



*Farm workers in a field use short handled hoes to harvest crops. Photo courtesy of Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University; photographer unknown.*

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

*This section provides an overview of the purpose and scope of the study and describes the study process.*

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### **Purpose and Need**

The Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-229, May 2008) authorized the National Park Service to conduct a special resource study of sites that are significant to the life of Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement in the western United States.

This legislation was sponsored by former Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis, from the Los Angeles, California area and Senator John McCain of Arizona, with numerous co-sponsors, including former Senator Kenneth Salazar of Colorado, Senator Barbara Boxer of California, and 69 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives from California, Arizona, Texas, and throughout the nation.

The overall purpose of this study is to evaluate the significance and suitability of sites significant to Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement, and the feasibility and appropriateness of a National Park Service (NPS) role in the management of any of these sites. Through the study process, the NPS identifies alternative strategies to manage, protect, or restore the resources, and to provide or enhance public use and enjoyment. These alternatives explore partnerships and efforts to protect important resources in ways that do not necessarily require the commitment of funds and staff by the NPS. This study will provide information to aid the Congress, the U.S. Department of Interior, and the National Park Service in determining whether designation of a unit of the national park system is desirable and appropriate. The legislation authorizing this study specifically directs the NPS to determine appropriate methods for preserving and interpreting the sites and whether any of the sites meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or designation as a national historic landmark.

The study follows the process established by the National Park System New Area Studies Act (P.L. 105-391, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1a-5). This law requires that these studies be prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). At the beginning of the study process, the NPS initiated a notice of scoping that was published in the Federal Register on May 17, 2011 (Vol.76, No. 95, pp.

28453-28454). Through the initial public scoping process, the NPS was able to identify a range of issues to address through the study and impacts of concern to the public. Special Resource Studies that consider a national park unit as an alternative are typically required to complete an environmental impact statement (EIS). The NPS has determined that an environmental assessment is a sufficient level of environmental analysis for this study, provided that significant impacts or controversy do not emerge. No significant impacts are anticipated from the findings and recommendations of this study.

This study is written to provide the Secretary of Interior and Congress with information on the sites and resources associated with Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement, and contains alternatives for the management, administration, and protection of those sites and resources, and evaluates their appropriateness for becoming a unit of the national park system. Cost estimates for operations and development are also included.

The study team investigated, with assistance from the Center for Oral and Public History at California State University, Fullerton (COPH), nearly 100 sites associated with Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement, ascertained the public's level of interest in recognizing Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement nationally, and evaluated whether one or more of the sites would be appropriate for designation as a national park system unit.

The draft study report was available for public review for a minimum of 30 days. During the review period, the NPS accepted comments from interested parties electronically, at public meetings and by mail. At the end of the public comment period, the NPS revised the report based on those comments for transmittal to the Secretary of the Interior, along with the NPS Director's recommendation for the most efficient and effective alternative. The Secretary will transmit the report to Congress, along with the Secretary's recommendation for the sites.

## **Issues Addressed in Study**

Through the scoping process, the public identified specific issues and concerns that should be addressed in this special resource study. The following issues and concerns were identified based on public input and Congressional testimony.

- Contributions to American history made by Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement deserve national attention, and are not currently recognized in the national park system. The NPS has few units that focus on Latino American history.
- The leadership and contributions of the Filipino community to the farm labor movement have not been widely recognized and deserve greater attention.
- Sites with high interpretive and educational value should be recognized, even if they don't meet NPS criteria for significance and integrity.
- There is a strong interest in many communities in local sites that people can visit to experience a connection to the life of Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement.
- There is a strong desire to keep the history of the farm labor movement relevant to youth and future generations.
- Many of the former farm workers who participated in the movement are still alive and it is important that their stories be documented.

## **Study Sites**

The study evaluated over 100 sites in California and Arizona related to Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement. The National Park Service partnered with the COPH to identify sites significant to Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement and evaluate their significance.

COPH faculty and students developed a preliminary list of 84 sites based on information obtained through personal interviews, books and essays written in the 1960s and 1970s, declassified FBI surveillance files, newspapers, and photographs. They then conducted site visits to determine current conditions and integrity of the sites. The research team noted in their report the challenges of documenting sites

associated with transitory events and activities (such as marches or picket lines). They observed that many sites associated with important events have changed dramatically in the years since the events, and therefore retain less historic integrity. The research team also noted in their report their expectation that additional significant sites will likely be found as information is gathered through the NPS study process. The research was completed between October 2009 and December 2010. Chapters 2, *Historical Overview and Resources*, and Chapter 3, *Significance*, provide more information on the sites and the analysis of their significance. Information has been added and revised based on information obtained during public scoping.

## **Study Process**

### **LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY DIRECTION**

Several laws and policies outline the criteria for units of the national park system. The National Park System New Area Studies Act (P.L. 105-391, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1a-5) establishes the basic process for NPS studies of potential new national park areas. NPS management policies provide further guidance. According to NPS management policies, a proposed addition to the national park system will receive a favorable recommendation from the NPS only if it meets all of the following four criteria for inclusion:

1. It possesses nationally significant natural or cultural resources;
2. It is a suitable addition to the system;
3. It is a feasible addition to the system; and
4. It requires direct NPS management, instead of alternative protection by other public agencies or the private sector.

These criteria are designed to ensure that the NPS includes only the most outstanding examples of the nation's natural and cultural resources. They also recognize that there are other management alternatives for preserving the nation's outstanding resources.

Alternatives for NPS management are developed for sites that meet all four of the criteria for inclusion, above. Further definition of each of these criteria is provided in the related sections of this report.

## **Public Involvement**

The NPS launched public scoping for this study in spring of 2011. In April 2011 the study team produced and distributed, mailed or emailed 1,900

newsletters to individuals, organizations, government officials and the media. The newsletter was also made available for comment on the study website and on the NPS's Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website. Newsletters were available in English and Spanish.

The purpose of this newsletter was to introduce the study, explain the process to community members and others, and solicit comments on issues the study should address. The newsletter also contained information on the schedule of public scoping meetings.

Press releases announcing the beginning of the study process and the public meeting schedule were distributed to local media. Numerous articles and opinion pieces about the study were published in area newspapers and presented on television and radio.

All information sent by mail or e-mail has also been available on the study website site at [www.nps.gov/chavez](http://www.nps.gov/chavez). Updates and information about the study process were also made available on the study's Facebook page at [facebook.com/chavezstudy](http://facebook.com/chavezstudy).

In May 2011, the study team held a series of public scoping meeting in California and Arizona. Included in the agenda was a presentation on the purpose and process of the study process, sites associated with Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement, and potential management ideas and outcomes. After the presentation the NPS facilitated group discussions so that participants could discuss their vision for recognizing the life of Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement and identify any additional sites that should be considered in the study. Study team members recorded discussion comments on flipcharts.

Public scoping meetings were held in San Jose, Salinas, Los Angeles, Oxnard, Coachella, Delano, (CA), and Phoenix and Yuma (AZ), and were attended by approximately 240 people. Spanish translation was available at all meetings. The study team also consulted with representatives of the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation, the Filipino Community of Delano, Inc., the United Farm Workers of America, the Chavez Family Vision, Chicanos Por La Causa, former participants in the farm labor movement and local, state and federal government officials.

The comment period extended to June 16, 2011, thirty days after publication of the notice of scoping

in the Federal Register. Comments received after this date were also accepted.

In addition to comments received at the public scoping meetings, the NPS received approximately 65 comments via written letters and through e-mail.

The Draft Cesar Chavez Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment was published and released for public comment on October 12, 2011. Approximately 555 copies were distributed for review to elected officials, government agencies, organizations, and individuals on the study mailing list and at public meetings. The draft study report was also posted on the study web site. A second newsletter/executive summary was distributed in October 2011 to more than 2,500 names on mailing and email lists. Copies were also distributed at public scoping meetings. The newsletter summarized the findings of the draft study report, provided a summary and comparison of five proposed management alternatives and requested public comment.

Public meetings were held from October 20, 2011 through November 10, 2011 in San Jose, Salinas, Delano, Coachella, Oxnard, Los Angeles, (CA) and Phoenix and Yuma (AZ). Spanish translation was available at all meetings. A total of 170 people attended the meetings. The study team provided a presentation describing the study process and criteria used in the study and discussed the study results. Copies of the draft study report were made available and participants were encouraged to submit comments by mail or through the study website or the PEPC website. The comment period ended November 14, 2011. In addition to comments received at the public meetings, 60 written comments on the draft study report were received and analyzed.

The study team also consulted with individuals and representatives of various organizations and government entities, including the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation, the Filipino Community of Delano, Inc., the United Farm Workers of America, the Chavez Family Vision, Chicanos Por La Causa, former participants in the farm labor movement and numerous local, state and federal government officials.

## **Development of Alternatives**

Five alternatives were evaluated in this study, including a "No Action" alternative which serves as a baseline for comparison for the other four action alternatives. Three of the four alternatives include

designation of a national park unit. All four action alternatives respect private property rights and existing local authority. The NPS alternatives propose collaborative management models that do not require extensive land management by the NPS.

The study team developed the five alternatives based on information gathered from public and stakeholder input, internal NPS discussions, site research and NPS management models elsewhere. The alternatives explore a range of possible actions including federal recognition of significant resources, technical assistance, and cooperative management and partnership with the NPS:

- Alternative A: Continuation of Current Management (No Action Alternative)
- Alternative B: National Network
- Alternative C: National Historic Trail
- Alternative D: National Historic Site
- Alternative E: National Historical Park

### **THE SELECTED ALTERNATIVE**

The National Park Service special resource study process requires that the study identify the alternative or combination of alternatives that in the professional judgment of the NPS Director is most effective and efficient in protecting significant resources and providing for visitor enjoyment. Based on public and stakeholder input and professional judgment, the NPS selected the national historical park (from alternative E), incorporating aspects of the national network (from alternative B). The National Park Service has determined this to be the most effective and efficient alternative in protecting significant resources and providing for visitor enjoyment.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT DISMISSED**

Two other alternative approaches to preservation and interpretation of significant sites were initially considered: a national heritage area encompassing the major agricultural valleys of California and Arizona, and a national historic trail that would connect the major communities with sites significant to Cesar Chavez and the farm labor movement. These alternatives are no longer under consideration because the areas do not fully meet NPS criteria for national heritage area or national historic trail designation.

See Chapter 6, *Alternatives*, for a full description of the study alternatives.

## **Related Plans and Studies**

This section describes plans and studies that have provided guidance and resource information for the study.

### **The Forty Acres National Historical Landmark Designation, National Park Service**

The Secretary of Interior designated the Forty Acres property in Delano, CA as a National Historic Landmark on October 6, 2008. The nomination form documents how the property meets NHL criteria and justifies the national significance of the property.

### **Nuestra Senora Reina de La Paz National Register Nomination, National Park Service**

Nuestra Senora Reina de La Paz in Keene, CA was listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance in 2011. The nomination form describes the many structures on the property and assesses and documents the property's significance.

### **Nuestra Senora Reina de La Paz Historic Landmark Nomination, National Park Service**

The Nuestra Senora Reina de La Paz National Historic Landmark nomination builds on the NRHP nomination and documents how the property meets NHL criteria. The nomination was reviewed and approved by the National Park System Advisory Board Landmarks Committee and has been forward to the Secretary of Interior for approval.

### **Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers' Movement in the American West and Southwest Theme Study, Raymond Rast PhD., Brian Casserly, PhD. and Gail Dubrow, PhD.**

The purpose of the theme study is to assist in the identification and evaluation of the properties associated with Cesar Chavez and the farm workers' movement in the American West and the Southwest. It provides an historical overview intended to illustrate the relevance, general relationships, and national, regional, or local importance of associated properties. It also provides interpretive direction for analysis of these properties in greater depth and detail. The draft theme study was completed in 2004.