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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Geochemical Data on Selected Coal Beds,

Raton Coal Field, Colfax County,

New Mexico

By

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Open-File Report 76-542 1976

This report is preliminary and has not been edited or reviewed for conformity with U.S. Geological Survey standards and nomenclature.

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY Reston, Va. 22092

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 $CONTENTS: 26 p., 2 figs., 11 table.$ 2 figs., MZp ~cila:____________________ ..

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TABLES

Introduction

This report presents analytical data on 16 coal samples and 10 shale samples from underground and open-pit mines, outcrops, and a core hole in the Raton coal field, Colfax County, New Mexico (fig. 1). The samples were collected from coal beds in rocks of the Vermejo Formation of Late Cretaceous age and the Raton Formation of Late Cretaceous and Paleocene age (fig. 2). Proximate, ultimate, Btu, and forms-of-sulfur analyses are given on 10 selected coal samples; major and minor oxides and traceelement compositions of these and 6 additional coal samples, and of shale beds related to the York Canyon mine and the outcrop of Vermejo Park were also determined.

Figure 1.--Map showing sample localities in the Raton coal field (hachured outline), Colfax County, New Mexico. Abandoned coal mines are shown by crossed picks.

Figure 2.--Generalized stratigraphic description of rocks in the Raton coal field, with sections showing approximate levels of coal beds in the central and eastern parts of the field. Positions of coal beds in the eastern part are courtesy of Kaiser Steel Corporation.

Sample distribution

Three coal beds in the Raton Formation were sampled. Several samples from the York Canyon coal bed were taken from Kaiser Steel's York Canyon underground (Sample Nos. D169000, 001 and D176216, 217) and surface (Sample Nos. Dl69004, 005, 006, 007, and 008) mines. Samples of the middling (0169002) and washed (Dl69003) coal from the wash plant were also analyzed. The Upper Left Fork coal bed (Dl69801, 802) was sampled in Kaiser Steel's development entries in the Left Fork of York Canyon. The Potato Canyon coal bed (Dl68803), in the eastern part of the field, was sampled at a test entry at Potato Canyon near the road to the York Canyon mine.

Two samples of the Raton coal bed of the Vermejo Formation were taken: .an outcrop of the bed (Dl69012) was sampled near the Bartlett mine at the northwest entrance to Vermejo Park; and a core sample of the Raton bed (Dl69013), 'from a deep hole in the eastern part of the field, about 12 mi (20 km) southwest of Raton, was furnished by Kaiser Steel Corporation.

The cooperation of Kaiser Steel in granting access to the sample sites ·and supplying the core of the Raton bed is gratefully acknowledged. We also thank the New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources for permission to include data on Dl76216 and Dl76217.

Analytical data

Analytical data for the 16 selected coal samples and the 10 rock samples from the Raton coal field are tabulated in tables 1-5. Statistical summaries of these data for the 16 coal samples are listed in tables 6-8. For comparison, statistical summaries for 295 Rocky Mountain province coal samples are listed in tables 6a-8a.

Using the analytical data, comparison between individual coals in the same and in different formations is possible. The whole-coal data (tables 3, 4), as summarized below, show that the core sample of the Raton coal

bed (Dl69013) contains considerably more of certain elements than the outcrop sample of the same bed (Dl69012), which is about 22 miles (35 km) away $(fig. 1)$:

The analyses of the ash of these samples (table 2) show appreciable differences of about the same magnitude as noted above; lead values for Dl69013 are about five times those of D169012, and Li values are about three times higher.

Differences in composition between the Raton coal bed of the Vermejo Formation and the composition of coal beds in the Raton Formation are that the coal in the Raton bed has lower volatile-matter and fixed-carbon values; generally higher ash content; lower hydrogen; oxygen, nitrogen, and Btu values; and somewhat higher S contents (table 1). Other elemental analyses display the following pertinent differences: (1) U and Th contents in the whole-coal analyses of the Raton bed core sample (Dl69013) are generally two to five times higher than in other coal samples. (2) The Cu content of the ash of samples of the Raton coal. bed are one-half to one-fourth those of the Raton Formation coal beds (table 2). (3) The average value for P in the whole coal (table 4) is about one-fourth to one-third that of the Raton Formation coal beds.

Table 6 summarizes the ultimate, proximate, Btu, and forms-of-sulfur determinations for 10 selected samples from the Raton coal field on the as-received basis. This table shows that average (arithmetic mean) ash content of the coal samples from the Raton field is 11.4 percent; nitrogen, 1.7 percent; sulfur, 0.5 percent; Btu/lb, 13,100. For comparison, the average value in 86 Rocky Mountain province coal samples (table 6a) is 9.1 percent ash, 1.2 percent nitrogen, 0.6 percent sulfur, and 10,480 Btu/lb. The coals typical of the Raton coal field are higher in Btu and lower in sulfur content than representative coals of the Rocky Mountain province.

Average concentrations of oxides in the laboratory ash of the 16 Raton field coal samples are shown in table 7. A comparison of these values with those determined for the laboratory ash of 295 Rocky Mountain province coal samples (table 7a) shows that P_2O_5 concentration is higher by more than 50 percent in the ash of Raton field coals, while Na_2O , MnO, and SO_3 concentrations are lower by more than 50 percent. The average values for the other nine oxides reported in the ash are about the same in both sets of samples.

Data for 37 elements calculated to, or reported on, a whole-coal basis are summarized for the Raton field coal samples on table 8 and for the 295 Rocky Mountain province coal samples on table Sa. For comparative purposes, the average element concentrations in shale (Turekian and Wedepohl, 1961, table 2) are listed on both tables. A comparison of the average amounts of elements in Raton field coal with those in the average shale shows that the concentrations of Al, Fe, Ti, F, Hg, Li, B, Co, Sc, V, and Zr are less by more than a factor of five in the coal; Mg, Na, K, . . An, Cr, and Ni are less by more than a factor of ten. The concentrations of the other 20 elements reported on the table are similar to those of the average shale.

A comparison of the average composition of coal in the Raton field to that of Rocky Mountain coal (tables 8 and 8a) shows that Na, As, Cd, B, Mo, and Nb concentrations in Raton field coal are less by a factor of two or more than those in Rocky Mountain coal. Copper values are about 50 percent higher, and Sr about two times higher than those of the Rocky Mountain coal. The average concentrations of the other 29 elements in the Raton field coal samples do not differ significantly from their average amounts in Rocky Mountain coal.

Statistical methods

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The estimate of the most probable concentration, as used in this report, is the geometric mean, GM, which is the antilog of the mean of the logarithms of concentration. The measure of scatter about the mode is the geometric deviation, GD, which is the antilog of the standard deviation of the logarithms of concentration. These statistics are used because of the common tendency for trace-element concentration in natural . materials to exhibit positively skewed frequency distributions. The distributions can be normalized by analyzing and summarizing traceelement data on a logarithmic basis.

If the underlying frequency distributions are, in fact, lognormal, the geometric mean is the best estimate of the mode, and the estimated range of the central two-thirds of the observed distribution has a lower limit equal to GM/GD and an upper limit equal to GM·GD. The estimated range of the central 95 percent of the observed distribution has a lower limit equal to GM/(GD)² and an upper limit equal to GM \cdot (GD)² (Connor and others, 1976).

Although the geometric mean is generally an adequate estimate of the most common concentration, it is a biased estimate of elemental abundance. In tables 6-8 and 6a-8a, the estimates of arithmetic means (abundance) are Sichel's t statistic (Miesch, 1967).

A common problem in statistical summaries of trace-element data. arises when the element concentration in one or more of the samples lies below the limit of analytical detection, resulting in a censored distribution. Procedures developed by Cohen (1959) are used here to compute unbiased estimates of the geometric mean, geometric deviation, and arithmetic mean for cases in which the concentration data are censored.

Acknowledgments

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The analytical results for this paper were compiled with the assistance of Scott D. Woodruff and Ricky T. Hildebrand, U.S. Geological Survey. The proximate, ultimate, Btu, and forms~of-sulfur analyses of the coal samples in table 1 were made by the Coal Analysis Section of the U.S. Bureau of Mines, Pittsburgh, Pa., under the direction of Forrest E. Walker, chemist-in~charge. The major- and minor-oxide and trace-element analyses in tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 were made by A. J. Bartel, J. W. Brown, G. T. Burrow, E. J. Fennelly, J. Gardner, P. Guest, J. c. Hamilton, R. J. Knight, R. E. McGregor, V. M. Merritt, H. T. Millard, Jr., D. R. Norton, V. E. Shaw, G. D. Shipley, J. A. Thomas, J. S. Wahlberg, and T. L. Yager of the U.S. Geological Survey, under the direction of Claude Huffman, Jr., chemist-incharge.

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Description of 10 analyzed samples on table 1

Samples Dl68801 and Dl68802

Underground mine face channel samples (Dl68801) and (Dl68802), Left Fork coal bed, Raton Formation, Paleocene age; sample Dl68801 is 108 inches thick, a 6-inch parting is excluded; sample Dl68802 is 84 inches thick, a basal split and parting are excluded, Left Fork prospect, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°56'21" N, long. 105°58' W.

Sample Dl68803

Outcrop channel sample, Potato Canyon bed, 72 inches thick, partings excluded, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, Potato Canyon prospect, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°52'27" N, long. 104°40'36" W.

Samples Dl69000 and Dl69001

Face bench samples, lower (Dl69000) and main (Dl69001) benches of the York Canyon bed, 27 and 48 inches thick, respectively, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, York Canyon mine, long wall panel, 7th right, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°52'13" N, long. 104°53'37" W.

Samples Dl69004 and Dl69005

Face bench samples, main (Dl69004) and upper (Dl69005) benches of the York Canyon bed, 106 and 16 inches thick, respectively, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, Kaiser Steel strip mine (south end), Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. $36°52'13''$ N, long. $104°55'14''$ W.

Sample Dl69006

Face bench sample, main bench of the York Canyon bed, 87 inches thick, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, Kaiser Steel strip mine (north end), Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°52·'38" N, long. 104°55'17" W.

Sample Dl69013

Core sample, 60 inches thick, Raton bed, Vermejo Formation, Early Cretaceous age, depth $1,189-1,194$ feet, lat. $36^{\circ}48'55''$ N, long. 104°37'13" w.

Sample Dl76216

Underground mine face channel sample, York Canyon bed, lower bench 60 inches thick (composited with Dl76217 for this analysis), partings excluded, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, York Canyon mine, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. $36^{\circ}53'$ N, long. $104^{\circ}54'46''$ W. (Collected by George S. Austin, New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources.)

Table 1.--Proximate, ultimate, Btu, and forms-of-sulfur analyses of 10 samples from selected sites in the Raton coal field, New Mexico

[All analyses except Btu are in percent. Original moisture content may be slightly more than shown, because samples vere collected and transported in plastic bags to avoid metal contamination. Form of analyses: 1, as received; 2, moisture free; 3, moisture and ash free. A. D. Loss is air-dried loss)

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Table 1.--Proximate, ultimate, Btu, and forms-of-sulfur analyses of 10 samples from selected sites in the Raton coal field, New Mexico--

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Description of 6 additional coal samples not on table 1 but included on tables 2, 3, and 4

Samples Dl69007 and Dl69008

Upper bench samples, 18 inches second bench (Dl69007), and 14 inches top bench (Dl69008) of the York Canyon bed, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, Kaiser Steel strip mine (north end), Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°52'38" N, long.l04°55'17" W. ·

Sample Dl69012

Outcrop face channel sample, Raton bed, 60 inches thick, Vermejo Formation, Late Cretaceous age, tributary to Spring Canyon, Vermejo Park, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°55'30" N, long. 105°01'10" W.

Sample Dl69002

Tipple sample (middling coal), York Canyon mine wash plant, York Canyon bed, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°52'13" N, long. 104°53'37" W.

Sample 0169003

Tipple sample (clean-coal pile), York Canyon mine wash plant, York Canyon bed, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°52'13" N, long. 104°53'37" W.

Sample 0176217

Underground mine face channel sample, York Canyon bed, upper bench 69 inches thick, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, York Canyon mine, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°53' N, long. 104°54'46" W. (Collected by George S. Austin, New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources.)

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Table 2.--Major and minor oxide and trace-element composition of the laboratory ash of 16 coal samples from selected sites in the Raton coal field, New Mexico

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[Values are in either percent or parts per million. The coals were ashed at 525°C. L after a value means less than the value shown, N means not detected. S after the element title means that the values listed were determined by semiquantitative spectrographic analysis. The spectrographic results are to be identified with geometric brackets whose boundaries are 1.2, 0.83, 0.56, 0.38, 0.26, 0.18, 0.12, etc., but are reported arbitrarily as mid-points of those brackets, 1.0, 0.7, 0.5, 0.3, 0.2, 0.15, 0.1, etc. The precision of the spectrographic data is approximately one bracket at 68 percent, or two brackets at 95 percent confidence]

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Table 2.--Major and minor oxide and trace-element composition of the laboratory ash of 16 coal samples from selected sites in the Raton coal field, New Mexico--Continued

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Table 3.--Amounts of seven trace elements in 16 coal samples from selected sites in the Raton coal field, New Mexico [Analyses on air-dried (32°C) coal. All values are in parts per million. L after a value means less than the value shown]

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Table 4.--Major, minor, and trace-element composition of 16 coal samples from selected sites in the Raton coal field, New Mexico, reported on whole-coal basis·

[Values are in either percent or parts per million. Si, Al, Ca, Mg, Na, K, Fe, Mn, Ti, P, Cl, Cd, Cu,.Li, Pb, and Zn values were calculated from analysis of ash. As, F; Hg, Sb, Se, Th,and U values are from direct-determinations on air-dried (32°C) coal. The remaining analyses were calculated from spectrographic determinations on ash. L after a value means less than the value shown and N means not detected]

Table 4.--Major, minor, and trace-element composition of 16 coal samples from selected sites in the Raton coal field, New Mexico, reported on whole-coal basis--Continued

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Rock samples, on table 5, related to previously described coal samples (here included in parentheses)

Samples 0169014 and 0169015

York Canyon bed, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, York Canyon mine, long wall panel, 7th right, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°52'13" N, long. 104°53'37" W.

D169015--channel sample, carbonaceous shale 3 inches thick

(0169001--main coal·bed sample,48 inches thick)

Dl69014--channel sample, silty carbonaceous shale 3 inches thick at base of coal

(Dl69000--lower coal bench sample, 27 inches thick)

Samples D169016, D169017, and D169018

York Canyon bed, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, Kaiser Steel strip mine· (south end), Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. $36^{\circ}52'13''$ N, long. $104^{\circ}55'14''$ W.

Dl69018--channel sample, carbonaceous shale and mudstone (roof) 4 inches thick

D169017--channel sample, carbonaceous shale 10 inches thick

(D169005--upper coal bench 16 inches thick)

D169016--channel sample, basal carbonaceous shale and mudstone 4 inches thick

 $(D169004--main coal seen 106 inches thick)$

Samples 0169019, 0169020, 0169021, and 0169022

York Canyon bed, Raton Formation, Paleocene age, Kaiser Steel strip mine (north end), Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°52'38" N, long. 104°55'17" W.

D169022--channel sample, carbonaceous mudstone (roof) 6 inches thick

0169021--channel sample, carbonaceous shale 7 inches thick

 $(D169008--top$ bench of coal, 14 inches thick)

D169020--channel sample, coaly shale and shaly coal split .10 inches thick

(D169007--second bench of coal, 18 inches thick)

D169019--channel sample, carbonaceous shale and mudstone 4 inches thick at base of coal

Sample 0169027

Outcrop sample (3 in.) at base of coal, Raton bed, Vermejo Formation, Late Cretaceous age, tributary to Spring Canyon, Vermejo Park, Colfax County, New Mexico, lat. 36°55'30", long. 105°01'10" W.

Table 5.--Major, minor, and trace-element composition of 10 rock samples from selected sites in the Raton coal field, New Mexico, reported on a whole-rock basis

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[Values are in either percent or parts per million. SiO₂, Al₂O₃, CaO, MgO, Na₂O, K₂O, Fe₂O₃, MnO, TiO₂, P₂O₅, Cl, Cd, Cu, Li, Pb, and Zn values were calculated from analyses of rock ash. As, F, Hg, Sb, Se, Th, U, total carbon, organic carbon, carbonate carbon,and total sulfur values are from direct determinations on air-dried (32°C) rock. The remaining analyses, indicated by an S after the element title, were calculated from spectrographic determinations on ash. These spectrographic results are to be identified with geometric brackets whose boundaries are 1.2, 0.83, 0.56, 0.38, 0.26, 0.18, 0.12, etc. but are reported arbitrarily as mid-points of those brackets, 1.0, 0.7, 0.5, 0.3, 0.2, 0.15, 0.1, etc. The precision of the spectrographic data is approxtmately one bracket at 68 percent, or two brackets at 95 percent confidence. L after a value means less than the value shown and N means not detected]

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Table 6.--Arithmetic mean, observed range, geometric mean, and ·geometric deviation of proximate, ultimate, Btu, and forms-of-sulfur analyses for 10 Raton field coal samples

[All values except Btu are in percent and are reported on the as-received basis]

Table 6a.--Arithmetic mean, observed range, geometric mean, and geometric deviation of proximate, ultimate, and forms-of-sulfur analyses for 86 Rocky Mountain province coal samples

[All values except Btu are in percent and are reported on the as-received basis]

[All samples were ashed at 525°C. L after a value means less than the value shown]

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·Table 7a.--Arithmetic mean, observed range, geometric mean, and geometric deviation of 17 major and minor oxides and trace elements in the ash of 295 Rocky Mountain province coal samples

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[All samples were ashed at 525°C; L after a value means less than the value shown]

Table 8.--Arithmetic mean, observed range, geometric mean, and geometric deviation of 37 elements in 16 Raton field coal samples (whole-coal basis). For comparison, average shale values arc listed (Turekian <u>and Wedepohl, 1961</u>)

[As, F, Sb, Th, and U values used to calculate the statistics were determined directly on whole coal. All other values used were calculated from determinations made on coal ash. L after a value means less than the value shown. Statistical values for Mn and Cd could not be calculated owing to variability of the lower limits]

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- Table 8a.--Arithmetic mean, observed range, geometric mean, and geometric deviation of 37 elements in 295 Rocky Mountain province coal samples (whole-coal basis). For comparison average shale values are listed (Turekian and Wedepohl, 1961) ·
- (As, F, Sb, ·Se, Th, and U values used to calculate the statistics were determined directly on whole-coal. All other values used were calculated from determinations made on coal ash. L means less than the value shown]

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2. Aeromagnetic map of parts of the Socorro and Tularosa 1° by 2° quadrangles, southwestern New Mexico, by the U.S. Geological Survey. 1 sheet, scale 1:250,000. See information following No. 1, above.

Geologic and structure contour maps of the Ute Creek 1 SE quadrangre, Colfax County, New Mexico, by Charles L. Pillmore. 2 sheets, scale 1:24,000. 1012 Federal Bldg., Denver, Colo. 80202; 8102 Federal Office Bldg., Salt Lake City, utah 84lll; Rm. 1-C-45, 1100 Commerce St., Dallas, Tex. 75202; Rm. 223 Geology Bldg., Univ. New Mexico, Albuquerque, N.Hex. 87106; New Hexico Bur. Hines and Hineral Resources, Socorro, N .Hex. 87801. *[Material from which copy can be made at private expense is avail*able at the Socorro office. $/$

4. The desert land forms of Peru; a preliminary photographic atlas, by M. J. Grolier, G. E. Ericksen, J. F. McCauley, and E. C. Morris. 146 p., 110 figs. 601 E. Cedar Ave., Flagstaff, Ariz. 86001.

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6. Preliminary bedrock surface contour map of Montgomery County, Maryland, by Albert J. Froelich. 1 sheet, scale 1:62,500.

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