

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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Mineral Resources  
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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.

Horace Ben

Quad: Sonsala Butte 1. NE 7 1/2'

1. AZ-60-1-1

Page 155

Kee and Tohe

2. AZ-60-1-2

Page 159

John Joe

3. AZ-60-1-3

Page ~~160~~

Castle Tsosie

4. AZ-60-1-4

Page ~~161~~

Joe Ben #2 Prospect

5. AZ-60-1-5

Page ~~163~~

Joe Ben #1 Prospect

6. AZ-60-1-6

Page ~~165~~

Joe Ben #3

7. AZ-60-1-7

Page ~~169~~

Enos Johnson

8. AZ-60-1-8

Page ~~170~~

Carl Yazzie #1

9. AZ-60-1-9

Page ~~173~~

H.B. Roy #2

10. AZ-60-1-10

Page ~~175~~

Reed Henderson (Reed Henderson Claims)

REFERENCES FOR CHUSKA DISTRICT

PAGE 177

Date visited 11/13/79

Mine name(s) Kee and Tohe County San Juan  
(Unsurveyed)  
Section Probably 31 Twنش. 26 N R. 20 W  
Quadrangle sheet Sonsala Butte 1 NE  
Mining district Chuska  
Elevation 7400'  
Nearest city and/or dwellings Sanostee, 8 mi. E; additional scattered single family dwellings within 3-4 mi. radius.

The Key and Tohe Mine consists of an adit about 27' long flanked by what is probably a powder magazine on the left and a stub adit (or another powder mag.) on the right, all driven northwestward into the upper part of the Recapture member of the Morrison fm. Photo (a) shows the powder magazine on the left, the dump from adit to the immediate right, and the stub adit to right of the dump (arrow points to dump). Photo (b) is a close up of the main adit showing material caved from the face partially blocking the 6'x6' entrance; scintillometers readings in the adit ranged up to 400 cps; no mineralization is apparent.

The powder magazine and stub adit, which are the first to come into view in approaching the mine, are each only 6'-8' long; none of the underground workings are particularly dangerous; the main adit is nearly sealed off by the caving already mentioned, but a man could still enter. This adit was probably tracked, or plans were made to track it, as an ore cart remains at the site (see photo e).

Access is by dirt road west of Sanostee for 5 mi.; then a right turn at the road fork near windmill. Follow Sanostee Wash up to vicinity of the Dennet Nezz #1 and #2 workings (about 2 3/4 mi.). From this point on the journey is on foot.

The mine reportedly produced a total 47 tons of ore averaging .10%  $U_3O_8$ . The ore contained about 90 lbs. of  $U_3O_8$ . Although the upper Recapture member has yielded the largest deposits in this area (The Enos Johnson Mine) the potential at the Key and Tohe would appear to be extremely limited to nil.

- References: (1) Blagbrough, J., et. al., 1959, Uranium Reconnaissance and Drilling in The Sanostee Area ..., AEC RME-111.  
(2) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uranium Resources of NW New Mexico USGS pp. 603.  
(3) AEC Production Records, courtesy Wm. Chenoweth, U.S. Dept. of Energy.

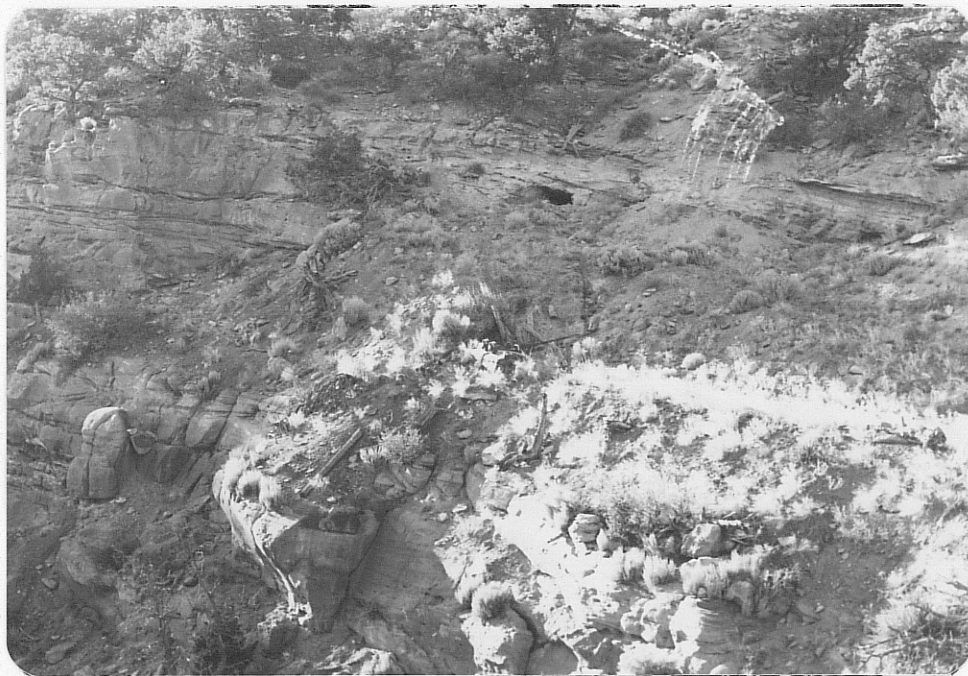


Photo (a) Key and Tohe Mine, looking N NW at the adit (arrow) blocked from view by tailings dump; flanking it are a powder magazine, left, and a short adit, right.

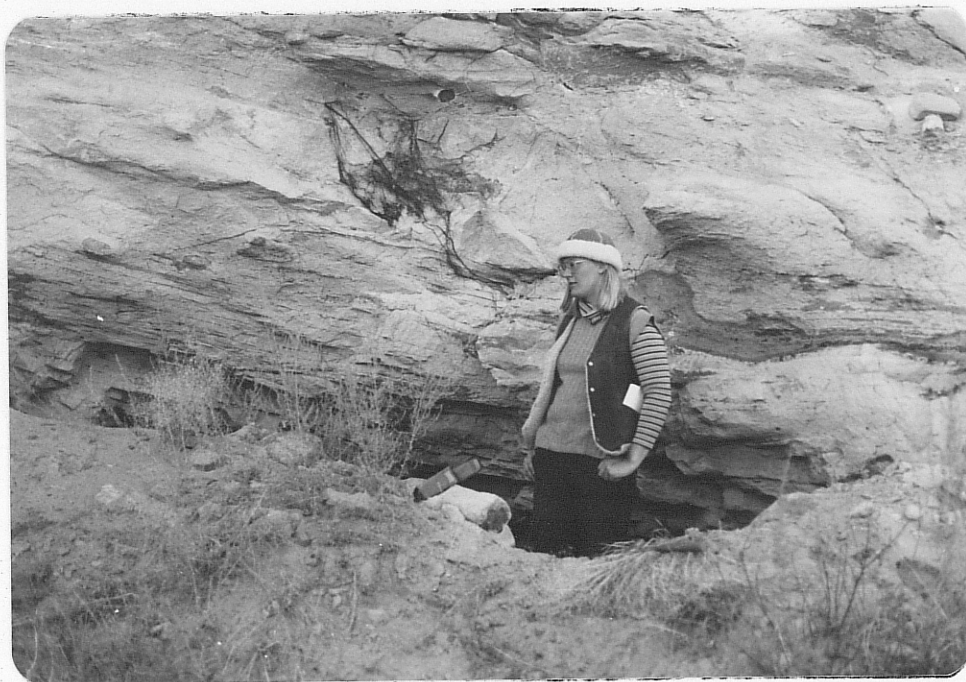


Photo (b) Key and Tohe adit, close up; face caving has nearly blocked adit entrance.



Photo (c) Key and Tohe workings; powder magazine to left of main adit.



Photo (d) Key and Tohe workings; short adit to right of main adit.



Photo (e) Key and Tohe mine site; tracked ore cart out front of main adit.