



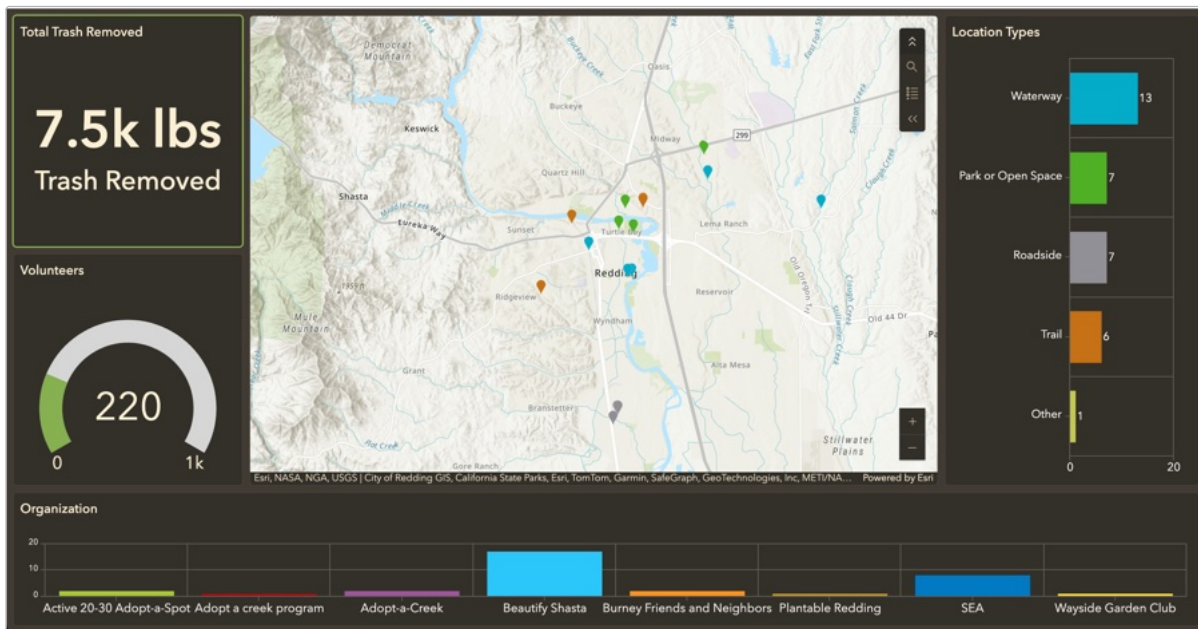
**Shasta Environmental Alliance**

**Stewardship - Education - Advocacy**

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# February Newsletter



## Our New Community Cleanup Dashboard Is Live!

We just launched a shared, real time cleanup dashboard that brings community cleanup work together in one place. As reports come in, the map and charts update instantly so cleanup activity is visible as it happens.

by environment type like waterways, trails, parks, and open spaces so it is easy to see what areas have been cared for and what still needs attention.

Click an organization or environment type and watch the totals update right away, showing how much trash was removed and how many people helped. Groups can also upload before and after photos so the work behind the data is visible.

This tool gives cleanup work a shared, lasting place to live so it does not disappear after each event. Anyone can explore the dashboard and understand what has been done across the community.

If your group is doing cleanups, submit them through the form so your work shows up on the map and dashboard: [Cleanup Form](#)  
Feel free to backdate submissions if you have cleanups you would like to include on the dashboard.

If your organization tracks cleanups using GIS or mapped data, email [kat@ecoshasta.org](mailto:kat@ecoshasta.org) to explore integration options.

Thank you to Beautify Shasta for contributing their Q4 2025 cleanup data to help launch the dashboard. This is just the beginning, and it will grow as more community cleanup work is added.  
Explore the dashboard here: [Cleanup Dashboard](#)

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Is your Email view of the newsletter clipped?  
[View the full message in your browser.](#)

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## Call for Public Comment on the Redding Riverfront Plan





## by Kat Camplin

The City of Redding has started a formal process to decide what will be studied in the Environmental Impact Report EIR for the Redding Riverfront Specific Plan. This step is called scoping.

Scoping happens before the Draft EIR is written. At this stage, the City is asking what issues, locations, and types of impacts must be included in the analysis. They are not approving buildings or a final design. They are deciding what the EIR has to look at in detail.

For the riverfront, this means the EIR can either look closely at things like native plants, wildlife, access to the water, traffic from events, and changes to public land use. Or it can treat some of those items as minor background issues. What is written into the scope now will shape how strong or weak the EIR is later.

Shasta Environmental Alliance has submitted its own scoping letter. Our letter asks the City to closely study how a hospitality and events focus would affect the river, wildlife, neighborhoods, and everyday users; what the plan means for public land, access, and parking; how it will change the southern riverfront; how Highway 44 and access routes will be affected; and how any future changes to the plan will be handled and reviewed.

Individual comments are also important. The City needs to hear from people who already use the riverfront and would be affected if it shifts toward a visitor hospitality and events focus.

### How you can comment

Written comments on scoping for the EIR are due by Monday, March 2, 2026 at 5 p.m.

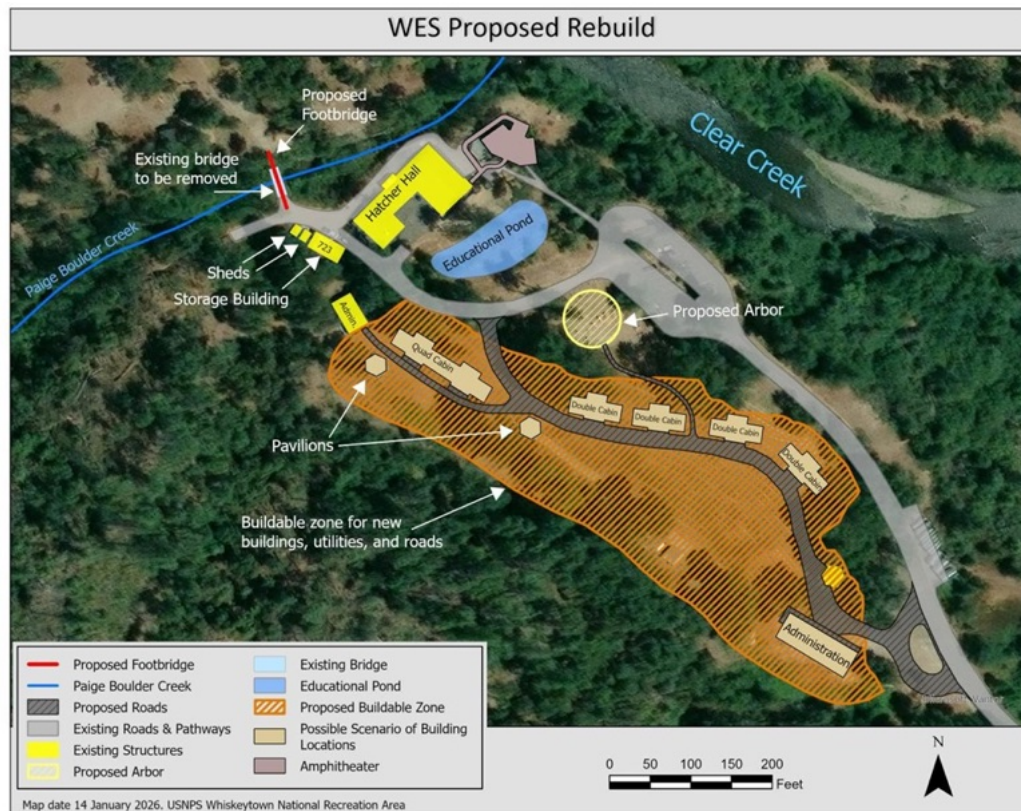
You can send comments by email to: [jpagan@cityofredding.org](mailto:jpagan@cityofredding.org)

Suggested subject line:

### **Redding Riverfront Specific Plan EIR Scoping Comments**

We have created a short template that you can use to make this easy. It focuses on how you use the riverfront now and what you are concerned about losing if it becomes a hospitality and events hub. To use it, open the template link below, then copy and paste into an email and fill in the blanks before sending.

# Call to Action on the Whiskeytown Environmental School Rebuild



by **Holly White-Wolfe (Guest Author)**

The National Park Service has released the Environmental Assessment (EA) for rebuilding the Whiskeytown Environmental School (WES), and public comment is open until February 21, 2026. This is a rare chance for our community to influence the future of a site that has shaped generations of North State students and sits within one of the most ecologically significant areas of Whiskeytown National Recreation Area.

WES has been a cornerstone of fifth grade science education since 1971. The Carr Fire destroyed much of the campus, and while day use visits are now possible, overnight programs remain suspended. The proposed rebuild is a once-in-50-years opportunity to ensure the site is fire resilient, ecologically sound, and aligned with the biodiversity and watershed values SEA members care deeply about.

The EA includes important findings, especially in Chapter 3, which details impacts on water quality, wildlife, creeks, and cultural resources. Notably,

Steelhead, both threatened species. Appendix B also provides a comprehensive wildlife species list that underscores the ecological richness of the area.

## Where SEA Voices Can Add Value

This is exactly the kind of project where informed public comment can shape outcomes. SEA members bring ecological expertise, long term perspective, and a deep understanding of Whiskeytown's natural systems. Many important topics, including universal design, tribal partnerships, and habitat restoration, are already addressed in the Environmental Assessment.

For members who want to engage more deeply, the following areas may be especially useful to look for and reflect on in your comments:

- **Fire resilient design:** Review how the plan approaches defensible space, vegetation management, and safety considerations for future overnight programs. Members may wish to comment on elements they find particularly strong or areas where additional clarity would be helpful.
- **Floodplain management:** Look at the details surrounding bridge removal and proposed road grade changes designed to reduce flood potential. These components shape both ecological outcomes and long term site resilience.
- **Ecosystem impacts:** Consider whether and how the plan addresses fish habitat, preservation of large oaks, and broader biodiversity goals. SEA members may want to reflect on how the design balances ecological protection with opportunities for students to interact meaningfully with the landscape.

These are not critiques. They are examples of substantive comments, the type of feedback federal agencies must respond to and can use to refine or clarify the final plan.

## How to Submit Your Comment

Submit electronically:

[https://parkplanning.nps.gov/WES\\_Rebuild](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/WES_Rebuild)

Or mail to:

Whiskeytown National Recreation Area  
c/o WES Rebuild  
P.O. Box 188  
Whiskeytown, CA 96095

in Shasta County for decades. SEA members have the expertise and passion to ensure the final plan reflects the highest standards of sustainability, resilience, and community benefit.

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## Upcoming Events



### There Is No Planet B Book Club

**February 22, 2026**

Our exploration of Ayana Elizabeth Johnson's *What If We Get It Right?* continues on February 22 from 2pm-4pm!

Join us for conversations about what's possible, biophilia, nature as teacher, reworking food systems, design justice, and surely much more. To receive meeting details and additional resources please join our TINPB book club contact [list](#) or contact [juliet@ecoshasta.org](mailto:juliet@ecoshasta.org).

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## Battle Creek Wildlife Area Field Trip

**Date:** March 1, 2026, 10am - Noon

**Location:** [Battle Creek Wildlife Area](#)

Join naturalist Juliet Malik and environmental scientist Stacey Alexander for an easy 4-mile walk along the Oak Tree Trail in the Battle Creek Wildlife Area. Juliet will talk about riparian habitats and all the cool perks they offer like biodiversity, clean water, and cooler temperatures –in case being beautiful and abundant with flora and fauna isn't enough for you! Stacey will fill us in about the critical importance of Battle Creek to endangered winter run salmon and the upcoming restoration projects to give these incredible endemic species the best chance to keep gracing us with their presence.

Please come prepared with water, sun/rain protection, sturdy footwear, hiking poles, snack, and anything else you like to use to observe nature, i.e. binoculars, hand lens, etc.

**Severe weather cancels. Please fill out this [form](#) to sign our waiver and be added to the contact list for updates.**

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Families in the Forest returns on Saturday, March 28, 2025, with a special nature-based outing for young children and their caregivers along Clear Creek in Redding. SEA volunteers and California Naturalists will guide families through sensory exploration, story time, and simple ways to notice the plants, waters, and landscapes around us. Look for the full event announcement in the March newsletter or check the event page on the SEA website soon.

### March 29, 2025

Join us on Sunday, March 29th for a lively “Free for All Thing Swap” at the Western Shasta Resource Conservation District. It’s a fun, low-pressure way to pass along items you no longer need, discover new treasures, and reduce waste while strengthening community connections. Full event details will be shared in next month’s newsletter and on the SEA website. To express your interest, contact [Ren@ecoshasta.org](mailto:Ren@ecoshasta.org).



**NOW ACCEPTING**  
**APRIL 18, 2026**

**EARTH DAY FAIR**

**EXHIBITOR & VENDOR APPLICATIONS**

**APPLY HERE** 

**\*PLEASE REVIEW FESTIVAL GUIDELINES PRIOR TO APPLYING\***

**DUE BY: APRIL 12**

**MORE INFO**

[www.ecoshasta.org/earth-day](http://www.ecoshasta.org/earth-day) [earthday@ecoshasta.org](mailto:earthday@ecoshasta.org)

and vendor applications for this year's event. Interested in participating? Apply here: <https://www.ecoshasta.org/earth-day/>

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## Species of the Month: Shasta Crayfish, *Pacifastacus fortis*

by Stacey Alexander



Image Credit: Photo of the sexy Shasta crayfish (Lauren Kong/USFWS)

When asked to write about a species for the month of February, I aimed to go for the sexiest species I could think of...the Shasta Crayfish. These docile crustations are 2-4 inches long and can be found in isolated spots in the Pit River and Fall River. The Shasta Crayfish is our last remaining native crayfish, and chances are if you have spotted a crayfish (aka crawfish; aka crawdad; aka mountain lobsters; well, whatever you call them), the one you saw is likely not the infamous Shasta Crayfish, it is likely the invasive red swamp crayfish, or more likely, the signal crayfish. Both these invasive species outpace our native crayfish by multitudes; in fact, recent research estimates that there are 220 million invasive crayfish in Lake Tahoe alone. These invasive crayfish are more aggressive,

In 1988, the Shasta Crayfish was listed as endangered both at the state and federal levels. Since then, there have been many efforts to find solutions to recover this crawdaddies population. Most efforts have focused on reducing signal crayfish in the Shasta Crayfish habitat, which appears to be exceptionally difficult. Efforts included electrofishing and stream barriers, but nothing has worked. Instead, a 20-year, multiagency effort to find a safe haven for California's only remaining native crayfish began. This partnership between California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and PG&E led to the restoration of a possible *Pacifastacus* paradise in Rock Creek.

## Rock Creek

Rock Creek, located just upstream of CDFW's Crystal Lake Hatchery, and the surrounding meadow had been dry since the 1950s.

Because of this, there were no invasive crayfish in the habitat, making it a perfect location to relocate Shasta Crayfish. The location was also ideal because the fish hatchery would block any signal crayfish in Crystal Lake from moving up into the restored portion of the creek.



Photo of Rock Creek (CDFW)

The creek restoration was no small act; restoration activities included major construction, removing a diversion dam upstream, and rerouting a pipeline, as well as recontouring the straight channel into a meandering creek and placement of large rocks and natural lava gravel to create habitat for the crayfish. This restored and monitored habitat gives new hope for the future of the population. And what could be more romantic than that!

### Resources:

- Moyle, Peter. "Crawdads: Naturalized Californians - California Waterblog." California WaterBlog - A Biologist, Economist, Engineer and Geologist Walk onto a Bar..., 14 Nov. 2023, [californiawaterblog.com/2023/11/12/crawdads-naturalized-californians/](https://californiawaterblog.com/2023/11/12/crawdads-naturalized-californians/).
- "Science Institute News: Endangered Shasta Crayfish Have New Refuge in Rock Creek."

- Snow, Meghan. "Saving California's Crayfish: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service." FWS.Gov, 12 June 2020, [www.fws.gov/story/2020-06/saving-californias-crayfish](http://www.fws.gov/story/2020-06/saving-californias-crayfish)

## Species of the Month:

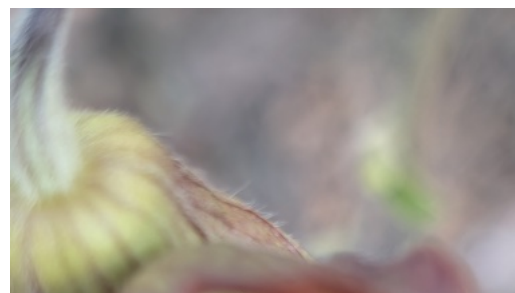
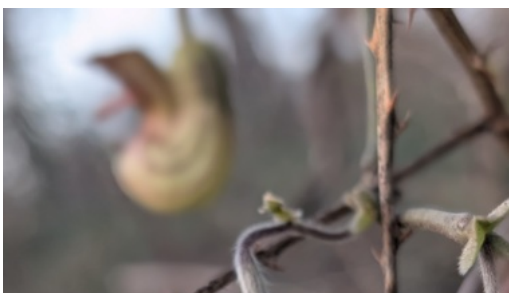
### California Pipevine, *Aristolochia californica*



by Ren Redlich

Image Credits: Ren Redlich

Before the burst of blooms in the spring, a small and unassuming plant creeps its way along the ground of moist woodlands and streams and crawls up the trunks and branches of trees. This plant, known as California Pipevine or California Dutchman's Pipe, is an early bloomer! Anywhere from January to April, it produces purple-striped, pipe-shaped flowers which open at the end, like the mouth of a baby bird begging for food. If you peek inside the "mouth" of this flower, you may see a party of gnats and flies, drawn to the flower by its unpleasant odor. The plant is not insectivorous, meaning it does not rely on nutrients from processing the insects themselves, but uses them only as a means of pollination. They accomplish this by stumbling around in one flower before finding their way out and moving onto the next, carrying pollen along with them.





After California Pipevine flowers, it will begin growing heart-shaped leaves. The youngest of these shoots are a prime location for the Pipevine Swallowtail (*Battus philenor*) to lay its eggs on, as pipevine is the only plant that supports these butterflies. These eggs will hatch into larvae that will munch their way up the vine until they change into velvety-black caterpillars with red-orange spikes. This aposematism is a warning to predators that they, like the pipevine that they eat, are also toxic if ingested. This is due to the aristolochic acid present in all parts of the pipevine, which makes it inedible to most species, but provides the caterpillars with a defense mechanism. If they manage to fend off the very few birds and predatory insects that may like to add a little spice to their diet, the final instar will pupate and emerge as a blue & black butterfly with white & orange spots.

*Aristolochia* species are also called “snakeroot” because of its historical use as a medical application for snake bites. However, it is not recommended that any part of the plant be consumed, as it is known to cause kidney damage and is carcinogenic. That doesn’t mean we can’t enjoy this funky little plant for what it is: a hot spot for insects! I would definitely join a pollinating “pub crawl” if I were a fungus gnat.

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## Be a Voice for the Environment

Do you care deeply about protecting our local environment and the wildlife, forests, rivers, and public lands that make it special? Join our board and help guide advocacy efforts that shape land use, conserve natural habitats, and preserve spaces for recreation and enjoyment. Bring your ideas, energy, and passion to make a real difference for the environment and your community.

Ready to get involved? [Fill out our interest form here.](#)

Join Us

[Forward this Newsletter to a Friend](#)



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