

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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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.

CATRON COUNTY

Quad: Mogollon 7½'

1. NM-377-1-1

Page 1

Baby Mine

Quad: Tejana Mesa 7½'

1. NM-242-1-1

Page 3

Section 21 (Varnum)

Quad: Telephone Canyon 7½'

1. NM-314-4-1

Page 5

Quary

Quad: Third Canyon 7½'

1. NM-245-2-1, NM-245-2-2

Page 7

Midnight #2, McPhaul Adit

Date visited 9/6/79

Mine name(s) Section 21 (Varnum) County Catron

Section NE $\frac{1}{4}$  21 Twنش. 3 N R. 16 N

Quadrangle sheet Tejana Mesa

Mining district N.A.

Elevation 6,960'

Nearest city and/or dwellings a local ranch house is 1 mile to the southeast

To reach the deposit go northeast on New Mexico 117 from Quemado for 8 miles, to the center of Sec. 32; T. 3 N., R. 15 W. Proceed west on a dirt road along Lopez Draw for 6 miles to a "T" intersection. Turn right and go north for 5 miles to a local ranch house, at a "Y" intersection. Take the right fork for 3/4 of a mile. Proceed north on foot for approximately 3/10 of a mile to the prospect.

The workings on the prospect consist of a shallow bulldozer cut 10' x 15' x 2' deep. A small dump 2' high, 5' long and 4' wide (photo a) lies just west of the cut.

No uranium minerals were visible, and no scintillometer readings were available. The workings are in sandstone of the Mesaverde Group, Hilpert (1969).

- References:
- (1) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uranium Resources of NW New Mexico, U.S.G.S. Prof. Paper 603, p. 33.
  - (2) U.S. AEC, Uranium Mine Records, GJO/AEC.
  - (3) Field notes, 9/6/79.



Photo (a) Looking east at the small dump on the Section 21  
(Varnum) Prospect.