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.

QUAY COUNTY

Quad: Forrest 7½'

Quad: San Jon NW 7½'

Date visited 9/11/79

Mine name(s) Good Luck County Quay

Section SE/4 NE/4 1 SW/4 NW/4 6 Twnsh. 7N R. 32E

Quadrangle sheet Forrest

Mining district N.A.

Elevation 4,550'

Nearest city and/or dwellings Forrest is 4.75 miles due south

The Good Luck mine is located 4.75 miles due north of the town of Forrest. The topography consists of mesas to the south, and erosional features where the prospect is located.

Workings consist of a trench cut trending E-W, 150' long, 15' wide, and 6' deep. Access to the prospect was by road from the south and east, which are now impassable. The disturbed area blends in well with the surrounding topography and is not readily discernible. It would not seem to warrant any immediate reclamation action, as there appear to be no hazards at the site.

The prospect occurs in Chinle sandstone. The ore horizon is a mottled gray color. No uranium minerals are visible. No scintillometer readings were available. The deposit produced 8.43 tons averaging 0.22% U_3O_8 (Finch, 1972).

References:

Finch, Warren I., 1972, Uranium in Eastern N.M., U.S.G.S. openfile rep., p. 13, A.E.C.

(photo a) Looking SW at trenching on Good Luck prospect

(photo b) Access Rd. from the south.