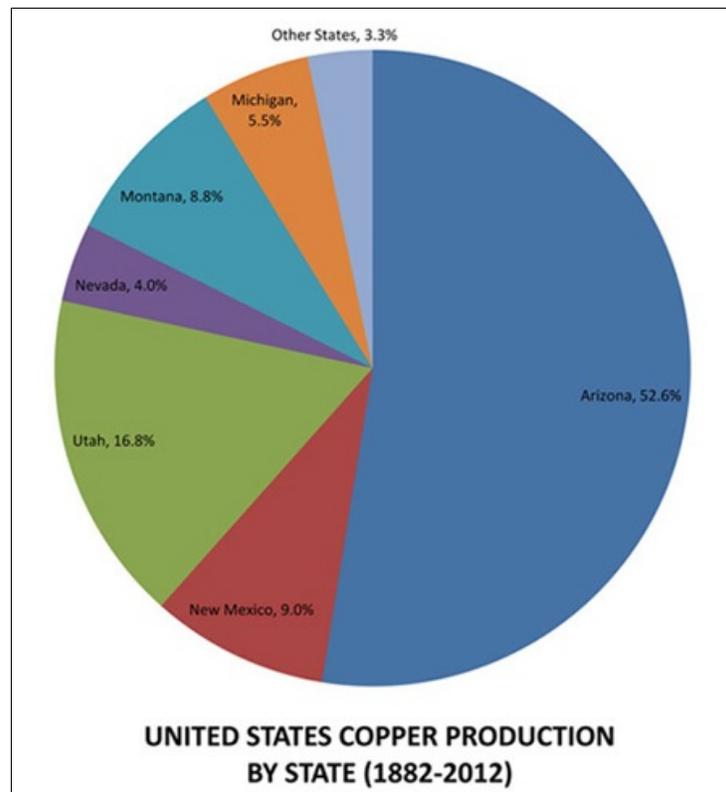


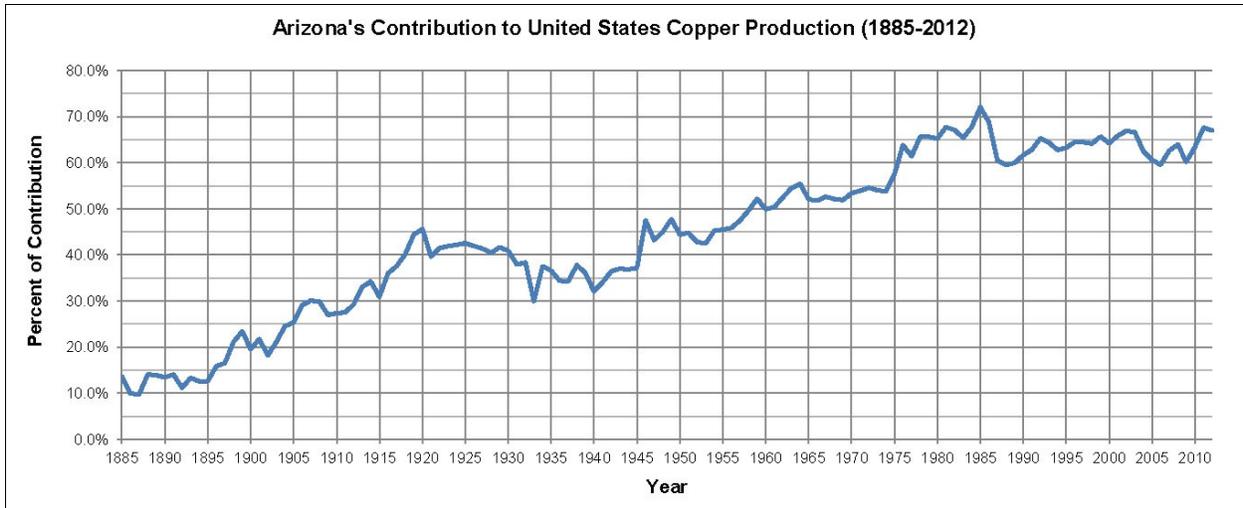
Interesting Facts about Arizona, Tucson and Copper

by David F. Briggs

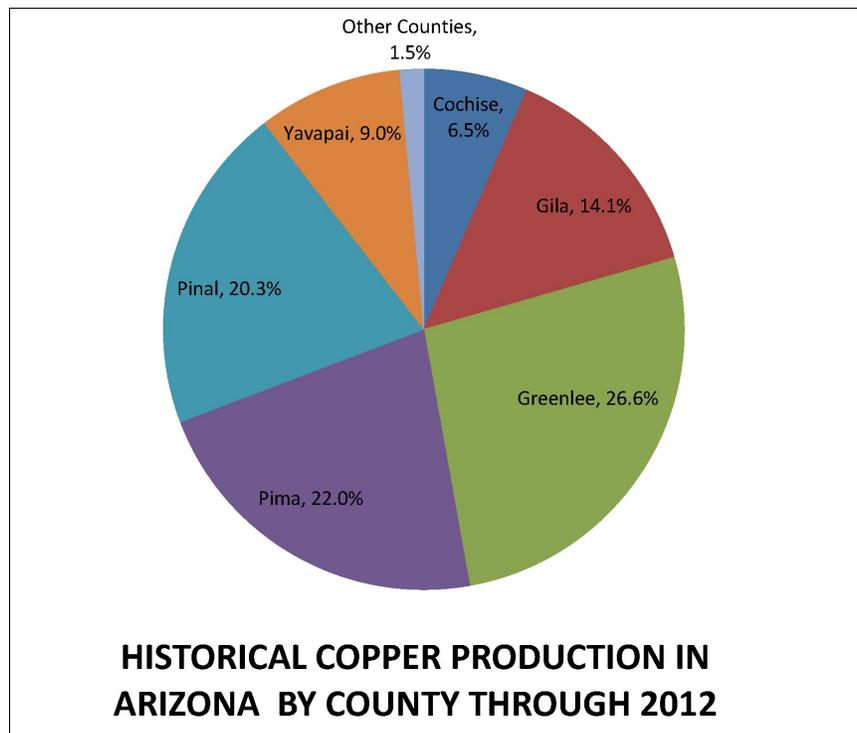
Have you ever wondered why Arizona is known as the “Copper State”. Based on historical records from the U. S. Bureau of Mines and U. S. Geological Survey, 52.6% of the copper produced in the United States over the last 130 years (1882-2012), has been derived from mines located in the state of Arizona.



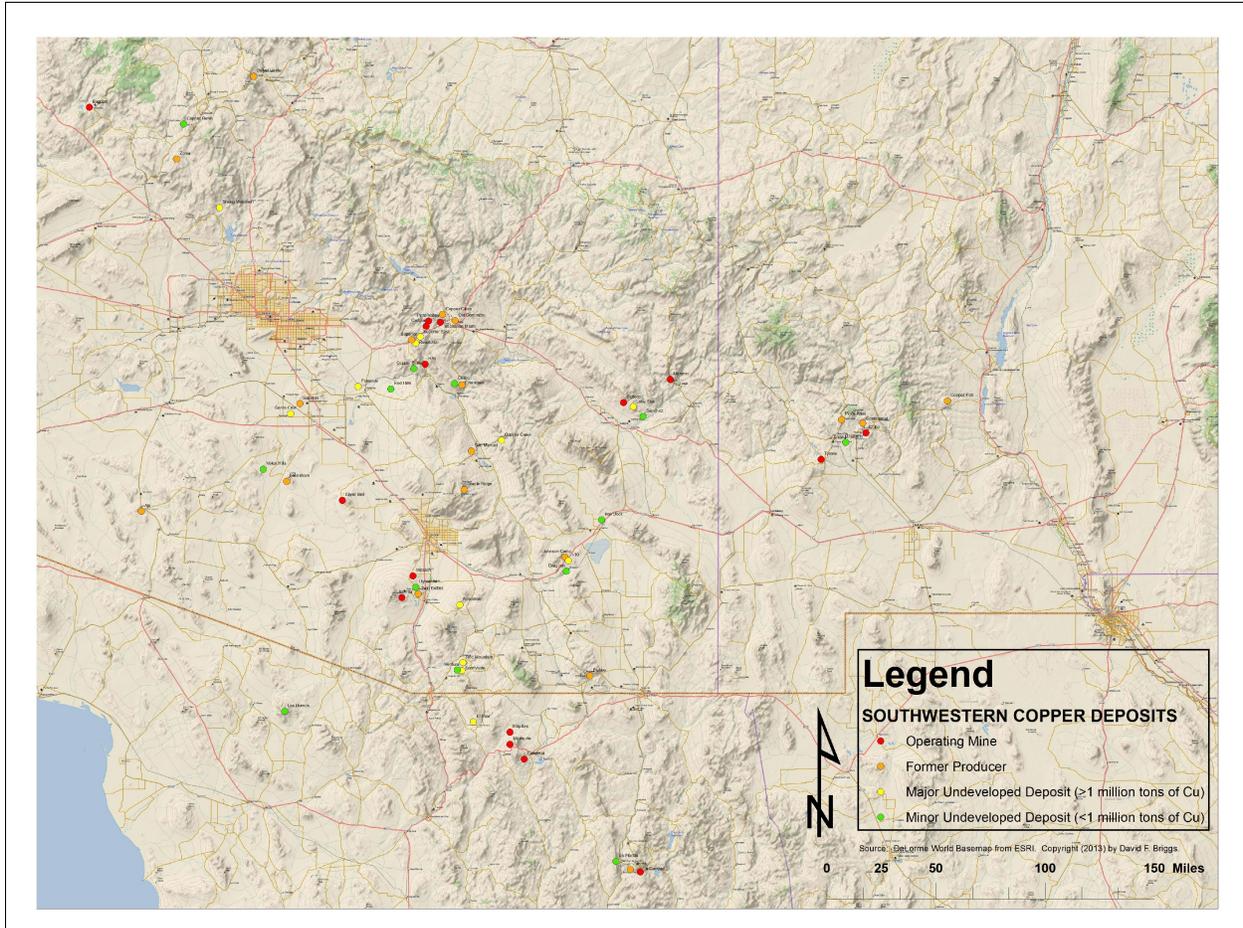
On an annual basis, Arizona’s copper mines have contributed more than 50% of the copper mined in the United States since 1961 and accounted for 60 to 70% of our nation’s copper production since 1976.



More than 90% of Arizona’s historic copper production has been derived from mines located within the southern portion of the state. In decreasing order of importance, most of Arizona’s copper production has been derived from Greenlee (26.6%), Pima (22.0%), Pinal (20.3%), Gila (14.1%) and Cochise (6.5%) counties.



The accompanying map shows the location of sixty copper deposits located within 250 miles of Tucson, Arizona, including forty-six deposits in Arizona, six deposits in southwestern New Mexico and eight deposits in northeastern Sonora. This figure includes seventeen operating mines, eighteen former producers and twenty-five undeveloped deposits that contain more than 200,000 short tons of copper metal.



Approximately 74.5% of the annual U. S. copper production since 1971 has been derived from copper mines located within 250 miles of Tucson, Arizona. Also located within 250 miles of Tucson, major producers in northeastern Sonora accounted for 71.3% of Mexico's annual copper production during 2012. Copper operations located within 250 miles of Tucson, Arizona also produced 55.7% of the copper mined in North America during 2012.

As of December 31, 2012, more than 80% of the proven and probable copper reserves in the United States were located within 250 miles of Tucson, Arizona. With continued evaluation of known of deposits and the discovery of additional deposits in this region, the potential add to the current reserve base is great.

The great concentration of major copper deposits in Arizona, southwestern New Mexico and northeastern Sonora has made Tucson the “Copper Mining Capital of North America”. Not only have a number of mining firms established offices in Tucson to support their mining and exploration activities, but numerous businesses, who provide goods and services to the region’s mines are also based here. Some of these consulting firms, like Call and Nicholas, Mintec, and Modular Mining Systems were founded in Tucson and have become the internationally recognized experts in their respective fields of expertise. Arizona’s mining professionals have worked very hard to ensure existing and future mining projects are developed and operated in an environmentally responsible manner.

From the establishment of many of the southwest’s early mining camps, such as Bisbee and Morenci, during the late 1800s, copper has played and continues to play an important role in Arizona’s history. With the development of new 21st century mining projects at Resolution, Florence and Rosemont, copper will continue to contribute to Arizona’s prosperity for many years to come.

Disclaimer: David F. Briggs is a resident of Pima county and a geologist, who has intermittently worked on the Rosemont copper project since 2006. The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Rosemont Copper Company.

Copyright (2013) by David F. Briggs. Reprint is permitted provided the credit of authorship is provided and linked back to the source.

Originally published by Mining and You in the Tucson Citizen on October 29, 2013.