

Mario Zabaleta Franco

Died 20 February 2015



Mario Zabaleta Franco destaca por sus aportaciones profesionales y compromiso para difundir la educación ambiental.

Mario Zabaleta Franco stands out for his professional contributions and commitment to spreading environmental education.

(Daniel Pacheco/SIPSE)

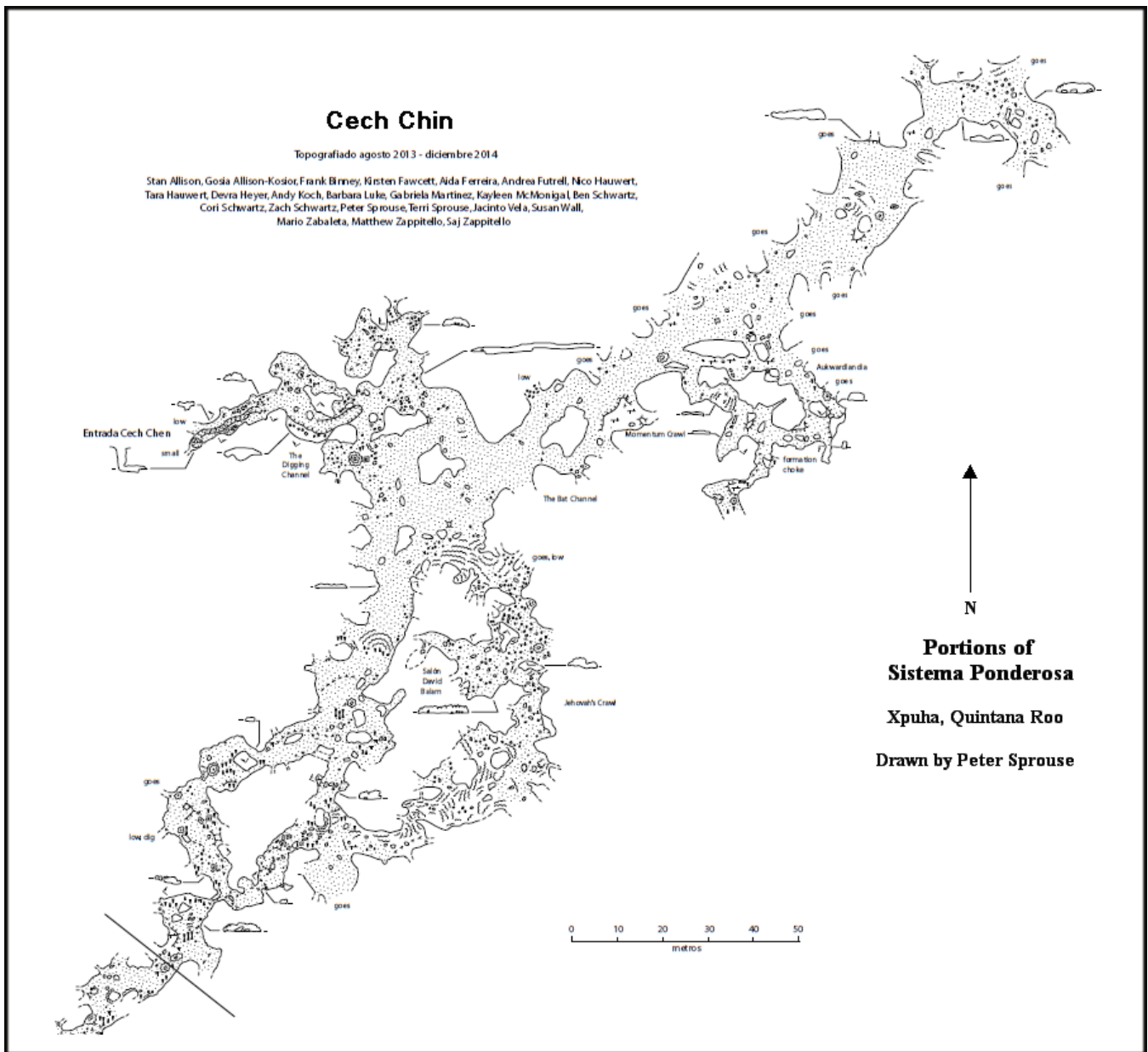
Mario Zabaleta died of a heart attack on February 20, 2015. I love the story of how Mario ended up in Mexico. A native of Madrid, he had travelled the world some 25 years ago, visiting among other places Playa del Carmen in Quintana Roo. One night after he returned home, he had a dream that he was to become a diving guide in Mexico, so he promptly moved there. Mario worked out of the Paamul dive shop for years and introduced many people to cenote diving. I got to know him about three years ago when he came dry caving with us, which he enthusiastically embraced. Soon he was a founding member of the **Círculo Espeleológico del Mayab AC** and dedicated himself to raising awareness about caves and caving. Fighting to preserve the many caves under threat in Playa del Carmen was never an easy task, but Mario stepped up to the plate like no one else I know. Though his work was cut short, he pursued a number of campaigns to successful outcomes, and will remain a model for the rest of us to follow.

Peter Sprouse, *AMCS Activities Newsletter 38*, 2015, p. 40.

There is a six-minute video of exploring a cave in Quintana Roo by Germán Yañez Mendoza of the *Círculo Espeleológico Mayab* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ku0kxBollFc>. There is a four-minute TV news feature about stopping the destruction of a cenote by quarrying at http://tv.milenio.com/estados/xenote_a_punto_de_desaparecer-playa_del_carmen_quintana_roo_3_347995221.html; Mario Zabaleta and some local officials are interviewed. *Source*: Mario Zabaleta.

http://tv.milenio.com/estados/xenote_a_punto_de_desaparecer-playa_del_carmen_quintana_roo_3_347995221.html

Mario helped map Cech Chin in 2013-2014, *AMCS Activities Newsletter* 38, p. 44-45, 2015:



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