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.

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

Quad: Gallup East 7½'

Quad: Goat Mountain 7½'

Date visited 12/14/79

Mine name(s) Junior County McKinley

Section NE¼ 4 Twnsh. 13 N R. 10 W

Quadrangle sheet Goat Mountain 7½'

Mining district Grants

Elevation 7,200'

Nearest city and/or dwellings 2 miles west along Two Fault Butte-Haystack Mountain road, single family dwellings.

The Junior Mine is indicated on the Goat Mountain 7½' quadrangle by a stipled pattern along the 7,200' contour 700' west of the Dakota Mine. Access road is same as for Dakota Mine.

Mine consists of several dozer cuts and several linear open pits (photos a & b) in basal Dakota sandstone along the south edge of the mesa in NE¼ of sec. 4. Disturbance is minimal and scintillometer response was somewhat weak in a waist-high traverse; maximum readings were approximately 200 cps (or 3 x background). Much of the disturbed area has become revegetated.

No uranium mineralization was visible, even though ore was reported mined from an open pit in 1953 (Hilpert, 1969).

A small north trending fault cuts through several hundred feet east of the mine; mine is on the downthrown side (see GQ-518).

References: (1) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uranium Resources of NW New Mexico, U.S.G.S., Prof. Paper 603.
(2) Thaden, R.E., et al, 1966, Geologic Map of Goat Mountain Quadrangle, GQ-518.
(3) Field notes, 12/14/79.

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Photo (a) Looking westward into bulldozed area along south edge of mesa at the Junior Mine workings. Note range pole for scale.

Photo (b) Looking southwestward at small open cut along south edge of mesa at the Junior Mine workings. Note range pole for scale.