

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.

RIO ARRIBA COUNTY

Quad: Arroyo del Agua 7½'

1. NM-82-2-1 Page 1  
Lucky Strike (Mid Continent?)
2. NM-82-2-2 Page 4  
Hillfoot (Serrano)
3. NM-82-2-3 Page 6  
Red Head (Tinney #2) Claims, Red Bird

Quad: Burned Mountain 7½'

1. NM-36-2-1 Page 8  
Tusas East Slope #5
2. NM-36-2-2 Page 10  
J.O.L. (Royal)

Quad: Ghost Ranch 7½'

1. NM-59-3-1 Page 13  
Lucky Dog/Horny Toad (Onego?)

Quad: La Madera 7½'

1. NM-60-1-1 Page 15  
La Paloma
2. NM-60-1-2 Page 20  
Pineapple

Mine name(s) Red Head(Tinney #2) Claims, Red Bird County Rio Arriba

Adit

Section NE $\frac{1}{4}$  NE $\frac{1}{4}$  8 Twنش. 22 N R. 3 EQuadrangle Sheet Arroyo del AguaMining district Gallina (Coyote)Elevation 6,810'1.25 miles west of Coyote, 1 mi. SE of ArroyoNearest City and/or dwelling del Agua. 1000' south of local dwellings.

The Red Head Mine is located 1/4 of a mile south of New Mexico route 96, between Arroyo del Agua and Coyote. The mine is near the head of a small canyon, on low foothills at the north end of Mesa Ojitos. A dry creek bed west of the mine runs into the Rio Puerco 1/2 mile to the north. Access is by dirt road near several local dwellings to the NW of the mine.

Workings consist of drill roads (Photo a), and a small adit (Photo b). A claim post in photo (a) was dated August 1, 1978, and was located by Minerals Mining Co. of Craig, Colorado. A letter to the company was sent, but no response as of this date (3/28/80). The drilling activity is east and south of the mine and encompasses several hundred square feet. The adit (Photo b), trends N 50° W, is 5' high, 5 feet wide, and 50 feet deep. The adit is driven in Cutler Formation sandstone and conglomerate (Chenoweth, 1957). Mineralization consisted of green copper carbonates and white calcium carbonate coating grains. No uranium minerals were visible, but readings inside the adit measured 6,000 cps. and 3,500 at the entrance.

In a later paper (Chenoweth, 1974) all the uranium occurrences in rocks of Premian age in this area were assigned to the Abo Formation.

The property was operated by the Bolivar Uranium Corp. in 1954 and 1955, who mined 67 tons with an average grade of .14% U<sub>3</sub>O<sub>8</sub>, .12% V<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>, and .14% CaCO<sub>3</sub> (A.E.C.).

- References:
- (1) Chenoweth, W. L., 1957, Preliminary Reconnaissance Report on Red Head Claims, U.S. AEC, file no. ED: R-737.
  - (2) Chenoweth, W. L., 1974, Uranium Occurrences of The Nacimiento-Jemez Region, Sandoval and Rio Arriba Counties, New Mexico, U.S. AEC, TM-194.
  - (3) New Mexico State Mine Inspector's Office, inactive uranium mine file.
  - (4) Field notes, 10/16/79.



Photo (a) Red Head Claims with local dwellings in center of photo.

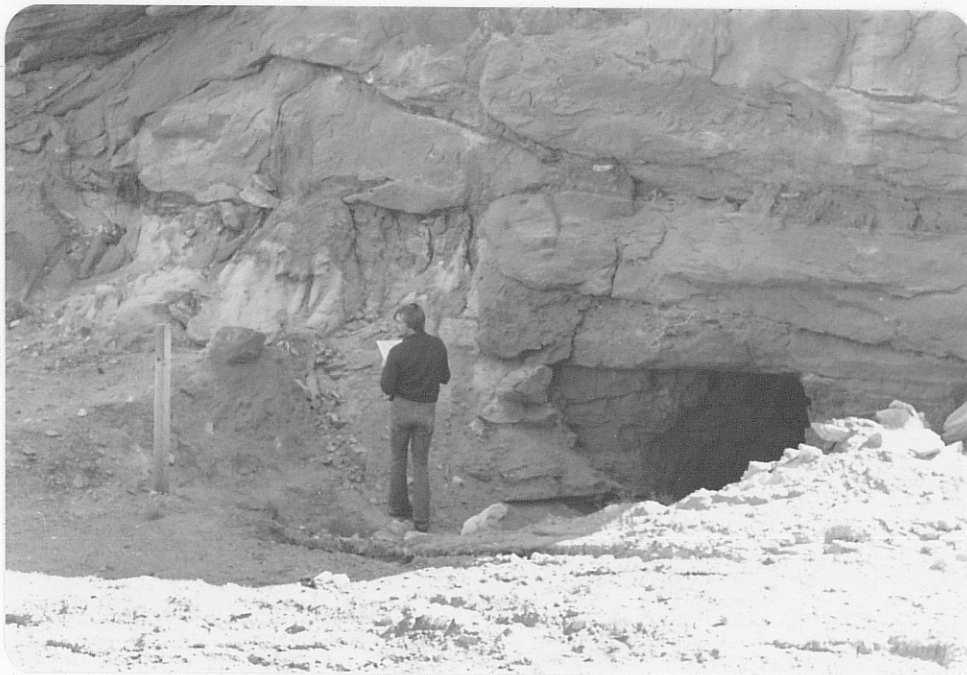


Photo (b) Red Bird adit on the Red Head Claims.