

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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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.

SAN MIGUEL COUNTY

Quad: El Porvenir 7½'

1. NM-135-2-1 Page 1
Sparks - Stone (Sparks Stone #1)

Quad: Honey Boy Ranch 7½'

1. NM-131-1-1 Page 2
High Peak(High Peak Claims)

Quad: Sabinoso 7½'

1. NM-139-2-1 Page 6
Sabinoso Uranium Coop. (Lujan Ranch) (Asco Mine)
2. NM-139-2-2 Page 10
Windy 9
3. NM-139-2-3 Page 12
Bish Claims
4. NM-139-2-4 Page 14
Verde (Hunt Oil Co. Sab)
*Unlocated on Sabinso Quad.

Date visited 10/20/79

Mine name(s) High Peak (High Peak Claims) County San Miguel

Section (Unsurveyed) NE $\frac{1}{4}$ 30 Twنش. 17 N R. 13 E

Quadrangle sheet Honey Boy Ranch

Mining district Willow Creek

Elevation 9160'

Nearest city and/or dwellings 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ mile NW of Emerson Ranch; 9 air miles NE of Peo

The High Peak Mine is located about 300' west of the Rito Atascoso which drains southward into the Rito Manzanares. The claim, which was never patented, lies within the Santa Fe National Forest about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles NW of The Emerson Ranch.

At present the workings on The High Peak claim consist of 100' long open cut or trench which apparently had been an adit at one time, (A.E.C. - P.R.R.). The Honey Boy quadrangle, printed in 1961, shows an adit symbol at the mine site. A short adit about 15'⁰ deep remains at the west end of the trench, see photo (a); the trench trends N 57° W.

The dump extends eastward from the trench for some 50'-75'; ranges up to 100' wide in a N-S direction, and has a maximum height of 25'. A small, shallow depression between the pit and the west edge of the dump held some water but it is apparently a seasonal pond and represents no hazard. No scintillometer readings are available for this site.

The deposit consists of pegmatitic stringers in Precambrian granite according to Griggs and Henderson, 1951, (see Photo b). A somewhat later report by Romslo, 1954 (DMEA-3207) stated that:

"The Mora (High Peak) deposit contains small amounts of monazite sporadically distributed in a pegmatite dike that apparently contains little or no uranium ore, high grade mica, or other marketable products."

The same report goes on to quote an AEC letter of May 20, 1954 sent to the U.S.G.S. explaining that

"Because the monazite occurs as scattered, small segregations within the pegmatite, tonnage is apparently too low to warrant exploitation. Also the uranium content of the monazite is much too low to make ore."

Total production through 1954 was reported as a few hundred lbs. of monazite ore taken from float rock and 1.25 tons of hand sorted ore from 2 shallow trenches. Obviously the long pit and short adit photographed at the site during the present investigation were developed after 1954, but additional production data is unavailable.

No monazite was recognized in the pegmatite dikes by the present investigators.

turn

SM-2

A map of the High Peak claim area from Romslo, 1954 is included as figure 1.

- Reference:
- (1) Griggs, R. L., and Henderson, G. E., 1951, Geology and Ground-water Resources of San Miguel County, New Mexico; N. M. Bur. of Mines, Ground Water Report 2.
 - (2) Romslo, T., 1954, Mora Monazite Company High Peak Monazite claim, Willow Creek Mining District, San Miguel Co., N. Mex.; AEC DMEA-3207.
 - (3) U.S. A.E.C., 1956, Preliminary Reconnaissance Report (PRR) File No. ASO-132; in RME-160.

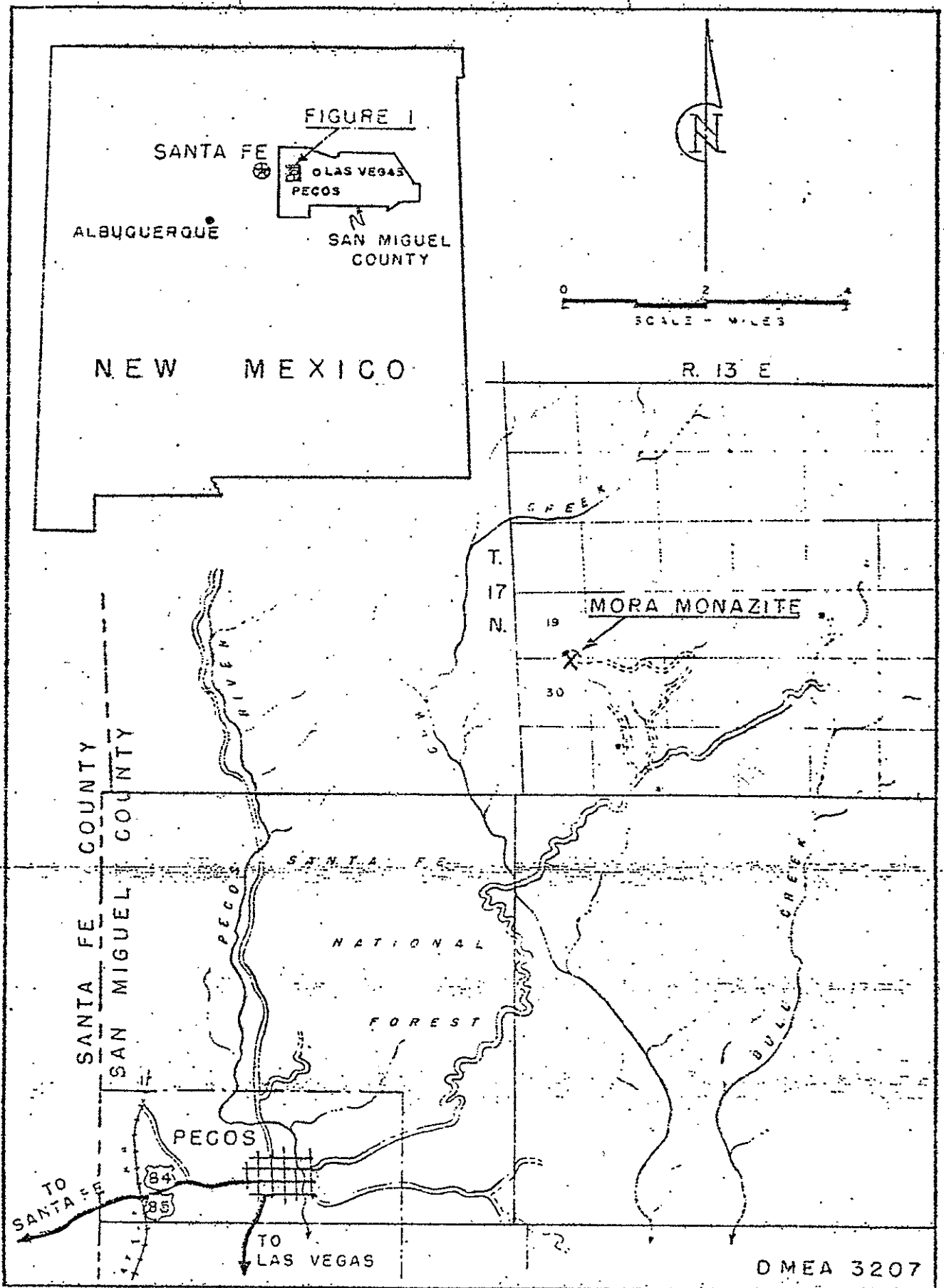


FIGURE 1. - LOCATION MAP - MORA MONAZITE CO.
HIGH PEAK CLAIM SAN MIGUEL COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

5/10/41

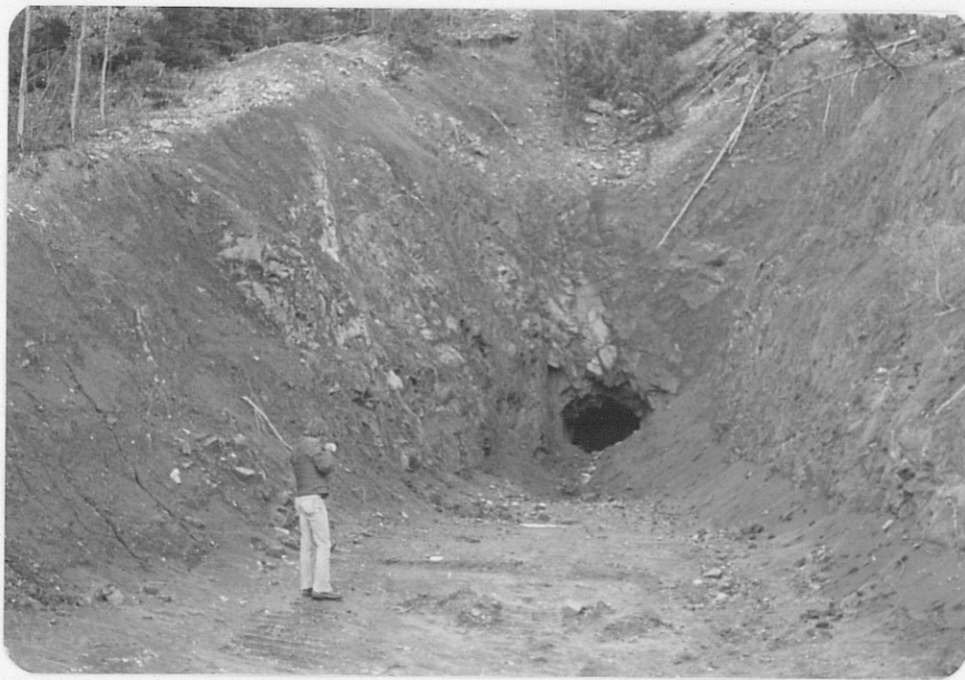


Photo (a) High Peak Pit.

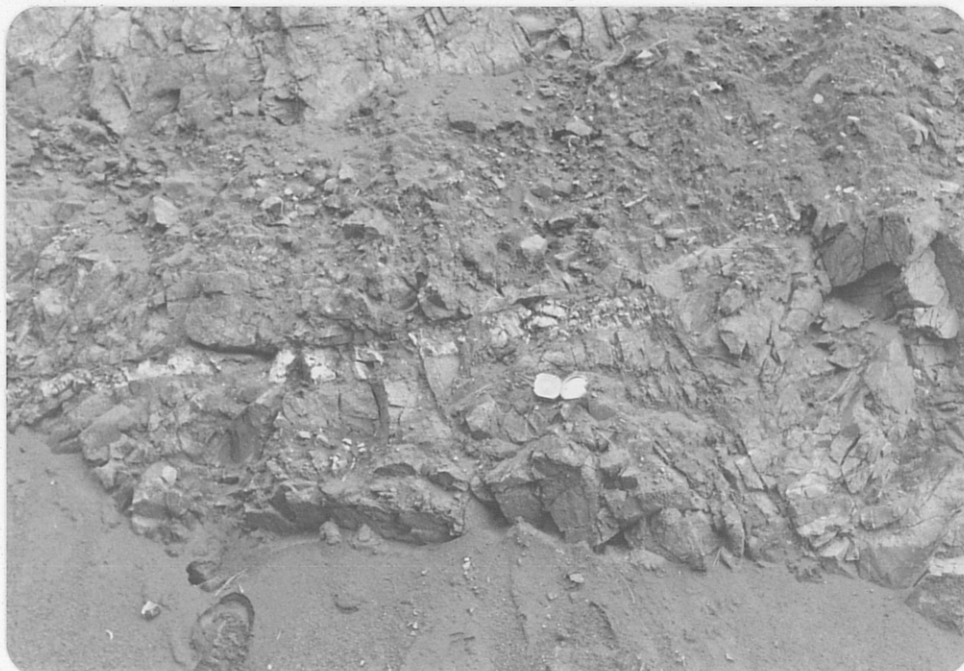


Photo (b) Close up of pegmatite veins in Pe granite; note Brunton compass for scale.

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