AB617 ANNUAL REPORT - Butte County Air Quality Management District

i Report No. 1 - Final

Title: Butte County Air Quality Management District AB617 Annual Report for G22

Reporting Period: July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

Grantee: Butte County Air Quality Management District

Date of submission:July 30, 2025Grant No.G22-CAPP-4

ii Costs Associated With Specific Tasks

Direct Costs: \$9,968.63

Pilot Residential Lawn and Garden

Program \$20,883.95

Community Air Protection Support

Grants \$10,044.60 Indirect Costs: \$5,290.59

Clean Air Day Free Bus Fare \$5,501.00

Check Before You Light Ad \$498.00

Special Wildfire Issue "Smoke Ready" Ad \$150.00

Woodsmoke Reduction Program Support \$575.81

Gridley Earth Day Mileage \$36.82

District Website ADA Support \$1,225.00

Total Direct Costs: \$38,915.18

- 1. AB617 calls for enhanced monitoring at community scale. The District maintains a portable particulate monitoring station (E-BAM) that's available to be deployed in communities across Butte County to respond to exceptional events or localized emissions. The District also maintained and deployed new low-cost sensors including ones deployed in Disadvantaged and Low-Income Communities. The District recieved federal funding in January 2025 to support portable and mobile air monitoring activities, including in low-income and disadvantaged communities. Some monitoring activities will be supported by this federal grant for the time being instead of AB617 funding.
- 2. AB617 calls for reducing exposure to air pollutants, particulately in communities affected by a high cumulative exposure burden. The District's Clean Air Shelter program provides the ability for facilities to request air cleaners during wildfire smoke impacts if they can be open freely to the public. The District prioritizes facilities in Disadvanted Communities and Low Income Communities. AB617 funds helped support the readiness of these air cleaners. Air cleaners were deployed at the Evacuation Shelter and the Local Assistance Center during impacts from the Park Fire in the summer of 2024. In an effort to advance zero-emission technology and to reduce the emissions of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants (benzene), the District funded a pilot residential lawn and garden equipment program. This program leveraged CAP Incentives and FY21 & FY22 AB617 Implmentation funds to kickstart an equipment replacement program that benefitted residential communities throughout Butte County, including in Disadvantaged and Low-Income communities. A total of \$35,000 in FY21 and FY22 AB617 Funds were used which replaced 55 saws/trimmers, 38 walk behind mowers, 1 ride on mower, and 21 leaf blowers with zero-emission equipment. These AB617-funded lawn and garden projects resulted in 0.006 tons/yr NOx reductions, 0.092 tons/yr ROG reductions, and 0.001 tons/yr PM reductions. The Free Fare Day on Clean Air Day 2024 served 2,627 riders in Butte County. The District continued outreach prompting local communities to become "Smoke Ready" in the case of wildfire in the area. AB617 Funds were used to complete a Woodsmoke Reduction Program Voucher for a low-income household, providing a reduction in PM, criteria pollutants, and GHGs.
- 3. AB617 calls for community participation in the Community Air Protection Program. District staff attended the City of Grildey's Earth Day celebration on Saturday April 12, 2025 and the Paradise Grazing Festival on June 1, 2025. At both events District staff recieved input on air quality priorities and shared information about District programs. The District's Governing Board held a meeting in May 2025 to discuss the AB617 program and approve G24-CAPP-4. To further expand the ability of community members to engange with the District's Community Air Protection Program and all other District Programs, that District made strides to impove the accessibility of the District's website and continued to update the District's Community Air Protection webpage: https://bcaqmd.org/cap/.

Proposals on July 10, 2024 for Community Air Protection Support Grants. These CAP Support Grants allow community organizations and businesses to propose projects for up to \$10,000 in funding that meet the goals of AB617. Funded CAP support grants include equipment for prescribed burning in the WUI (wildfire risk reduction is a community priority in Butte County), a zero-emission cargo bike to support local active transportation events and bike-valet opportunities, and support for Butte County wildfire prevention activities.

Summary of Work Completed and In Progress Since the Last Progress Report

- iv 1. Fund remaining approved CAP Support Grants.
 - 2. Plan and hold the 2nd Breathe Better Butte Fair on October 1, 2025.
 - 3. Seek community input and Board input on new residential air filtration program. Possibly seed a pilot with AB617 funds and then continue with CAP Incentive funds.
 - 4. Track and implement guidance from CARB on use of AB617 funds.

Grant Funds Remaining and Expended

G22-CAPP-4 FY23-24 Interest: Total Available:	\$54,130.00 \$44.40 \$54,174.40
G22-CAPP-4 Expended 7/1/24 through 6/30/25 FY23-24 Interest Expended	\$54,130.00 \$44.40

Expenditure Summary Showing all CAP Implementation Funds for Reimbursement

vi	i The District was awarded advanced payment for all AB617 Implementation awards.	
	The expenditure summary is included in v above. The District is not seeking additional reimbursement.	



Butte County Air Quality Management District CAP Support Grants Application

Name of project: Butte County Prescribed Burn Association

Location of project: Serving unincorporated Butte County's wildland-urban interface, about 80% of which is a low-income community

Project overview and goals: The Butte PBA is a co-op of landowners, students of fire, neighbors and others who help each other to put good fire on the ground. Through on-the-ground training burns, we reduce the amount of fuel available to burn in future wildfires, reduce future smoke impacts from wildfires, build a community corps of fire-literate and smoke-literate forest health practitioners, and perform outreach that accustoms the community to seeing good smoke. Our trainings build community-based prescribed fire capacity by providing ordinary people the chance to learn to read fire weather, understand burn prescriptions and the burn planning/permitting process, gain proficiency in smoke management, monitor different types of fuel moisture, develop an understanding of wind patterns at their microsite and how to use them to disperse smoke from forest health burns. Meanwhile, our social media and news media outreach before, during, and after each burn ensures the community is well-informed about the location, timing, and reason for the smoke they are seeing. We collaborate with CAL FIRE, BCAQMD, the Fire Safe Councils, and many other local organizations to build a rural culture of respect for smoke and an understanding that a little smoke on good burn days can prevent a lot of smoke during a catastrophic, "purple air" wildfire season. We believe that caring for our land - and our airshed – is everyone's business, so we find ways everyone can contribute to restoring good fire in our communities.

In spring 2021, our first season of burning, we held 4 successful training burns that created a total of 21 acres of underburned defensible space on private land. About 75 unique Butte County residents received on-the-ground training in good fire and, in the process, eagerly contributed a collective 700 hours of volunteer labor. Since then our acreage has grown past 100 acres, our volunteer hours have surpassed 2000 hours, and over 200 unique Butte County residents contributed their time and knowledge on over 20 prescribed fires. This level of engagement sends a clear message that the community is ready for this type of program. Community participants report regaining a sense of control over fire, healing traumatic associations with fire, improving their connection to nature, and achieving a much better understanding of how smoke moves in the landscape and how to work with fire without subjecting themselves and neighbors to smoke impacts. Next year, we want to increase the number of training's we offer and reach 200 acres burned with a 1000 acres a year burned being the eventual goal. We have done a great deal of burning in the low-income community of Cohasset and many properties we burned survived the Park Fire. We believe that good fire played a crucial role in the survival of those homes, neighboring properties, trees surviving, and even may have been a factor in a portion of the community being spared devastation. Following the recent Park Fire one landowner commented "My house is standing today 100% because of Butte PBA" Increasing the number of potential burn units in play at once will require more fire suppression equipment.

To increase the amount of defensible space we can create around homes and communities and increase the health of the forest we request a budget of \$10,000 to purchase a 500 gallon water trailer, hose, and fittings. This small investment will increase our gallons of water available fivefold from 125 to 625 to use on prescribed fire. Our project is extremely scalable, so if less than \$10,000 is available, we can still put the funds to good use by buying or building a less expensive fire skid unit that volunteers can put in the back of their personal vehicles.

Quantitative and / or qualitative description of expected emission reductions by air pollutant (particulate matter, oxides of nitrogen, reactive organic gases, toxic air contaminants, greenhouse gas emissions): By reducing the ladder fuels available to a wildfire, the project reduces future wildfire intensity and extent and thereby reduces the amount of particulate matter and greenhouse gas emissions released during a wildfire. A future wildfire that encounters a recently prescribed-burned area is likely to "drop down" out of the canopy to the forest floors, consume fewer whole trees, generate less smoke per acre while it is burning the pre-burned area, and overall leave more carbon in the forest on those acres. Furthermore, by creating defensible space around homes and communities, the project also reduces the likelihood that homes and structures would burn in a future wildfire, thereby reducing the volume of toxic air contaminants such as dioxins and volatile organic compounds that are released when homes burn. Additionally, by reducing tree and soil microbiology mortality, the forest has a chance to continue to sequester carbon and clean the air instead of needing to be removed via chainsaws and heavy equipment which both contribute to air pollution.

Quantitative and / or qualitative description of expected reduction in exposure to air pollutants – either directly or indirectly (from outreach or monitoring efforts, for example). By choosing the time and weather conditions for burning ladder fuels in the forest, the Butte PBA's efforts reduce the community's exposure to smoke. Fire in California is inevitable, but human health impacts from smoke need not be. By choosing to underburn our forests when conditions for smoke dispersal are excellent, we can get all the benefits of fuel reduction while minimizing the smoke impacts on sensitive individuals. Also using fire to treat overloaded fuels and protect homes and forests will reduce the need for other treatment methods including mastication, cut and pile or scatter, and bulldozing all of which are loud, dangerous, and pollute the air.

While burning in the winter, the only vegetation in the forest that will typically burn for a long time and put out excessive amounts of smoke are stumps. Rapid and thorough extinguishment of burning material helps reduce smoke impacts and the additional water capacity afforded to the Butte PBA by having a 500 gallon water trailer will significantly enhance our ability to accomplish this and keep smoke impacts to a minimum.

Estimated project timeline (projects must be funded by June 1st 2026): The funding requested will go to purchase equipment and supplies, so it can be expended almost immediately upon grant approval.

Estimated total costs. The estimated annual cost to provide the Butte Prescribed Burn Association program for 2023-24 is \$175,000, which includes all volunteer and partner match, coordinator wages, supplies/equipment, training budget, and overhead.

CAP Support Grant funding amount requested. BCRCD requests \$10,000 to purchase a 500 gallon water trailer, hose, and fittings which will allow Butte PBA to scale up the quality and quantity of our prescribed fire operation while minimizing our smoke impacts and protecting homes, property, and the forest.

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Project Information

For each proposed project, please submit the required information listed below. District staff will evaluate application packages and reach out if more information is needed.

Name of project: Cargo bike for equipment transportation, outreach and accessibility

Location(s) of project: Chico, CA

Project overview & goals: We are proposing the purchase of an electric cargo bike to replace using a traditional vehicle for transporting equipment and supplies to community events. An electric cargo bike would remove the barrier of needing to have an insured vehicle to be on our staff, eliminate this portion of our organization's carbon footprint and reduce air pollution on a weekly basis in our community. In addition to the immediate impact, it is also our desire to serve as a case study and leverage our experience to spark interest and enthusiasm for other small businesses in Butte County to also adopt cargo bikes for local delivery and transportation needs - furthering the impact of this grant. Chico Velo is committed to this cause and would be able to utilize the cargo bike to canvas for local business interest and serve as a resource.

Quantitative and / or qualitative description of expected emission reductions by air pollutant (particulate matter, oxides

of nitrogen, reactive organic gasses, toxic air contaminants, greenhouse gas emissions): Chico Velo currently transports our vendor equipment and supplies to the Chico Farmers Markets and other events at an estimated 420 miles per year. The cargo bike would eliminate 100% of these vehicle miles traveled as well as the associated GHG emissions. At an average rate of 400g of CO2 emissions per mile (higher when we use older vehicles), we would eliminate a minimum of 168,000g of CO2 emissions per year. Additionally, replacing a traditional internal combustion vehicle with an electric cargo bike would also eliminate the particulate matter, N2O, methane and other associated tailpipe emissions.

Quantitative and / or qualitative description of expected reduction in exposure to air pollutants – either directly or

indirectly (from outreach or monitoring efforts, for example):

In addition to the reduction in exposure by our staff and community by using a cargo bike over a traditional vehicle, we would also perform outreach efforts to other businesses to promote the use of electric cargo bikes for their local delivery systems. We are not aware of anyone else in the Chico area that utilizes cargo bikes, and by raising awareness of this option, we hope to influence the further elimination of air pollutants by encouraging others to use cargo bikes in their businesses.

Estimated project timeline (projects must be funded by June 1, 2026): The cargo bike that fulfills our needs is readily available and could be purchased as soon as funds are received. We would begin using it as soon as possible following arrival, ideally before the end of 2024 or early 2025.

Estimated total costs: \$12,500

CAP Support Grant funding amount requested: \$10,000

AB836 - Clean Air Center Annual Report 2024

1. Grant Recipient Name

Butte County Air Quality Management District

629 Entler Avenue Suite 15 Chico, CA 95928

Contact: Jason Mandly, jmandly@bcagmd.org, 530-332-9400x108

2. Equipment

The District was awarded four (4) Medify Model #MA-112 portable air cleaners. In 2023, one of the four units was found to have been damaged during shipping. Medify was able to replace the unit under warranty. The damaged unit was repaired in-house which leaves five (5) units available for deployment.

3. Device Deployment Record

The Park Fire started in Chico, CA on July 24, 2024 and quickly impacted the communities of Forest Ranch and Cohasset in Butte County.

On July 28, 2024, staff from the American Red Cross in coordination with Butte County requested four units for the evacuation shelter at Neighborhood Church – 2801 Notre Dame Blvd in Chico, CA. This location was located within a low-income community within 1/2mi of a Disadvantaged Community. District staff deployed four units at that location. The population of the shelter fluctuated daily. There were approximately 50-75 individuals using the shelter during deployment.

On August 2, 2024, the evacuation shelter was largely demobilized and the four units were transferred to the Local Assistance Center, a temporary multi-agency hub for the public to receive assistance due to damaged or destroyed homes. 2156 Pillsbury Road, Suite 100 in Chico, CA. This location was in a low-income community. The population of the Local Assistance Center fluctuated depending on visitation. There were approximately 50-75 individuals at the Local Assistance Center during a maintenance visit by District staff.

The four portable air cleaners were demobilized on August 15, 2024.

4. Outreach

The District continuously has information about the Clean Air Shelter Program, including an application to borrow portable air cleaners, on the District's website at https://www.bcaqmd.org/wildfires-and-air-quality.

The District issued a Joint Air Quality Advisory with Butte County Public Health on July 3, 2024 due to the Thompson Fire near Oroville, CA. The advisory correspondence to local agencies and the media included information on how to request portable air cleaners. The District repeated this outreach when issuing the first Joint Air Quality Advisory for the Park Fire on July 26, 2024. The District also included information about the Clean Air Center Program in the annual "Smoke Ready" press release

(https://www.bcaqmd.org/files/7cc48b9ba/July+2024+Smoke+Ready+Press+Release.pdf).

When the four portable air cleaners were deployed during the Park Fire, the District coordinated with CAPCOA and CARB to update the California Clean Air Center map. The District, along with CARB, published information about the temporary clean air shelters on social media.

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- <u>Listings</u>

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Events

First Farth Day Block Party Offered Family Fun



1 of 11



Director Sheila McQuaid and Brooke Bereznak, representing 530 Food Rescue, had a booth at Gridley's inaugural Earth Day Block Party.

GRIDLEY, **CA** (MPG) - On April 12, Gridley City Councilmember Catalina Sanchez hosted Gridley's inaugural Earth Day Block Party at the Magnolia Terrace cul-de-sac next to St. Timothy's Episcopal Church. The official Earth Day is April 22.

There were about a dozen booths, including CAL FIRE (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection), Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District (Mosquito Abatement), 530 Food Rescue and St. Timothy's plant booth. In addition, there were mini yoga classes and a composting workshop.

Music and food were also part of the event.

Visitors could tour the St. Timothy's Community Garden, where Gridley residents can have their own gardening patch as the gate is always open. Free compost is available and the community garden accepts compostable items such as food scraps from the public for this purpose.

The CAL FIRE booth had free stickers, erasers, pencils and coloring books for the youth.

Coloring books, a cloth bag and other free items were at the Mosquito Abatement booth. A large display of mounted insects there fascinated visitors. Vector ecologist Ryan Rothenwander was there to raise awareness of the need for mosquito control.



Vector ecologist Ryan Rothenwander is with the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District insect collection.

Jason Mandly of Butte County Air Quality Management District spoke about the program that swaps out wood-burning stoves for newer, cleaner wood stoves, gas or electric options. About 700 stoves have been swapped out in the county during the last 10 years. A similar program exists for swapping out old farm equipment, such as tractors, sweepers, shakers and harvesters for newer equipment that uses Tier 4 Diesel or electric models. Tier 4 Diesel is much cleaner than the old diesel, according to Mandly.

In conjunction with other food banks, 530 Food Rescue collects edible food left over from businesses that would otherwise be thrown away. The food is then distributed to those in need. According to director Sheila McQuaid, the organization has rescued more than 550,000 pounds of food in three years.



Soil ecologist Janelle Luke shows living organisms in compost under the microscope.

For the composting workshop, a microscope was set up by soil ecologist Janelle Luke, showing the living organisms that make compost superior to potting soil.

"One of the most important things about compost is all of the things that live in it, such as amoebas, nematodes, etc. Bagged soils don't have anything living in them," Luke said.



St. Timothy's Episcopal Church Community Garden is free to the public.

According to Luke, California legislation passed in 2016 requires that all organic waste be kept out of the landfills. Although Gridley received a waiver because of low population, Luke pointed out, it will probably be part of the mandate at some point.

The Earth Day Block Party raised community awareness on a variety of environmental issues.

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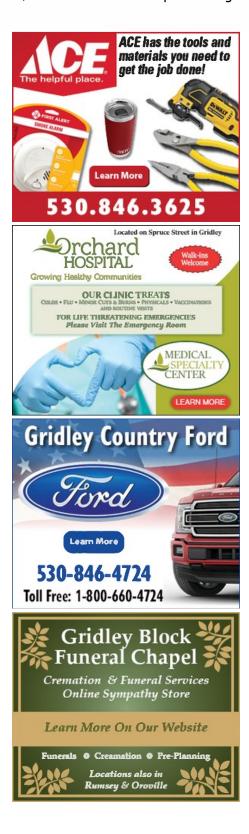
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Upcoming Events Near You

<u> 29</u>

SCG Open Studio Hours with Ray Gonzales

 $\underline{\text{12:00pm} \cdot \text{Blue Line Arts}}$

<u>29</u>

Yuba County Library's First Five Storytime at Health and Human Services

10:00am · Yuba County Health and Human Services

29

Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors - A virtual education program

11:00am · Virtual Event

<u>30</u>

<u>Yuba County Library's First Five Storytime at Health</u> <u>and Human Services</u>

10:00am · Yuba County Health and Human Services

30

SCG Open Studio Hours with Ray Gonzales

12:00pm · Blue Line Arts

<u>SCG Workshop II with Ray Gonzales | Raku Firing Techniques</u>

12:00pm · Blue Line Arts 30

Mental Wellness - A Community Forum

<u>6:00pm · Yuba College</u> <u>View All</u>

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Are You Smoke Ready?

 Find how smoke is impacting current air quality with The Airnow Fire and Smoke Map: fire.airnow.gov

Make sure your home is ready with an HVAC

- filter rated high enough to filter out smoke (MERV-13 or higher) or a portable HEPA filter.
 - Be prepared with a well-fitting N-95
 respirator if you need to spend time
 outdoors in smoky conditions.

More information at www.butteairquality.com





If you burn in a fireplace or woodstove, please:

Use dry and seasoned wood

Ayoid burning trash or gift wrap

Keep a hot flame to reduce smoldering