ABANDONED OR INACTIVE URANIUM MINES IN NEW MEXICO

A report of investigation carried out between August 1979 and May 1980 under contract with the New Mexico Energy and Minerals Department.

by

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INTRODUCTION

During the course of this investigation approximately 200 uranium mine sites were visited. Although these sites are distributed throughout 20 counties the majority are in McKinley, San Juan, and Valencia Counties, along the western and southern margin of the San Juan Basin. Other counties with an appreciable number of sites are Grant, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, Sierra, and Socorro.

Field work commenced in August, 1979 and extended although not continuously, into May, 1980. Information obtained during the on-site visits included location, type and size of mine, condition of mine, host formation, dimensions of remaining structures, proximity to residences or villages, water quality data, and radiation levels, although a gamma ray scintillometer was not obtained for the project until October 20, 1979. An effort was made to contact landowners whenever and wherever possible, however, no systematic attempt was made to determine land and mineral ownership during this phase of the investigation.

Mine operation data has been included where available. This consists of information on ore grades, production history mineralogy, and mine operator. Old publications of the U.S. AEC and the State Mine Inspectors office were helpful in this area.

The mine reports are arranged alphabetically by county with each county having its own index. A NM- or AZ-mine identification number is given with each mine name in the index. It is an AML numbering system devised by Don Baker, Jr. The first part of this

identification number is based on a U.S. Soil Conservation Service numbering system of 15' quadrangles beginning with 1 in the northwest corner of the state to 24 in the northeast corner, then returning to the western border to start a new tier. The second part refers to a 7½' quad within the 15' quad; these are numbered counterclockwise from 1 in the NE quadrant to 4 in the SE. The last part of the number refers to a particular mine within the 7½' quad. An AZ- prefix indicates the 15' quadrangle is an Arizona quad that overlaps the New Mexico state boundary.

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The help and cooperation of the Navajo Tribe Office in Window Rock, Arizona permitted a statewide investigation to be completed; a note of thanks goes to Mr. R. Zaman and Mr. William Armstrong of that office.

SOCORRO COUNTY

Date visited 8/8/79

Mine name(s) Jeter (or Charley #2) County Socorro

Section SW¼, NE¼ 35 Twnsh. 3 N R. 2 W

Quadrangle sheet Riley 15'

Mining district Ladrone

Elevation 5,700'

Nearest city and/or dwellings Mack Brown Ranch; 2 miles southwest

The Jeter or Charley #2 Mine is located on the east edge of the Ladrone Mountains. It may be reached by taking the U.S. no. 60 exit 25 miles north of Socorro on I-25. Then get on old U.S. no. 85 southward and cross old bridge over the Rio Puerco and take dirt road to west for 11 miles to the mine.

The mine consists of a decline and one open pit, (see photos a & b). The 12°-15° decline is oriented approximately N 80° E, is well timbered, but caved in at 25' feet from portal. Portal dimensions are 6' high, 10' wide; a row of timbers leads down the center of the decline. Back is stable for the 25 foot distance to the cave in; although the timbers lean to the left danger appears minimal at this point.

The open pit is about 125 feet to the north of the portal. It is approximately 150 x 300 feet, elongate N-S, and contained a shallow pond nearly 100 feet long at the time of the visit. Local rancher who grazes the section did not complain of stock hazards or the water quality.

Directly out from the decline is a 25 x 25 foot concrete slab upon which rested the hoist and draw works; 1½ in. diam. bolts remain anchored in the foundations, see photos. The mine dump is to the immediate NW of the concrete slab and shown in the same photo; it is about 4' high and up to 100' feet in maximum dimension. No scintillometer readings are available.

Disturbance is not severe or extensive, but nevertheless highly visible; no buildings remain. Total disturbed area is 400 x 400 feet or approximately 3.5 acres.

The uranium occurs in mostly oxidized forms in a 1-10 foot thick sheared dark gray clayey material and bleached tuffaceous sandstone near the base of the Popotosa fm. (Hilpert, 1969, p. 55). The Popotosa fm., has here been faulted against the underlying Precambrian granite along the Cerro Colorado fault.

The mine was operated during the 1954-1958 period, Hilpert, (1969), however, last registration with the State Mine Inspector's Office was in August, 1957. By that time it had acquired the additional names of "Jeter and Hattie" and "Hattie #2"; the owner was listed as Seaboard Oil and Gas. Production statistics are being made available in the form of "U.S. Dept. of Energy Ore Production Reports-U.S. Government Contracts, 1948-1970" according to William Chenoweth U.S. Department of Energy (personal communication).

References: (1) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uranium Resources of NW New Mexico, U.S.G.S., Prof. paper 603, p. 55.
(2) New Mexico State Mine Inspector's Office, inactive uranium mine file.
(3) Field notes, 8/8/79.

Photo (a) Jeter Decline, looking east from hoist foundation area; note hat for scale.

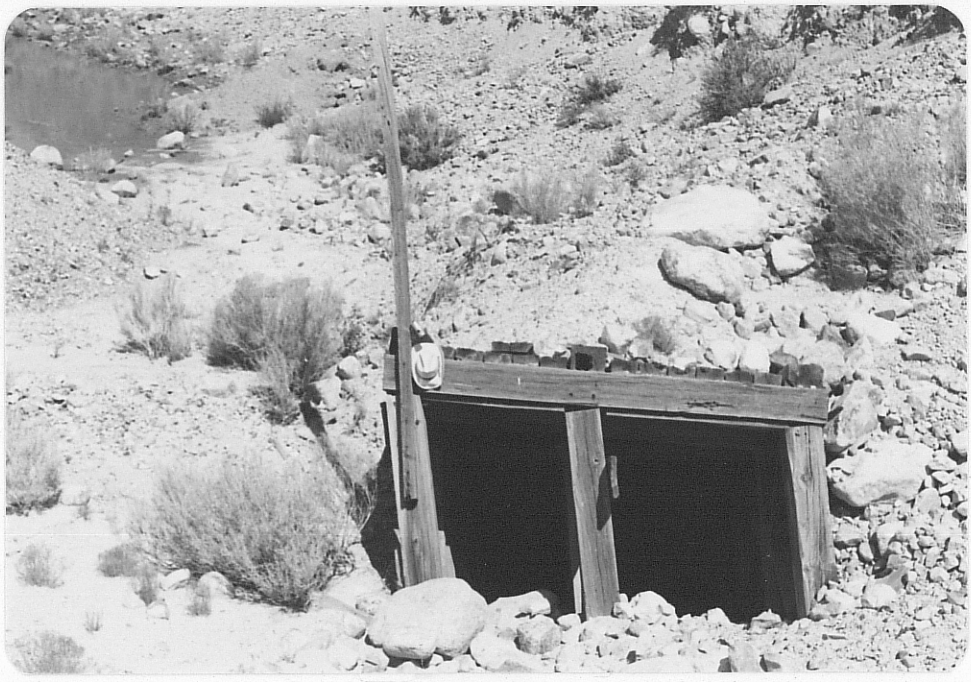

Photo (b) Close-up of Jeter Decline.

Photo C - Jeter open cut, looking north.

Photo D - Jeter hoist foundation and mine dump looking NW.