



Nuestra Señora Reina de la Paz



Photo courtesy of Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University

A New National Monument

President Barack Obama signed a Presidential Proclamation on October 8, 2012, creating the César E. Chávez National Monument. This peaceful “La Paz” site, in the Tehachapi Mountains northeast of Los Angeles, commemorates César Chávez and the struggles and accomplishments of the farm worker movement. A visitor center and the memorial garden where César Chávez is buried are open to the public.

César Chávez, Leader of the Farm Worker Movement

Widely recognized as the most important Latino leader in the United States during the twentieth century, Chávez led farm workers and supporters in the establishment of the country's first permanent agricultural union.

Under the leadership of César Chávez, Dolores

Huerta, Larry Itliong and many others, and with the support of millions of Americans, the farm worker movement achieved better working and living conditions and wages for farm workers. During the 1970s the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) broadened its focus to become a national voice for the poor and disenfranchised.

La Paz – Place of Action, Place of Refuge

Nuestra Señora Reina de la Paz (Our Lady Queen of Peace), or “La Paz,” embodied the spirit of César Estrada Chávez and the farm worker movement. La Paz became the national headquarters of the UFW; the home and workplace of Chávez, his family, union members and supporters; and the symbol of the movement's most significant achievements and expanding horizons, from the early 1970s until the death of the iconic farm labor and civil rights leader in 1993.

In 1971, the UFW made La Paz its official national headquarters. With residential buildings, administrative spaces, maintenance shops, and supporting infrastructure from its former use as a tuberculosis sanatorium, the property supported a new community almost immediately. César Chávez and his family moved to the grounds, and a fluctuating community of movement volunteers, union members and supporters, most living on subsistence pay, made La Paz their home as well.

From the 1970s to Chávez's death, La Paz was at the forefront of the American farm worker movement. Thousands of farm workers and their supporters from California and across North America streamed through La Paz to meet with movement leaders, learn from other farm workers, devise strategies and tactics, negotiate contracts, volunteer their time, and celebrate events. Chávez established an educational center at La Paz that trained farm workers to run their own union. Many other people came to La Paz,

where movement leaders helped them organize their unions, boycotts and campaigns. Throughout this period, La Paz became a symbol of a broad American farm worker movement and a place where thousands of people worked selflessly for social justice.

Many of the farm worker movement's most significant efforts of the 1970s and beyond were born, planned and coordinated at La Paz. Among them were major field strikes and national boycotts, landmark political campaigns in California and Arizona, and strategy sessions leading to the enactment of California's historic 1975 Agricultural Labor Relations Act, still the nation's only law establishing the right of farm workers to organize.

La Paz also offered the organizers a respite from the bitter struggles in the agricultural valleys and big cities, and the violent reactions that farm workers sometimes encountered. It is where César Chávez came in the 1970s, 80s and 90s to recharge and regroup, celebrate victories, mourn losses, forge new ideas, plan campaigns, and nurture the nonviolence ethic at the core of the farm worker movement. At La Paz, Chávez not only saw the union persist and modernize, but he watched his children and the children of other movement volunteers grow, marry, and raise children of their own. Chávez asked to be buried at La Paz, which remains an enduring testament to the strength of his association with the property. La Paz symbolizes Chávez's lasting contributions to United States history.

A Park Under Development

César E. Chávez National Monument is a new national park area “in progress” with services and programs that are still under development. In the coming years, you will see more visitor opportunities, interpretive and educational programs added to the park.

The site is managed collaboratively by the National Park Service and the National Chavez Center, with initial operations funded in part by the America Latino Heritage Fund of the National Park Foundation, the official fundraising partner of the National Park Service.

The areas that are currently open to visitors include a visitor center that features multimedia presentations and exhibits and a memorial garden in which César Chávez is buried.

Today La Paz continues to be a home and workplace just as it was during César Chávez’s life. Please respect the privacy of the farm worker movement organizations that still operate from this site, and the residents who live here.

Planning Your Visit

Operating Hours and Seasons

Hours: Open every day from 10am-4pm
(closed on major holidays)

Address:

César E. Chávez National Monument
29700 Woodford Tehachapi Road
Keene, CA 93531

For More Information: www.nps.gov/CECH

Directions

From Los Angeles (coming from the south):
Take I-5 N towards Sacramento
Take State Route 14 N towards Palmdale/
Lancaster
Continue onto CA-58 BUS W; turn left to merge
onto CA-58 W
Take exit 139 toward Keene
Turn right toward Woodford-Tehachapi Road
Turn right at Woodford Tehachapi Road
National Chavez Center and César Chávez
National Monument will be on your left

From Bakersfield (coming from the north):
Take the CA-58 E / Barstow-Bakersfield Hwy /
Blue Star Memorial Hwy
Take exit 139 toward Keene