

# Big Bend Hot Springs Project Community Newsletter

Big Bend, Shasta County, California

Issue #1 - June 2013



## The Long and Winding Road to Re-opening Big Bend Hot Springs

What's taking so long!?!? When the Big Bend Hot Springs Project was first formed in 2008, and concerned new stewards came together to protect and reopen the campgrounds and soaking pools, we first had to remove the "red flags" placed on the property by Shasta County officials. At that time, we had no idea that the work to reopen would take so long, be so expensive and involve so many regulatory requirements. We soon learned that we had to apply for a new Conditional Use Permit, which involved a high level of planning and engineering with many expensive and complex restrictions and requirements. We have been raising funds and working on meeting the requirements ever since.

With the help of lots of fellow Big Bend residents, local and outside funding sources, expert consultants, engineers, etc., we submitted a Master Plan and Use Permit Application to the Shasta County Planning Division in July 2011. That initial two years of work was rewarded in January 2012, when the Shasta County Planning Commission granted us a new Conditional Use Permit by unanimous vote. This permit allows us to

**Welcome** to the new Community Newsletter from Big Bend Hot Springs Project (BBHSP). We like to keep the Big Bend Community informed about our progress in work towards reopening this community resource (closed by County in 2007) and our efforts to protect this sacred land and water resources. We realize that many people in the community do not have access or time to read our online updates, so this paper newsletter is our latest effort to get the word out about what's happening at Big Bend Hot Springs.



apply for building permits to create new facilities considered safe and legal by fourteen different regulatory agencies and utility companies.

It has been a long, complex, and expensive journey to bring the facilities at BBHS up to code and gain approval for our plans to reopen the campground and soaking business. This "Labor of Love" is ongoing, and has been exhausting at times, but we continue to work hard to comply with the countless regulatory and logistical hurdles. We are succeeding gradually, step-by-step, to overcome each obstacle and to work with regulators to satisfy dozens of conditions required to activate our Use Permit.

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## The Long and Winding Road to Re-opening, cont.

In addition to the design and planning work we've been engaged in, we have also been working hard to establish and put into practice the best stewardship methods we can. Among other things, this includes cleaning up and protecting the beautiful habitat that we are here to learn about and take care of, for the good of the ecosystem and the community. We have planted gardens, cared for neglected orchards, and studied the



wildlife here to learn how best to protect the habitat and avoid disturbing sensitive species.

Since completing the County-required dismantling of five unpermitted structures in 2009, we have continued with additional cleanup efforts, trying to bring the land back to a simple, safe, and respectful state. We have cleaned up large trailer loads of trash and debris, while repairing areas of erosion and preventing further degradation from the forces of weather and past misuse. We have come a long way, and the property is looking better than it has in many years.

Countless lovers of this special place have patiently waited, helped the efforts, and/or supported the work in various ways, as we chip away at the numerous requirements we face. We will reopen the hot springs, hiking trails and campground as soon as possible, even though the process is taking far longer than anyone

imagined. We are grateful for all the contributions of ideas, encouragement, funding, and hard work that so many from within the community and outside of Big Bend have generously given over the past several years.

We want to thank all of the participants so far and we continue to invite constructive participation from more and more people for future efforts. In addition to the official requirements, we are also working on other equally important aspects to the project's success.

We have been researching the history of Big Bend and the Hot Springs, and wish to learn as much as we can about the past, in order to mindfully steward this land in respectful and functional ways. We are working on understanding how the Madesi band of local Native Indians lived here and how the hot springs were used in the past to better understand how we can reestablish respectful traditions and sensitive use of these sacred resources.

One of the boldest plans we have is to remove the offensive power and phone lines and poles that currently cross the river directly over the main hot spring, known as the “Mother Source”. We are currently working with PG&E engineers and neighbors on complex plans to reroute the lines and permanently clear the sacred site of these eyesores, which will be a big step in our clean-up efforts.



**\*\*Look for the Big Bend Hot Springs Project  
Community Newsletter, Issue #2, Coming Soon!**



**Contact Us:** You can email us at [info@bigbendhotsprings.org](mailto:info@bigbendhotsprings.org) or Call us at 530-337-6155. Our mailing address is: BBHSP; PO Box 153; Big Bend, CA 96011 and our website is: [www.bigbendhotsprings.org](http://www.bigbendhotsprings.org) .

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