

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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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: Thumb Tank Peak 7½'

1. NM-366-1-1

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Red Tiger (Bobby Johnson)

Quad: Upham 15'

1. NM-392-0-1

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Paran (Paran Claim)

Date visited 5/20/80

Mine name(s) Red Tiger (Bobby Johnson) County Sierra

Section 1 and 2 Twنش. 13 S R. 7 W

Quadrangle sheet Thumb Tank Peak 7½'

Mining district _____

Elevation 5,320'

Nearest city and/or dwellings Ladder Ranch Camp (2 mi. SW). Foreman (Ronnie Calvert)

Some very old prospecting pits occur in the south ½ of sec. 1 just southeast of the Double S Peaks on the Ladder Ranch. To reach the area take the Cuchillo exit just north of Truth or Consequences on I-25, and proceed westward to the town of Cuchillo. On the west edge of town take dirt road to left leading southwesterly and follow for about 9 miles to the entrance to the Ladder Ranch.

The prospected area was not visited. Ranch foreman, Mr. Ronnie Calvert did not have the authority to grant access to the site. Mr. Art Evans, Ranch Manager, telephone no. 895-5381 must be contacted before site can be investigated. (He was not reached by telephone that evening, and so we could not return the following day). Mr. Calvert, however, did describe the site as consisting of a few very old ridges and pits that pose no hazard to man or beast. Neither the ranch hands nor the management has any complaints.

According to RME-160, (1970) there was some prospecting for copper back in the 1930's. In 1956 some exploration work for uranium was done; 6 small pits about 4' x 4' and 2' deep were dug in a greenish gray siltstone of the Abo formation. Mineralization was apparently along small fractures. No production reported.

The State Mine Inspector's Office, however, has the workings listed as "uranium (open cut)". It was last registered with that office in January, 1957.

- References:
- (1) U.S. AEC RME-160, 1970, Preliminary Reconnaissance for Uranium in New Mexico, 1950-1958; GJO/AEC; p. 188; (microfiche only).
 - (2) State Mine Inspector's Office, inactive uranium mine file.
 - (3) Field notes, 5/20/80.