

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

Orin J. Anderson

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.

Quad: Mariano Lake 7½'

1. NM-123-4-1 Page 214
Mac #1
2. NM-123-4-2 Page 217
Black Jack #2

Quad: Pinedale 7½'

1. NM-123-3-1 Page 222
Westwater

Quad: San Mateo 7½'

1. NM-150-3-1 Page 224
Rialto (Chill Wills)

*San Mateo Quad report #2 found under Valencia County

Quad: Thoreau NE 7½'

1. NM -148-1-1 Page 230
Alta
2. NM-148-1-2 Page 234
Silver Bit 15 and 18 (Pentada Prospect)
3. NM-148-1-3 Page 237
Francis
4. NM-148-1-4 Page 241
Evelyn
5. NM-148-1-5 Page 247
Billy The Kid and Greer Warren and McCormack

6.	NM-148-1-6	Page 252
	Elkins (Tom Elkins) (Lawrence Elkins)	
7.	NM-148-1-7	Page 255
	Maddox and Teague	
8.	NM-148-1-8	Page 258
	Golver	
9.	NM-148-1-9	Page 260
	Red Top	
10.	NM-148-1-10	Page 262
	Haven (Sec. 21)	
11.	NM-148-1-11	Page 265
	Red Cap Prospect	
12.	NM-148-1-12	Page 267
	Yucca #2	

Mine name(s) Elkins (Tom Elkins) (Lawrence Elkins) County McKinley
 Section NE $\frac{1}{4}$ 24 Twنش. 14 N. R. 12 W.
 Quadrangle sheet Thoreau NE 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ '
 Mining district Smith Lake
 Elevation 7,140'
 Nearest city and/or dwellings Prewitt, 4 3/4 miles south

The Elkins is located in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 24. To reach the site proceed 4 3/4 miles north of Prewitt on dirt road and hike up to top of the mesa $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of the road.

The mine consists of two nearly adjacent shallow stripped areas. The northern area is the smaller of the two, measuring about 100' x 150' (see photo a). The southern area, about 400' to the south, measures about 200' x 450', and extends out to the edge of the mesa on the east side (see photos c & d). No deep cuts or pits occur in either of the two prospected areas. Maximum scintillometer readings were 60 cps for the north area, 70 cps for the south area (background is about 45 in this area).

The prospects explored the Todilto limestone. No mineralization was noted and it is doubtful any production came from the two prospects. Hilpert, (1969), however, stated that the southern one was mined in 1954-55 and the northern one may have been mined about the same time.

The property was registered with the State Mine Inspector's Office in October, 1954 with the Jackpot Oil Co., as the operator.

- References:
- (1) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uranium Resources of NW New Mexico, U.S.G.S., Prof. Paper 603, p. 42.
 - (2) Green, M.W., et al, 1971, Geologic Map of The Thoreau NE Quadrangle, GQ-954.
 - (3) State Mine Inspector's Office, inactive uranium mine file.
 - (4) Field notes, 12/12/79.



Photo (a) Looking northeastward into northern stripped area; note range pole on waste pile just right of center for scale.



Photo (b) Looking northwest at linear prospecting trench or road at northwest corner of southern prospecting area.



Photo (c) Looking north at southern prospected area; extensive clearing took place, but scintillometer response is weak. Note person at far right for scale.



Photo (d) Looking northeastward at southern prospected area, showing dozer activity right out to the mesa edge.