

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

Orin J. Anderson

New Mexico Bureau of Mines and
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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: Redrock Valley 15'

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Franks Point (Plot. 6)
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Salt Canyon Mines (Salt Canyon Claim)
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- 6-9. AZ-40-0-6 to 9
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| Red Wash Point (VCA Plot #1) | |
| 17. AZ-40-0-17 | Page 119 122 |
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| Alongo (Alongo Claim) | |
| 20. AZ-40-0-20 | Page 131 134 |
| Canyon View (Alongo Claim) | |
| 21. AZ-40-0-21 | Page 135 138 |
| KING Tutt #2 (MP-G Sylvania Mining) | |

REFERENCES FOR CARRIZO MINING DISTRICT

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| *Preface to Chuska District Reports | Page 138 141 |
| *Road log to Sanostee Quad. and the Chuska Mining District | Page 141 144 |

Quad: Sanostee West 7½'

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|---------------------------|----------|
| 1. NM-49-2-1 | Page 148 |
| Dennet Nezz #1 and #2 | |
| 2. NM-49-2-2 | Page 150 |
| Dennet Nezz #3 | |
| 3. NM-49-2-1001 (unnamed) | Page 151 |
| (unnamed) Sec. 8 Adit | |

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.

Orin J. Anderson

*New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources
Socorro, New Mexico
June, 1980*

Date Visited 11/2/79

Mine name(s) Begay (Begay #1) County San Juan
Section (Unsurveyed) Probably 24 Twnsh. 29 N R. 21 W
Quadrangle sheet Redrock Valley 15'
Mining district East Carrizo
Elevation 5550'
Nearest city and/or dwelling Oak Spring, 3 mi. N NW; single family dwelling
¼ mi. S.

The Begay Mine consists of an adit driven northward on the south edge of King Tutt Mesa ¼ mi. east of the King Tutt Point Mine. The portal is about 5' high, 7' wide, and several hundred feet deep plus drifts. Adit is untimbered but in very stable condition; little if any roof debris has fallen. Numerous footprints suggest that the local population frequents the mine. A 12' wide trench, 180' long leads to the portal of the mine, see photo (a); depth of trench increases to nearly 30' as the mine entrance is approached.

Some minor amounts of black vanadium oxide staining was noted on adit faces, but other evidence of mineralization is scant. Access is provided by dirt road leading eastward from the Red Rock-Oak Spring road and ascending King Tutt Mesa just east of the state line mile post marker #20. The road then turns southeastward and traverses the Begay claim (also called the E. Tapahonso No. 24); see claim index map attached.

Approximately 50' out front of the trench (southward) the mine tailings dump begins which extends another 100' southward (see photo b). At its terminus the dump is approximately 60' high with the material at the angle of repose. Dump contains mineralized fragments, mostly black vanadium oxide staining with some yellowish to greenish yellow coloration on surfaces-probably carnotite/tyuyamunite. Also in photo (b) note the drainage line below the dump, the single family dwelling near the bottom of the arroyo, Horse Mesa at center and left in the middle distance, and Beautiful Mountain in the far distance.

Photo (c) shows what is probably a ventilation shaft for this mine. It is located on the mesa top several hundred feet north of the adit entrance, is not fenced, and measures about 7' in diam. It is filled with plant debris, but is somewhat dangerous.

The mine produced from the Salt Wash member of the Morrison formation. It was operated during 1953-54 and 1966-67 by Walter Duncan, Jr., and also by VCA. Total production was reported as 3,921 tons or ore averaging .21% U_3O_8 and 1.63% V_2O_5 ; the ore contained 16,491 lbs. of U_3O_8 and 127,499 lbs. of V_2O_5 , for a U:V ratio of approximately 1:5. The Carrizo Mine which also produced from these workings, (see Carrizo Mine report) reported a slightly lower U:V ratio of about 1:4.

(turn)

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- References: (1) Chenoweth, W.L., 1980, Historical Review of Uranium-Vanadium in The Eastern Carrizo Mountains, San Juan County, New Mexico, U.S. DOE, TM-210.
- (2) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uran. Res. of NW New Mexico; U.S.G.S. pp. 603, p. 52.
- (3) East Carrizo District Claim Index Map, 1953.

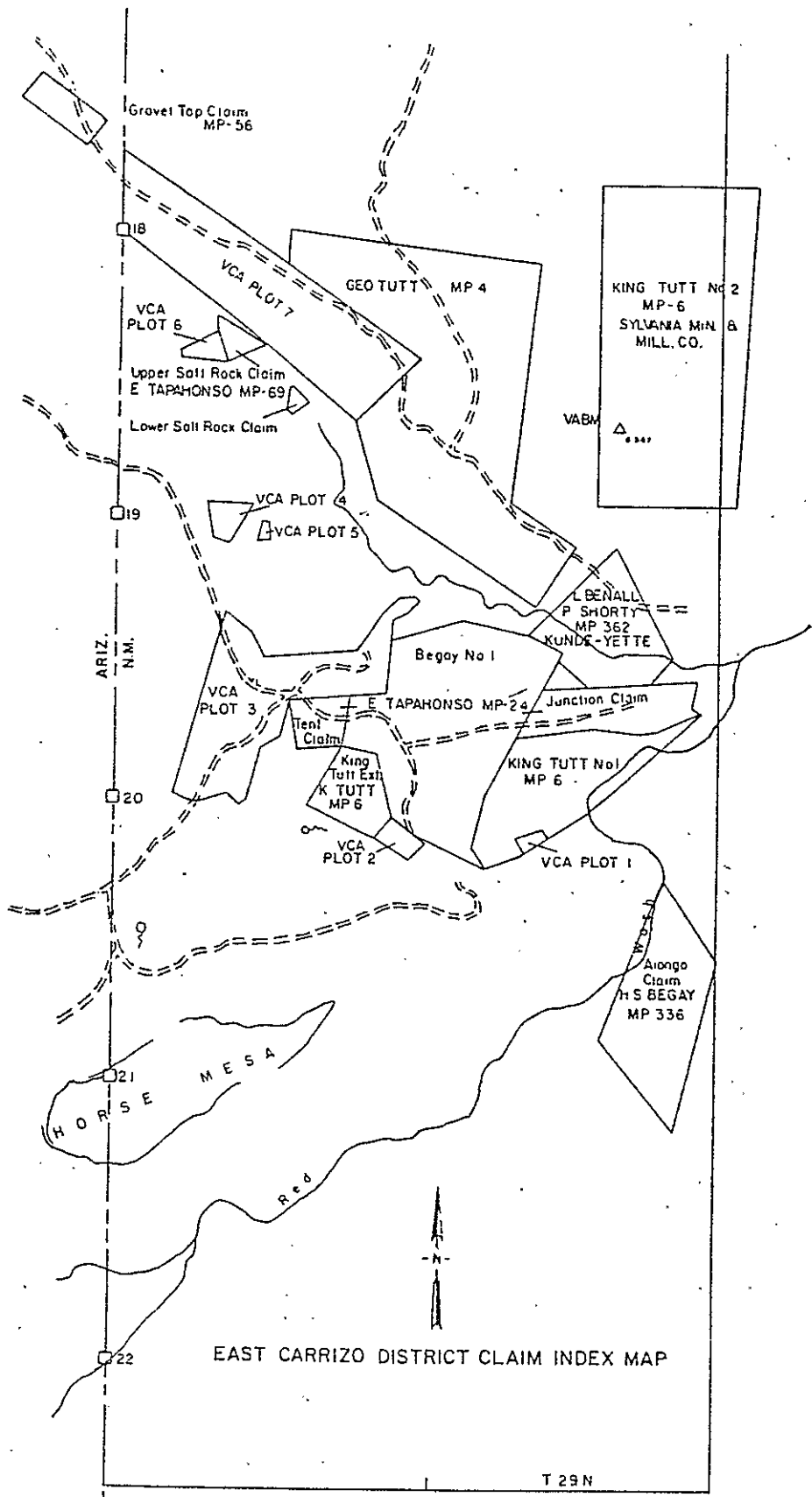




Photo (a) Begay #1, looking N into 12' wide trench with adit entrance at end.



Photo (b) Looking SE at waste dump of Begay #1; note dwelling and drainage line in background; Beautiful Mtn. in far distance.



Photo (c) Ventilation shaft of Begay #1; pole at right is 5" diam, 7' long.