



Rosemont Copper - It's Time to Put Southern Arizona Back to Work

by David F. Briggs

Like many concerned citizens of southern Arizona, I have closely followed the Rosemont debate for eight long years. The numerous delays that have unnecessarily prolonged governmental approval of this important project are very disturbing.



Future Site of the Rosemont Copper Mine (Photo by David Briggs, August 2008)

U. S. law guarantees mining firms, like Rosemont Copper, the right to explore and develop mineral resources located on public and private lands. However, if the domestic mining industry is not permitted to responsibly develop their mineral holdings in a timely manner, it discourages their investment of the capital required to fulfill the needs of present and future generations of Americans. According to a recent study by Behre Dolbear Group, Inc., titled "Where Not to

Invest,” the risks associated with delays in permitting was identified as the primary reason for not investing in mining ventures located in the United States.

This has ultimately reduced America’s ability to produce the minerals required to ensure our national security and to maintain and improve our standard of living and infrastructure. Less than 50 percent of the minerals currently used by U. S. manufacturers are derived from domestic sources. This dependence on foreign sources for raw materials has not only contributed to our large trade deficits, but has also left our national security needs vulnerable to decisions made by foreign governments.

Large mining projects, like Rosemont Copper, are capable of injecting massive amounts of capital into the communities, where they operate. Did you know that 75 percent of the copper produced in the United States is derived from mining operations located within a 300-mile radius of Tucson? This simple fact explains why Tucson is one of our nation’s leading mining centers and the home of many mining professionals and businesses, who provide goods and services to the area’s mines.

A recent independent study indicates the proposed Rosemont copper project will result in the creation of several thousand badly needed jobs for Arizonans. The use of copper by environmentally friendly technologies of the future will play an important role in southern Arizona’s economic prosperity.

The average American consumes more than 1,500 pounds of copper during their lifetime. If we are not permitted to mine where geologic forces have created large copper deposits in southern Arizona, where are we going to get the copper we require to meet our future needs?

The Rosemont copper project will assist our nation achieve its goal of energy independence by supplying an important component used in environmentally friendly technologies of the future. In accomplishing this task, it will also help reduce our reliance on foreign imports, which currently threaten our economic and national security.

Many of Rosemont Copper's supporters are citizens of southern Arizona, who have a vested interest in our community’s future. We have seen the efforts Rosemont Copper has made to minimize the environmental and social impacts this project will have on the surrounding area. Rosemont Copper’s open and transparent manner in responding to questions is very refreshing. They have clearly shown a willingness to work closely with surrounding communities to solve common problems. Rosemont Copper has earned my respect and support through their efforts to be a good neighbor.

All Arizonans, who have similar concerns about the impacts these delays will have on the future of our community, need to contact the Coronado National Forest and express their support for the Rosemont Copper project. It's time to put southern Arizona back to work.

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 Rosemont Copper.

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