

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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New Mexico Bureau of Mines and
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.

SIERRA COUNTY

Quad: Caballo 7½'

1. NM-391-1-1

Page 1

Red Rock (Red Rock Claim 1)

Quad: Chise 7½'

1. NM-342-4-1

Page 3

Trujillo Lease (Chise)

Quad: Cuchillo 7½'

1. NM-367-1-1

Page 4

Mitchell Price Prospect

Quad: Garfield 7½'

1. NM-391-4-1

Page 5

Sierra (Sierra Mining)

Quad: Jaralosa Mountain 7½'

1. NM-342-1-1

Page 8

Glory and Empire Claims

Quad: Monticello 7½'

1. NM-343-2-1

Page 11

Pitchblende Strike (Terry Prospect)

Date visited May 20, 1980

Mine name(s) Mitchell Price Prospect County Sierra

Section 12 Twنش. 13S R. 5W

Quadrangle sheet Cuchillo 7½'

Mining district _____

Elevation approximately 4700'

Nearest city and/or dwellings Truth or Consequences, 7 miles southeast;
municipal airport, 3 miles northeast.

The prospect is located in the north ½ of Sec. 12 (exact location not known). Directions given in RME-160 (1970), are as follows. Go north of Truth or Consequences on (old) highway No. 85. Then turn left and proceed up Cuchillo Negro Creek (passing under I-25) for 6.7 miles; then left out of canyon to the south for 0.3 miles to the claim.

During the present investigation a locked gate was encountered at about 3 miles up the creek. It was later learned from Dr. Hubble in Truth or Consequences (telephone 894-3531 office, or 894-2861 residence) that there is a way around the locked gate, namely by driving in the stream bed, but that the prospecting up in section 12 was minor, consisting of a few piles of rock.

RME-160 (1970) stated that there is one small discovery pit, 4' x 6', 10' deep in a recrystallized limestone member of the Magdalena formation. No uranium minerals observed during the AEC examination of the property in September, 1955. Radiometrically determined U₃O₈ content was .002%. Owners were A. Armstrong and Buell Price of Truth or Consequences.

The prospect was never registered with the State Mine Inspector's office, and there is no recorded production.

References: (1) U.S. AEC RME-160, 1970, Preliminary Reconnaissance for Uranium in in New Mexico, 1950-1958; GJO/AEC; p. 177 (microfiche only).
(2) Field notes, 5/20/80.