

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.

SAN MIGUEL COUNTY

Quad: El Porvenir 7½'

1. NM-135-2-1 Page 1  
Sparks - Stone (Sparks Stone #1)

Quad: Honey Boy Ranch 7½'

1. NM-131-1-1 Page 2  
High Peak(High Peak Claims)

Quad: Sabinoso 7½'

1. NM-139-2-1 Page 6  
Sabinoso Uranium Coop. (Lujan Ranch) (Asco Mine)
2. NM-139-2-2 Page 10  
Windy 9
3. NM-139-2-3 Page 12  
Bish Claims
4. NM-139-2-4 Page 14  
Verde (Hunt Oil Co. Sab)  
\*Unlocated on Sabinso Quad.

Date visited 9/19/79

Mine name(s) Bish Claims County San Miguel

Section NE $\frac{1}{4}$  NE $\frac{1}{4}$  31 Twنش. 17 N R. 24 E

Quadrangle sheet Sabinoso

Mining district Sabinoso

Elevation 4950'

Nearest city and/or dwellings 2 mi. SW of Sabinoso

The Bish Claims are located on the far southwestern corner of a NE-SW trending ridge, with Cerro del Miguel Antonio to the NE, and Canon Sabinoso  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile over the ridge to the NW.

Evidence of an adit was found at the site, ore piles, timber, etc., and the State Mine Inspector makes reference to a tunnel, however, the entrance may be caved, as after an extensive search no adit was found\*. There was evidence of extensive drilling activity, and 6 levels of drill roads were found (photos a and b).

According to Finch, (1972), the Bish #2 Mine yielded 30 tons of ore, averaging 0.10%  $U_3O_8$  and 0.40%  $V_2O_5$ .

Host rock is the middle member of the Chinle, which locally is a sandstone, limestone-pebble conglomerate (Finch, 1972), that contains carbonized plant remains.

- Reference: (1) Finch, 1972, Uranium in Eastern New Mexico, U.S.G.S., open-file report.  
(2) U.S. A.E.C. Uranium Mine Records  
(3) State Mine Inspector

\* A report later obtained, courtesy of Wm. Chenoweth, by I. T. Fisk, a field engineer for the A.E.C., states that the adit was 75 feet in length. Mr. Fisk made his field check in August, 1960, and he states the portal was partly caved and the mine flooded 30' from the portal at the time of his visit.



Photo (a) Drill roads in the Bish Claims.



Photo (b) Close up of impassable drill road on the Bish Claims.