

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.

SANTA FE COUNTY

Quad: Cundiyo 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ '

1. NM-109-2-1

Marion

p. 1

Quad: Espanola 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ '

1. NM-108-1-1

Rodgers Claims (Becky)

p. 3

Quad: Tetilla Peak

1. NM-132-3-1

La Bajada (Lone Star)

p. 6

Date Visited 9/14/80

Mine name(s) Rodgers Claims (Becky) (San Jose) County Santa Fe

Section 17, 20, (29-San Jose) Twنش. 20 N R. 9

Quadrangle Sheet Espanola 7½'

Mining district N.A.

Elevation 5800'

Nearest City and/or dwelling Sombrillo & Rancho Valle (Unincorporated)
2 mi. N; additional scattered dwellings along
US 64 & 84.

The Rodgers claims run north-south along two tributaries of Arroyo Seco. U.S. interstate 64, 84, 285 running north south is approximately ½ mile due west of the claims.

Workings on the claims consist of several small bulldozer pits, which now serve as catch basins for water promoting vegetation growth (see photos a & b). The pits are supposedly spread out over three sections, however, this search revealed workings only in the S½ of Sec. 17 and the N½ of Sec. 20. Dimensions of a typical pit are 15' x 15' x 2' deep. No scintillometer readings are available. Anomalous areas were apparently detected using airborne radiometrics (Hilpert, 1969) and claims staked accordingly.

The dozer cuts are in the Santa Fe group, consisting of slightly consolidated sandstones, siltstones, and mudstones. No uranium minerals were visible during the field visit, but according to Hilpert (1969), carnotite, schroekingerite, and meta-autonite coal fractures in a small pit in the NW¼ of Sec. 29, and a grab sample yielded 0.27% U₃O₈. Another grab sample in the SW¼ of 17 yielded U₃O₈ values of 0.03%

Photo (c) shows an additional prospecting pit on the north bank of a small drainage line. In the background may be seen some of the dwellings that characterize scattered development along U.S. route 64 & 84.

- References:
- (1) Chenoweth, William, 1979, Uranium in The Santa Fe Area in New Mexico Geol. Soc. 30th Field Conference Guide book, Santa Fe County, p.263.
 - (2) Collins, G. E., and Freeland, R. G., 1956, Airborne and Ground Reconnaissance in the Espanola area, Santa Fe County, New Mexico, U.S. AEC RME-1075.
 - (3) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uranium Resources of NW New Mex; USGS Prof. Paper 603.
 - (4) N. Mex. State Mine Inspector.



Photo (a) Small bulldozer cut-Rodgers claims.



Photo (b) Rodgers claims, Santa Fe Fm., looking north.



Photo (c) Rodgers Claims, looking NW; note claim marker in immediate foreground. Locale is near Sec. 17/20 line.