

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.

SIERRA COUNTY

Quad: Caballo 7½'

1. NM-391-1-1

Page 1

Red Rock (Red Rock Claim 1)

Quad: Chise 7½'

1. NM-342-4-1

Page 3

Trujillo Lease (Chise)

Quad: Cuchillo 7½'

1. NM-367-1-1

Page 4

Mitchell Price Prospect

Quad: Garfield 7½'

1. NM-391-4-1

Page 5

Sierra (Sierra Mining)

Quad: Jaralosa Mountain 7½'

1. NM-342-1-1

Page 8

Glory and Empire Claims

Quad: Monticello 7½'

1. NM-343-2-1

Page 11

Pitchblende Strike (Terry Prospect)

Date visited 5/21/80

Mine name(s) Trujillo Lease (Chise) County Sierra  
Section 18 Twنش. 12 S R. 7 W  
Quadrangle sheet Chise 7½'  
Mining district -  
Elevation 5,760'  
Nearest city and/or dwellings Chise (½ mi. NW)

Some very minor prospecting was done in sec. 18 in the mid 1950's. The area is about ¼ mile east and ¼ mile south of Chise, which in turn is about 8 miles by good dirt road south and east of Winston.

The prospected area was not visited. Mr. Nick Ortega, who is head of the only permanent family in Chise, explained that the prospect is on Ladder Ranch property and that he did not have authority to grant us permission to go on the property. He further explained that the Trujillo lease property belonged to his relatives at the time of the prospecting. The prospecting was done with no heavy equipment at the site, and no ore was ever hauled off the lease. The Trujillos subsequently sold the property to Graves Evans of the Evans Ranch, and since then the Diamond A cattle Co., of Roswell has purchased it and incorporated it into the Ladder Ranch. Permission to go on the Ladder Ranch must be obtained from Art Evans, manager, telephone 895-5381.

The deposit occurs in a gray and red shale and limestone pebble conglomerate of the Abo fm.; 4 small trenches were dug (RME-160, 1970).

The prospect was registered with the State Mine Inspector's Office under the name Trujillo lease in April, 1956 with Gar-Pac, Inc., as the owner/operator.

- References: (1) U.S. AEC RME-160, 1970, Preliminary Reconnaissance for Uranium in New Mexico, 1950-1958; GJO/AEC; p. 182, (microfiche only).  
(2) N.M. State Mine Inspector's Office, inactive uranium mine file.  
(3) Field notes, 5/21/80.