

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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Mineral Resources  
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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.

Acknowledgments - The writer wishes to thank the following people for their valuable assistance in the field: Lars (Skip) Skotte, Richard Chamberlin, JoAnne Osburn, Mary Ann Anderson, and Cheryl Kyllonen.

A special thanks is extended to Mr. William Chenoweth of the U.S. Department of Energy, both for his time in the field as well as the claim maps and A.E.C. mine production records he provided. Mr. John Blagbrough provided helpful information about the Chuska district. The editorial assistance of Wyatt Brewster and Lars (Skip) Skotte is gratefully acknowledged.

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.

Horace Ben

Quad: Sonsala Butte 1. NE 7 1/2'

1. AZ-60-1-1

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Kee and Tohe

2. AZ-60-1-2

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John Joe

3. AZ-60-1-3

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Castle Tsosie

4. AZ-60-1-4

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Joe Ben #2 Prospect

5. AZ-60-1-5

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Joe Ben #1 Prospect

6. AZ-60-1-6

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Joe Ben #3

7. AZ-60-1-7

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Enos Johnson

8. AZ-60-1-8

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Carl Yazzie #1

9. AZ-60-1-9

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H.B. Roy #2

10. AZ-60-1-10

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Reed Henderson (Reed Henderson Claims)

REFERENCES FOR CHUSKA DISTRICT

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Date visited 11/14/80

Mine name(s) Joe Ben #1 Prospect County San Juan

Section (Unsurveyed) 6 Twنش. 25 N R. 20 W

Quadrangle sheet Sonsala Butte 1 NE, 7½'

Mining district Chuska

Elevation 7,000'

Nearest city and/or dwellings Sanostee, 8 mi. east; additional single family dwellings within a 3-4 mi. radius.

The Joe Ben Prospect is no more than a radiometric anomaly in the lower Salt Wash member of the Morrison Fm. (see photos a & b). A side road off the road paralleling Sanostee Wash leads directly to this site, but there are no recognizable workings or disturbance (see Chuska district map).

The anomalous readings of up to 230 cps (or 4 x background) were found just below a pronounced bedding plane in massive, medium to fine grained, red to brownish red sandstone (see again photo b). No uranium mineralization was noted.

Reportedly 6 tons of ore averaging .36%  $U_{38}$  were shipped from the property (A.E.C. production records) in 1952, but other than the road no ground disturbance was noted.

- References:
- (1) Blagbrough, J. W., et. al., 1959 Uranium Reconnaissance and Drilling in the Sanostee area ...". U.S. A.E.C. RME-111.
  - (2) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uranium Resources of NW New Mexico, U.S.G.S. Prof. Paper 603, p. 50.
  - (3) U.S. A.E.C. Production Records, courtesy Wm. Chenoweth, U.S. Dept. of Energy.



Photo (a) Looking E, at the Joe Ben #1 prospect on south side of small canyon.

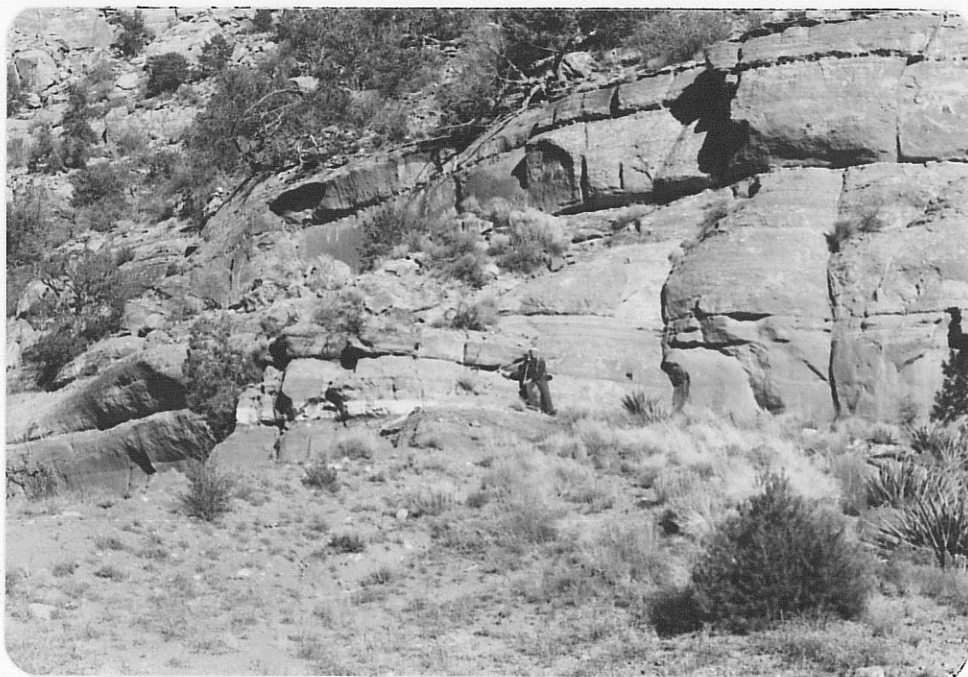


Photo (b) Close up of view shown in photo (a); person in photo is pointing to parting having radiometric anomaly.