

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.

Quad: Grants 7½'

1. NM-173-1-1 Page 58
Anaconda F-33 (F-33)
2. NM-173-1-2 Page 66
Tom 13 (Tom)
3. NM-173-1-3 Page 68
Lone Pine 3 (Lone Pine)
4. NM-173-1-4 Page 74
Cedar 1 (Yucca) (Falcon?)

Quad: Mesa Gigante 7½'

1. NM-176-3-1 Page 78
Chavez (Canoncito)

Quad: Moquino 7½'

1. NM-175-1-1 Page 80
Woodrow (Woodrow Breccia Pipe)

Quad: San Mateo 7½'

1. NM-150-3-1 Found under McKinley Co; Quad: San Mateo
Rialto (Chill Wills)
2. NM-150-3-2 Page 83
San Mateo

Quad: South Butte 7½'

1. NM-199-2-1 Page 92
Crackpot Mine

Date visited 5/7/80

Mine name(s) Chavez (Canoncito) County Valencia

Section SE $\frac{1}{4}$ 22 Twنش. 10 N R. 3 W

Quadrangle sheet Mesa Gigante 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ '

Mining district -

Elevation 6,080'

Nearest city and/or dwellings Canoncito Navajo School NE 3 mi.

The Chavez (Canoncito) is in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 22 near Canoncito School. To reach the site take the Canoncito exit ^{off} east of the Rio Puerco on I-40 and proceed about 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles north; then turn to left for 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles to sec. 22. Last $\frac{1}{2}$ mile must be made on foot as the access road no longer exists. Local passerby, Mr. Sam Pablo, assisted in locating the site during the present investigation.

Workings consist of an adit driven northeastward into the Recapture member sandstone of the Morrison Fm., and a small bench cut immediately west of the adit along a road descending to the site. Slumping has nearly obliterated the original bench cut and it appears as no more than a road cut at present. Scintillometer response at the cut was weak, about 2 x background. The mine is indicated on U.S.G.S., Map, GQ-212 by an adit symbol.

The adit, shown in photos (a) and (b) is about 6' high, 8' wide and forks into two drifts about 12' inside. Each drift continues for about another 25'. Some roof falls have occurred, and the entire length was not examined. Scintillometer readings at the portal ranged up to 1,200 cps; the ground out in front gave readings between 200-300 cps.

Hilpert (1960) stated that ore was mined from shallow open cut and adit in 1955. The State Mine Inspector's Office registered the mine in April, 1955 as the Canoncito. The registration indicated a uranium-vanadium deposit, being developed by Calumet-Hecla, Incorporated.

No production data available.

- References: (1) Hilpert, L., 1969, Uranium Resources of NW New Mexico, U.S.G.S., Prof. Paper 603; p. 57.
(2) State Mine Inspector's Office, inactive uranium mine file.
(3) Moench, R. H., and Puffett, W. P., 1963, U.S.G.S., Map, GQ-212.
(4) Field notes, 5/7/80.



Photo (a) Looking eastward at 6' x 8' portal of adit at Chavez Mine. Maximum scintillometer readings were obtained at left side of portal where person is standing.



Photo (b) Looking eastward at same. Very little debris in way of timber, cable, or garbage remains at the site.

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