

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.

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.

SAN JUAN COUNTY

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## PREFACE TO EAST CARRIZO DISTRICT REPORTS

The East Carrizo District lies along or within several miles of the Arizona border in townships 29 and 30 N., and ranges 20 and 21 west.

The area is covered on the Pastora Peak and Redrock Valley 15' topographic quadrangles, but is largely unsurveyed. A land net was projected in solely to determine if our locations agreed with those given in other publications such as Hilpert, L., (1969), and does not appear on the East Carrizo District claim maps (after AEC, 1953, Claim Maps, East Carrizo District) that accompany each report.

These claim maps were provided for our use on this project by Mr. William Chenoweth of the U.S. Department of Energy, Grand Junction Office, Grand Junction, Colorado. They show access roads, drainage lines, and the claims in the area as of 1953. The only scale they carry is the mile post markers along the New Mexico/Arizona state line.

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Socorro, New Mexico  
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Date Visited 10/23/79

Mine name(s) Canyon #1 County San Juan

Section (Unsurveyed) Twنش. 30 N R. 20 W & 21 W

Quadrangle sheet Pastora Peak 15'

Mining district East Carrizo

Elevation 5600'

Nearest city and/or dwelling Beclabito, 3 mi. N

The Canyon #1 apparently consists of 3 separate workings that are very near the range 20 & 21 W line in T. 30 N. The eastern and middle workings are small adits, the western an open cut at the base of 2 ss. cliff. All 3 are just off the Oak Springs road (see claim map), and are indicated as I, II, III.

The eastern adit which is just 50' off the sharp bend in the road is approximately 5' high, 4' wide, and at least 50' long (the entire length is not known), see photo A. It is driven in sandstone just below a 4"-8" thick gray to greenish gray mudstone; the mudstone or the mudstone/sandstone interface is apparently the ore bearing horizon as the highest scintillometer count, 700 cps., was recorded there. The portal area registered about 250 cps. or about 4 x background (see photo b).

The middle workings, shown as symbol II, are just below the road. The adit is 6½' high, 12' wide at face but tapers back quickly, and 12' long (see photo c). The typically black vanadium staining on the left face (east wall) produced a scintillometer reading of 600 cps. A greenish, lenticular mudstone also exposed on the left face produced readings of 450 cps. The small dump just out front of the adit is about 8' high, up to 12' wide, (see photo d), and gave average scintillometer readings of 200 cps.

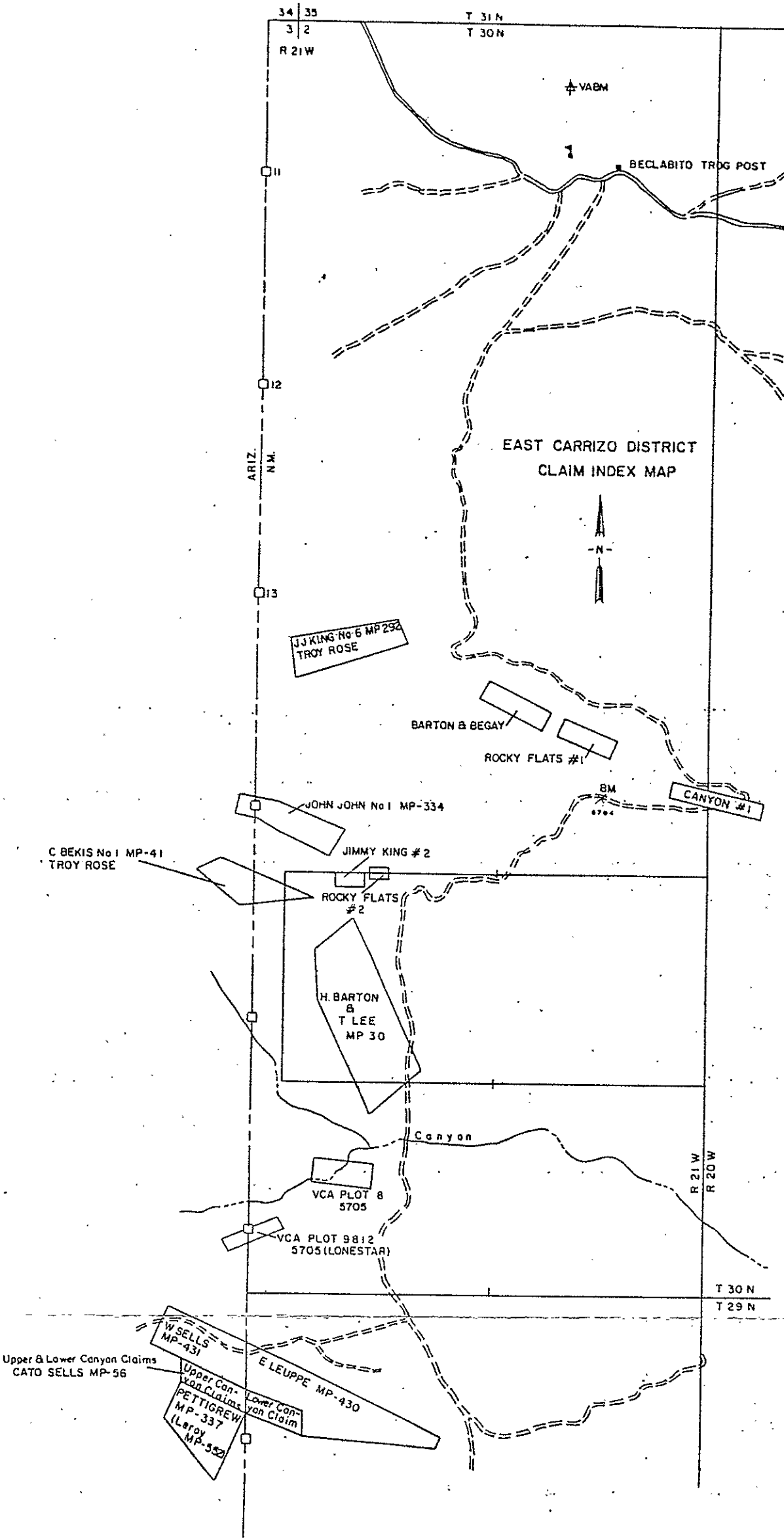
The western workings consist of a small open cut or trench, irregular in outline and not more than 15' in any horizontal dimension, nor more than a few feet in depth, (see photo e). A one foot mudstone lens exposed at the base, shown in photo e, produced readings of 3000 cps. on the scintillometer and probably provided the incentive to prospect here. Carnotite/tyumunite mineralization was noted on the sandstone rocks in the rather prominent mine dump from this open cut (see photo f); dump is approximately 55' x 30'.

Host rock is again the Salt Wash ss. member of the Morrison fm. The mine was operated by Pete Atcity from 1951 to 1953. Total production from all 3 workings was 97 tons of ore containing 206 lbs. of  $U_3O_8$  at an average grade of .11%. The  $V_2O_5$  content was 3,974 lbs. at an average grade of 2.05%.

Continued

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- References: (1) Chenoweth, W.L., 1980, Historical Review of Uranium-Vanadium in The Eastern Carrizo Mountians, San Juan County, New Mexico, U.S. DOE, TM-210.
- (2) Hilpert, L.S., 1965, Uranium Section in Mineral and Water Resources of New Mexico, New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources, Bull. 87, pp. 216
- (3) East Carrizo District Claim Index Map, 1953



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Photo (a) Looking south into Canyon #1, eastern adit.



Photo (b) Looking S SE into adit area, at middle right, and dump.



Photo (c) Looking south into small adit; middle workings of Canyon #1.



Photo (d) Looking south, showing adit & dump at middle workings.



Photo (e) Western workings, Canyon #1; looking NW.



Photo (f) Looking N at dump of western workings.