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
Open-File Report 148

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.

Quad: Bread Springs 7½'

Quad: Church Rock 7½'

Quad: Dos Lomas 7½'

*Dos Lomas Quad reports #26 - #35 found under Valencia County

Quad: Gallup East 7½'

Quad: Goat Mountain 7½'

Date visited 1/15/80

Mine name(s) Hanosh County McKinley

Section N½ NE¼ 26 Twnsh. 13 N R. 10 W

Quadrangle sheet Dos Lomas 7½'

Mining district Poison Canyon Trend

Elevation 7,020'

Nearest city and/or dwellings Single family dwellings, ½ mile west.

The Hanosh Mine is located in the N½ NE¼ sec. 26 on an Indian allotment section. It is about 3 miles west of highway no. 53 just off the road to Haystack Mountain.

The mine consists of an inclined shaft and several open pits that extend northwestward and east of the shaft. Photo (a) shows the load out facility surrounded with small ore piles, the box cut into which the incline was driven, and an extensive area of strip mining activity in the background which belongs to the NW¼ sec. 25 workings. The portal of the decline measures about 8' x 8' and is located at the bottom of a 75' long, 20' deep box cut (photo b); the 20' cut is entirely in unconsolidated overburden. A few timbers are in place just inside the portal and the south drift (photo c) is tracked. A drift back to the north underneath the entrance ramp goes back an unknown distance. Scintillometer readings inside the shaft ranged up to 2,400 cps and uranium mineralization was noted on roof and faces; at close range mineralized faces read up to 6,000 cps.

An open pit or trench extends east of the shaft across the east section line (photo d). This cut is 25' deep and about 50' square with maximum gamma readings of 1,800 cps.

The mine produced from an irregularly shaped medium deposit in the middle and lower parts of the Todilto limestone; locally pockets of fine grained fluorite were uncovered. The mine was worked between 1952 and 1957 (Hilpert, 1969). Last registration with the State Mine Inspector's office was in August, 1958, which listed Hanosh Mines, Inc., as the operator.

A description of ore deposits in section 26 is given in McLaughlin (1963).

References: (1) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uranium Resources of NW New Mexico, U.S.G.S., Prof. Paper 603, p. 37.
(2) McLaughlin, E. D. Jr., 1963, Uranium Deposits in the Todilto limestone of the Grants District, in Geology and Technology of the Grants Uranium Region: New Mexico Bur. of Mines and Mineral Resources, Mem. 15, p. 147.
(3) State Mine Inspector's office, inactive uranium mine file.
(4) Field notes, 1/15/80.

Photo (a) Looking southeastward at the Hanosh shaft site showing load out facility at lower left, and box cut immediately to right which contains entrance to shaft. In background at center and left is spoil piles from strip mining in section 25.

Photo (b) Looking southward at portal of inclined shaft in bottom of box cut.

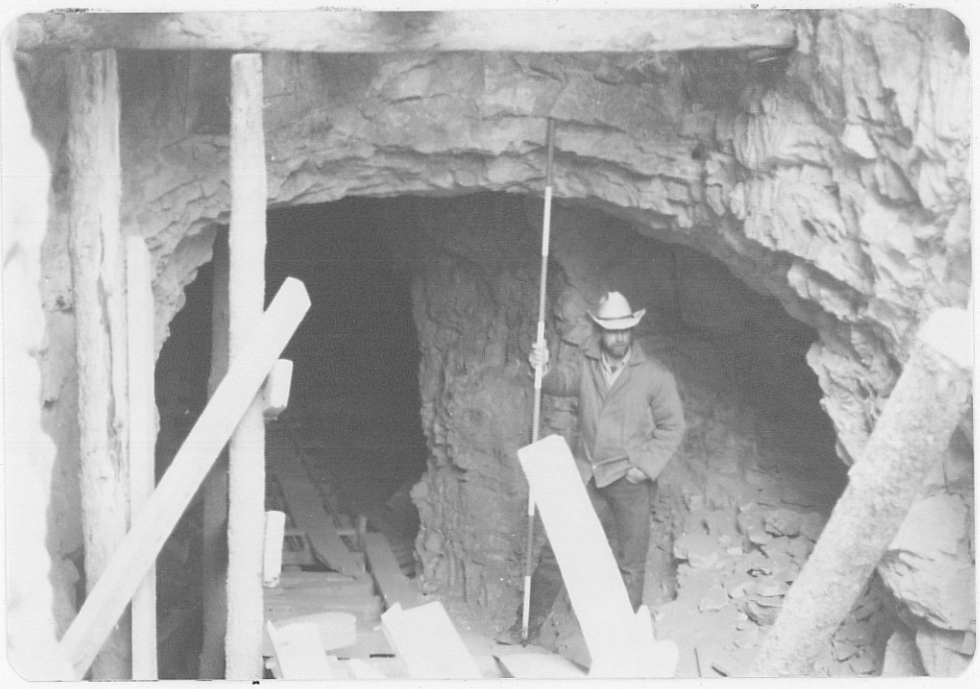

Photo (c) Inside portal of inclined shaft showing timbering and tracked haulage way.

Photo (d) Open pit at section line several hundred feet east of shaft site; note person at right of center for scale.