better signage and markings for higher visibility for all users. Completion is estimated to be summer 2021 so the path will be ready for action for the fall semester!

Announcements

Wrapping up the Science Building



Professor Emeritus Wes Dempsey and his wife Phyllis

Retired Chico State Professor Emeritus Wes Dempsey and his family gifted the [Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve \(BCCER\)](#) a \$1 million endowment to continue its mission in the cultivation of land stewards and conservationists. The BCCER serves a wide range of students from Chico State graduate students to thousands of kids from local elementary schools. “I care deeply about the vision for perpetuating this remarkable wilderness next to the city,” Dempsey said. “It’s important to educate young people to carry on the work of our conservation heroes.” Read the full story on Professor Dempsey’s gift by Sean Murphy [here](#)

Chico State Giving Day



The Giving Day fundraiser is live! Chico State has made a commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030 and we need your help to get there. The Campus Sustainability Committee (CSC) is the formal group working on achieving this important goal along with all of the other campus sustainability goals. If you would like to donate to the Campus Sustainability Committee, please check out the page by clicking [here](#). Every donation made to the CSC will make a difference in the work we are able to do and the impact we are able to have.

Green Campus Resources

Green Campus students work in collaboration with all campus partners to further our sustainability goals and commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030. Green Campus is a key catalyst in building a campus community and culture of sustainability through peer education and awareness building, program and project development and implementation, and sustainability-related research.

The Green Book

With this handbook we hope to give you the tools to navigate your college experience as sustainably as possible. You'll be introduced to amazing resources, and student groups that are working to further campus efforts through education, outreach, projects, and



Sustainability Passport

The Stewards of Sustainability Passport is a guide to the sustainable services offered to you as a Chico State student. Following this passport will take you around the city of Chico and will hopefully show you some things you may not have known about.

Sustainability Tip

Did you know that coffee grounds could be used as fertilizer?

As plants grow, they absorb nutrients from the soil, ultimately leaving it depleted. Thus, most gardens need to be fertilized to ensure that plants have the nourishment they need to survive. Coffee grounds contain several key minerals for plant growth — nitrogen, calcium, potassium, iron, phosphorus, magnesium, and chromium. Along with those benefits, coffee grounds also help absorb heavy metals that can contaminate the soil. Next time you make a cup of Joe, feel free to sprinkle the grounds around your garden or mix them into the soil.

Subcommittee Updates



The Campus Sustainability Committee includes several subcommittees with the charge and purpose of working on actionable goals to progress our campus sustainability efforts, including achieving carbon neutrality. The subcommittees cover many facets of sustainability and reach every corner of our campus. Subcommittees include students, faculty, staff, and community members, all bringing unique perspectives and expertise to the work.

Energy

Lead: Mike Guzzi

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Energy Subcommittee reported electricity savings of \$900,000, with another \$200,000 in electricity savings from adjusting FMS staffing times.

Curriculum

Lead: Tim Sistrunk

Developing a Climate Change and Resilience course designation and hosting workshops to help faculty integrate climate change and resilience into their courses requirement across campus.

Alternative Transportation

Lead: Cheri Chastain

Received Strategic Plan funding to start construction on the campus bike path project running east-west through campus along the north side of Big Chico Creek. The project will include repaving, painting a green bike path lane, and signage along the path and at the bike racks.

Student Engagement

Lead: Kendall Ross

Hosted the first annual America Recycles Day: Wildcat's in Action. Local vendors Klean Kanteen, Chico Bag, Waste Management, The Bear, and more provided giveaways to participants.

Water

Lead: Mike Alonzo

Updating the campus water fountain/station map. The map will also include the compost garden, recycling bins and bioswales. Additionally, a leak was located and fixed in a drip irrigation line, saving 800-1000 gallons of water/day.

Natural Environment

Lead: Eli Goodsell

Partnering with the Water Subcommittee to draft an inventory plan for the Chico Creek Riparian zone, managing species with ecological or cultural benefits. They will also be removing the invasive wisteria behind Sylvester's Café, providing volunteer opportunities to interested students.

Subcommittee Updates Cont.



Research

Lead: Sandrine Matiasek

Conducted a survey of faculty to compile those researching sustainability related work and partners faculty are working with. This will be entered into a yet to be determined database and shared with the campus and community.

Zero Waste

Lead: Bri Saseen

Working on upgrading exterior bins around campus and creating a zero-waste hub as well as reorganizing their system for tracking and managing waste from campus.

Agriculture

Lead: Cindy Daley

Working to improve carbon storage on the University Farm. So far efforts have been promising on the 50-acre dairy pasture which is estimated to sequester 60 tons of carbon/year. Plans are under way to scale this project to the rest of the farm.

Procurement

Lead: Sandrine Matiasek

The CSU system is in the process of adopting a Sustainability Procurement Policy that will guide the work of this subcommittee.

Wildcat Spotlight



Amanda Moylan is a recent Chico State graduate with her eyes set on the goal of making our campus a more sustainable place. She was recently awarded over \$3,000 to create a new water recycling system here at Chico State. This funding was awarded to her through the Sustainability Fund (SFAC) - A way for students to receive money in order to bring life to sustainability-based projects for our campus community. Amanda's project is a brilliant concept that would collect water created by the condensation from the HVAC units outside the Gateway Science Museum and use that water to irrigate a vegetated display containing a wide array of native California flora. Amanda has been

working with FMS staff to bring this project to fruition and is excited to see the potential it has to conserve water at Chico State. In her SFAC project proposal, Amanda wrote "Although this model is small scale, the applicable concept has an immense potential for improving the well-being of all living things". In terms of scale, Amanda said in an interview about this project that on an average day this system has the ability to collect around 15 gallons of water with that number being as high as 30 gallons on a particularly hot day. All of this water would be collected in two 50-gallon barrels made of recycled plastic from the company Blue Barrel. While Amanda did admit that the project was currently moving a bit slower than she expected it to be, she is confident in the knowledge that the project will be finished and the system would be installed before school is let out in May. It truly is inspiring to see a fellow Wildcat make a project like this come to life and push forward the commitment of our university to make our campus community as sustainable and beautiful as possible.



Upcoming Events

February 26 / March 9 / March 25 2021

Faculty Development Workshops

Faculty from all disciplines are encouraged to attend the workshops, network with peers, and be inspired to integrate climate change and resilience into their course materials. The workshops will be facilitated by Dr. Richard Widick (University of California, Santa Barbara) and Dr. Mark Stemen (California State University, Chico) and will be held via Zoom. Click [here](#) to learn more about these workshops.

March 25-26 2021

This Way To Sustainability

This year's theme for the annual TWTS Conference is Resilience from the Ground Up: Strengthening Diversity in Soil, Communities and Economies. This year's keynote speakers include Leah Penniman- farmer, activist and author of [Farming While Black](#), Katharine Wilkinson- senior writer of the New York Times best-seller [Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming](#), Jennifer Atkinson- author of Gardenland: [Nature, Fantasy and Everyday Practice](#) and Bill Shireman- President and CEO of [Future 500](#). If you would like to register for the conference, click [here](#) to be taken to the signup page.

March 30 2021

Sustainability Fund Applications Due

The Spring 2021 AS Sustainability Funding cycle is now open and applications are due Tuesday, March 30th by Noon. If you have a sustainability-based based project in mind that you think would make our campus a better place, please fill out the SFAC Project Proposal form and you could be awarded up to \$5,000 to make your proposal a reality. If you would like to learn more check out the [Sustainability Fund \(SFAC\) page](#) on the CSU Chico website.