

Situating the Rosemont Mine Proposal Geographically & Historically: Toward a Political Ecology of a Copper Mine

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This presentation...

- Geographical Context—United States, Arizona, Tucson
- Historical Context—Capitalist expansion: advancing frontier
- Governance & the ‘hydro-social’ landscape of the SW U.S.
- Climate change, drought and the Colorado River
- The Rosemont Copper mine project

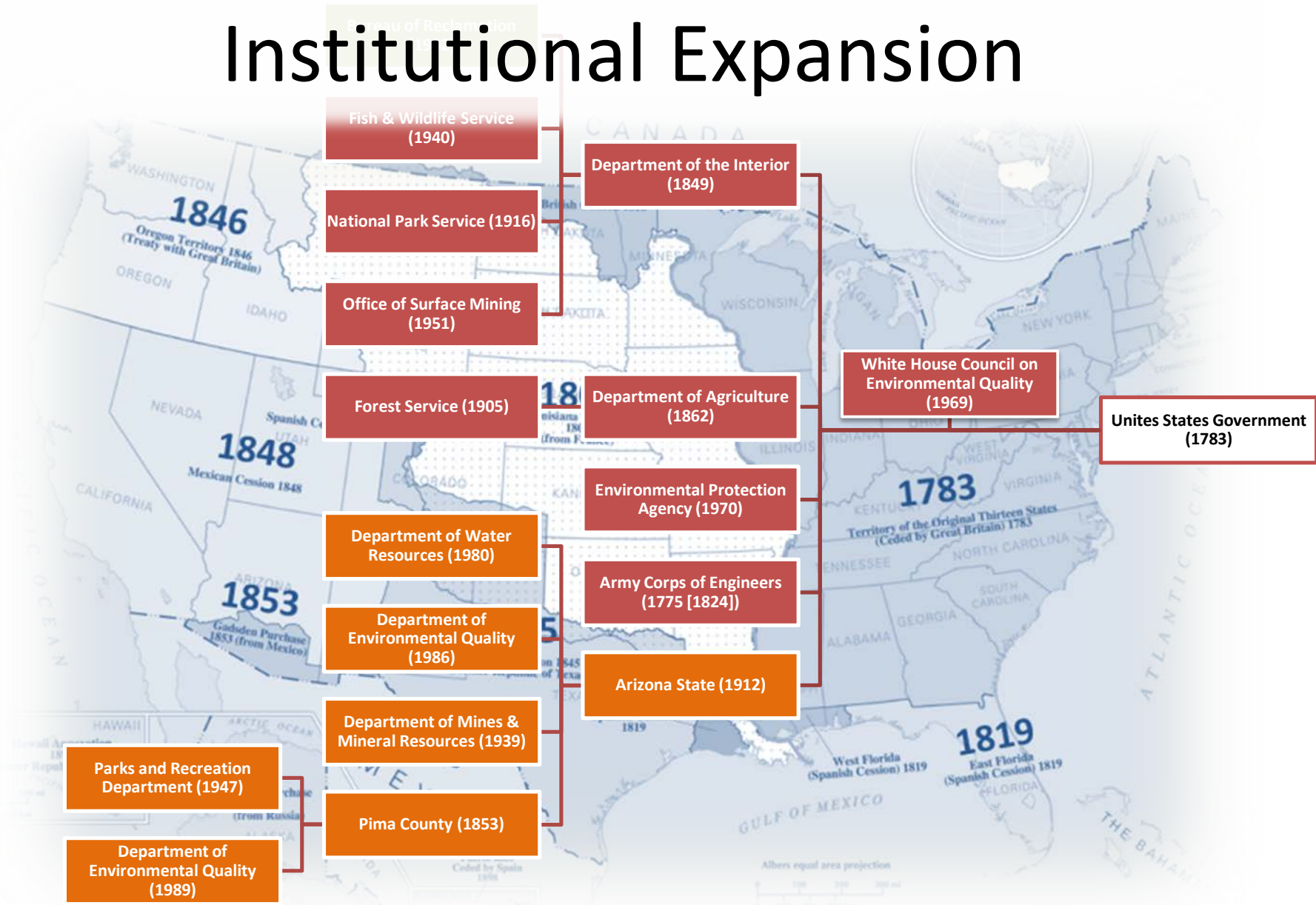
Arizona, United States



Territorial expansion of the US



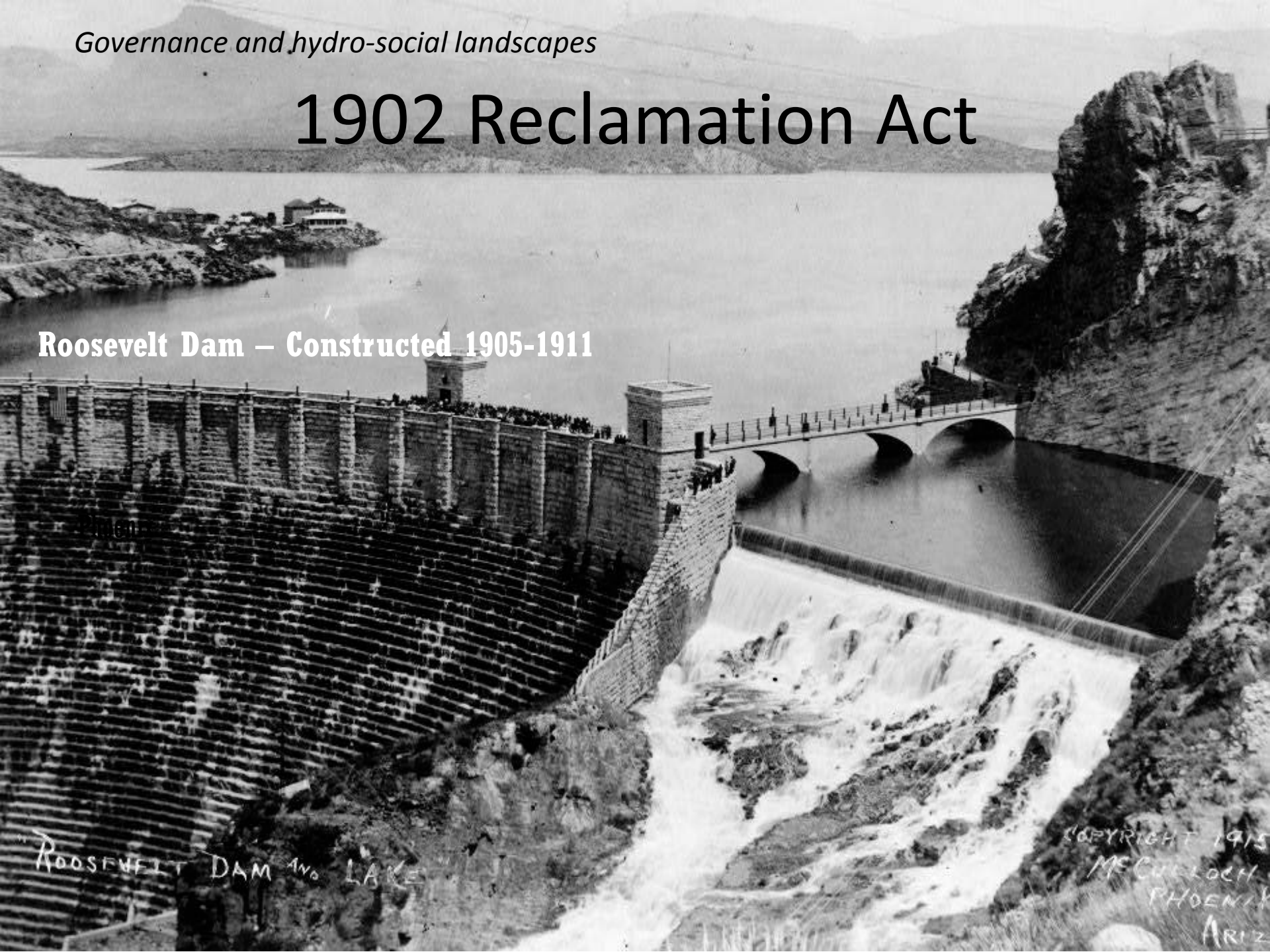
Institutional Expansion



Governance and hydro-social landscapes

1902 Reclamation Act

Roosevelt Dam – Constructed 1905-1911



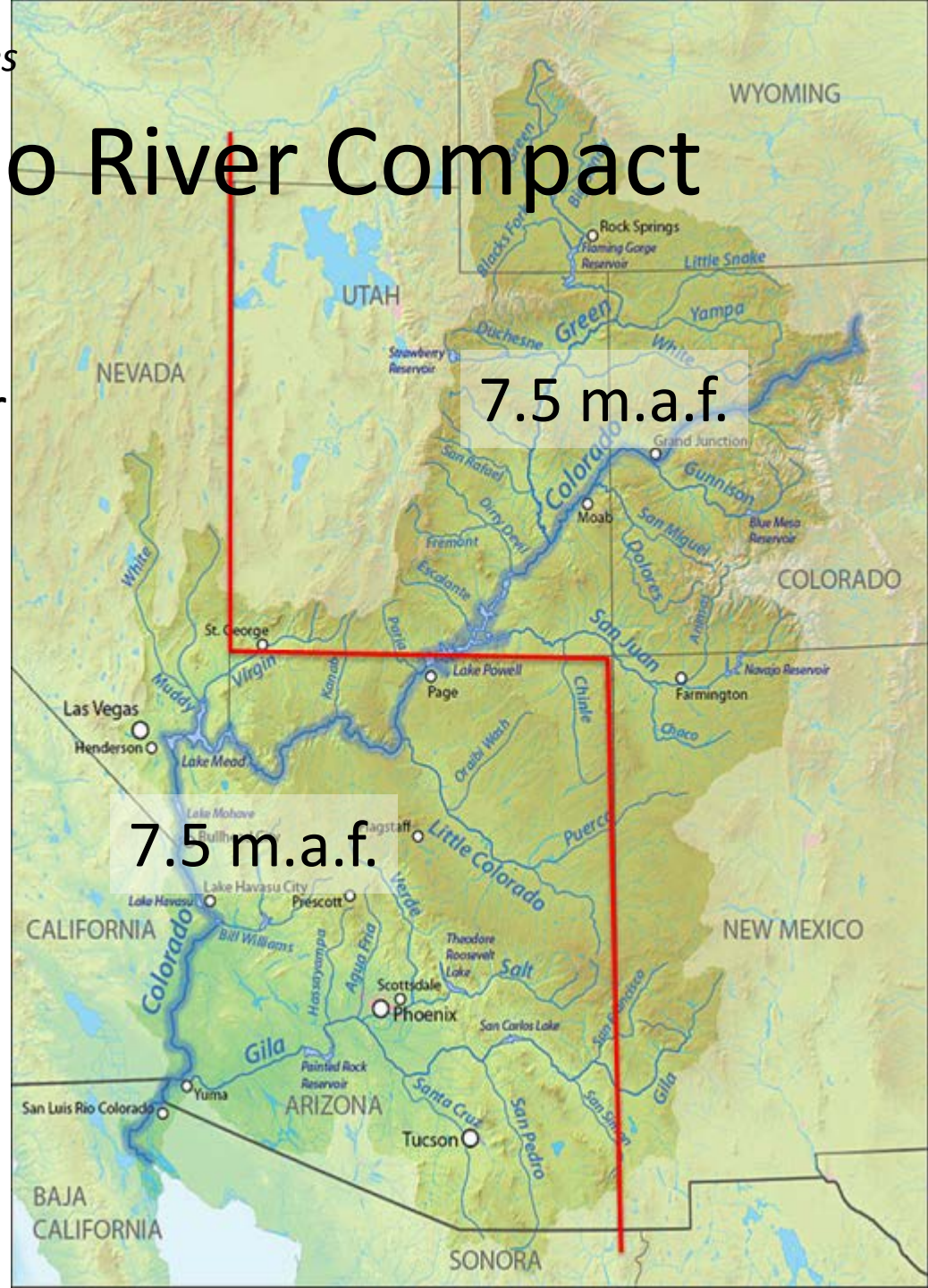
ROOSEVELT DAM AND LAKE

COPYRIGHT 1915
McCULLOCH
PHOENIX
ARIZ

1922 Colorado River Compact

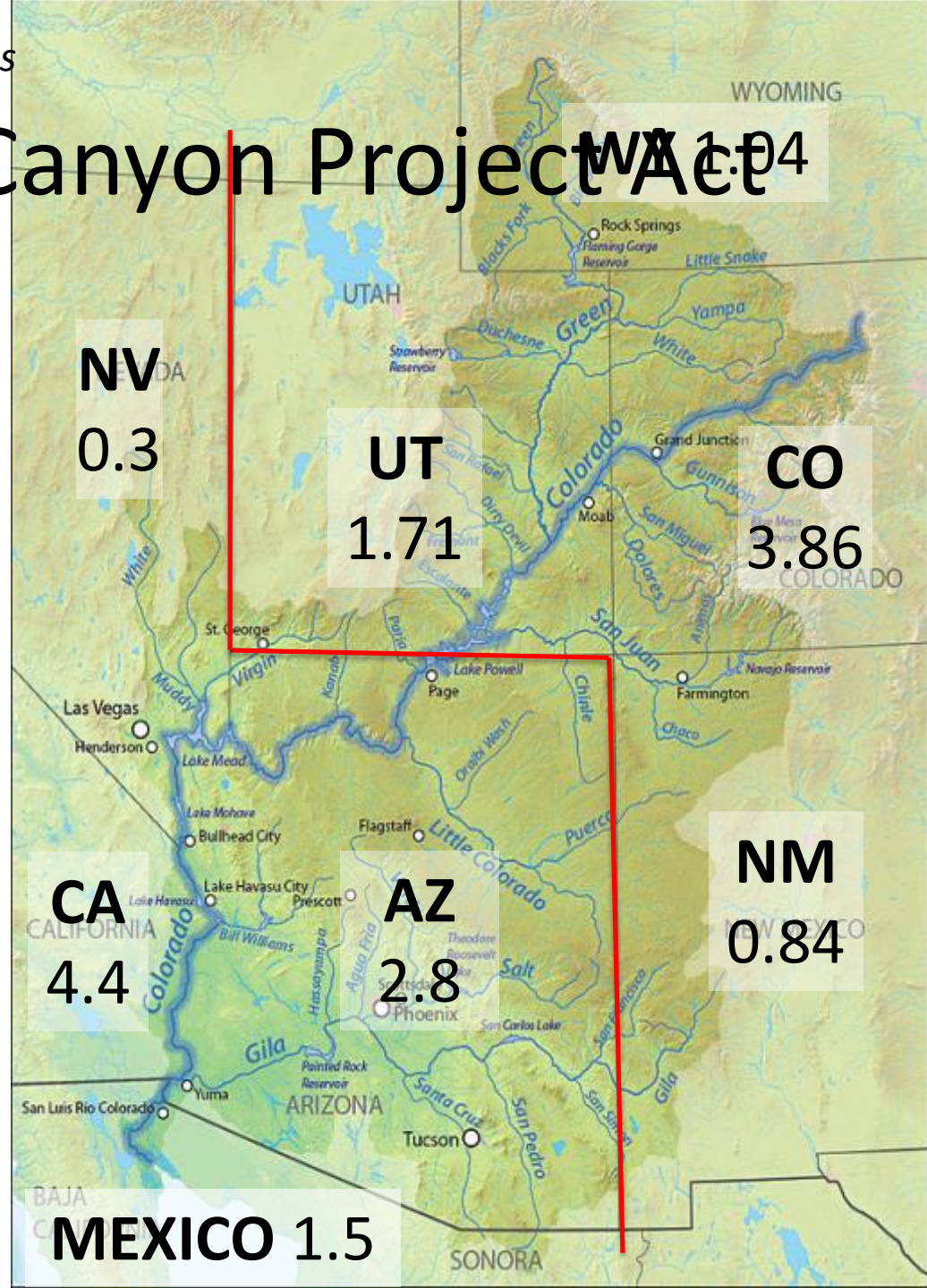
- Allocated waters of the Colorado between upper and lower 'Basin States'
- 50-50 split
- 7.5 million acre-feet* each

*1 acre x 1 ft. of water



1928 Boulder Canyon Project Act

- Apportioned the 7.5 m.a.f. among the lower basin states
- Approved the construction of Hoover Dam; Imperial Dam; All-American Canal → Imperial Valley
- 1944 Mexican Water Treaty
- 1948 Upper Colorado River Basin Compact



Governance and hydro-social landscapes

1928 Boulder Canyon Project Act



Governance and hydro-social landscapes



HOOVER DAM



IMPERIAL DAM



ALAMO CANAL




ALL AMERICAN CANAL



ALAMO RIVER




IMPERIAL VALLEY



YUMA PROJECT



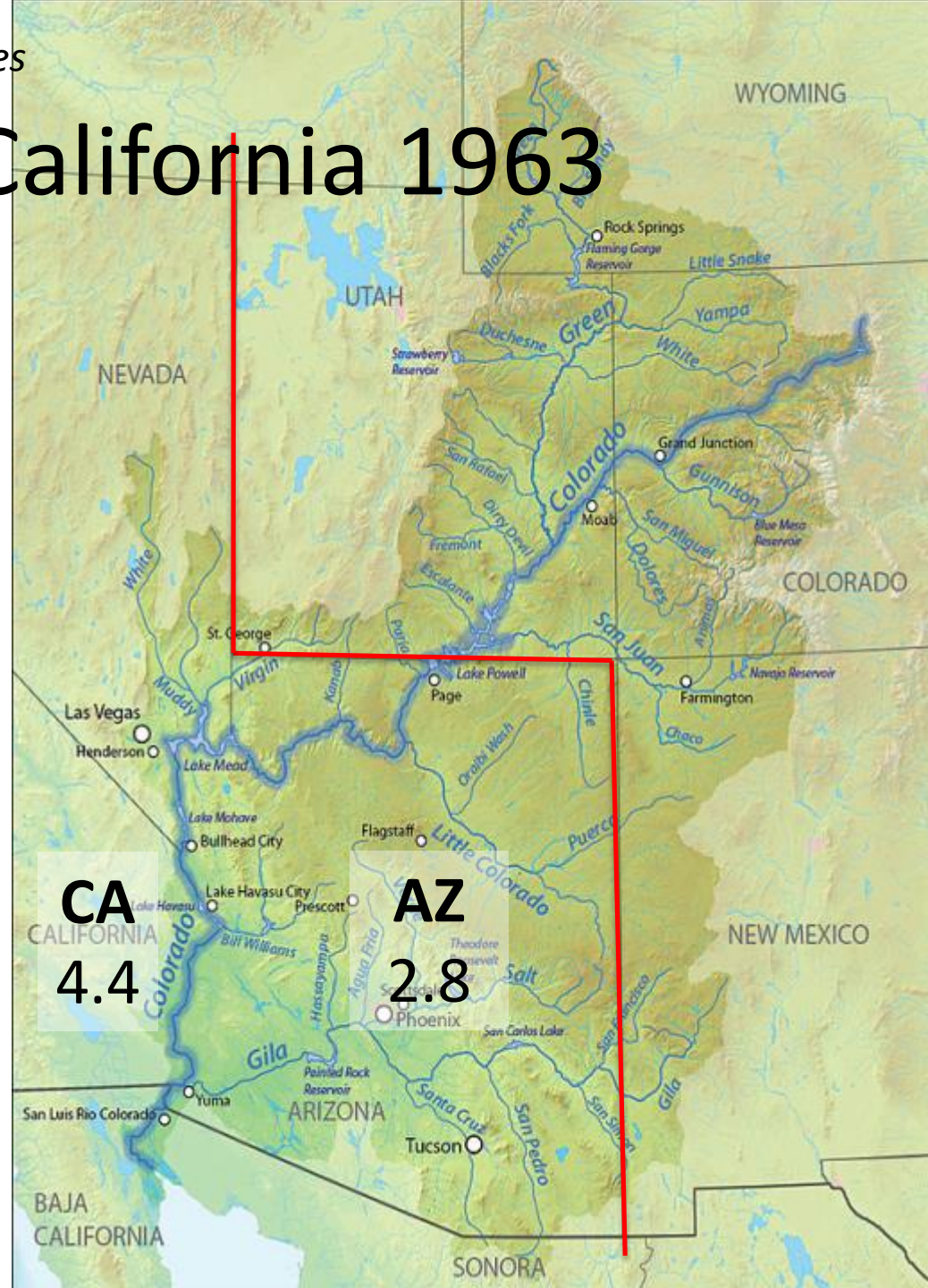
GILA RIVER



SALT RIVER PROJECT

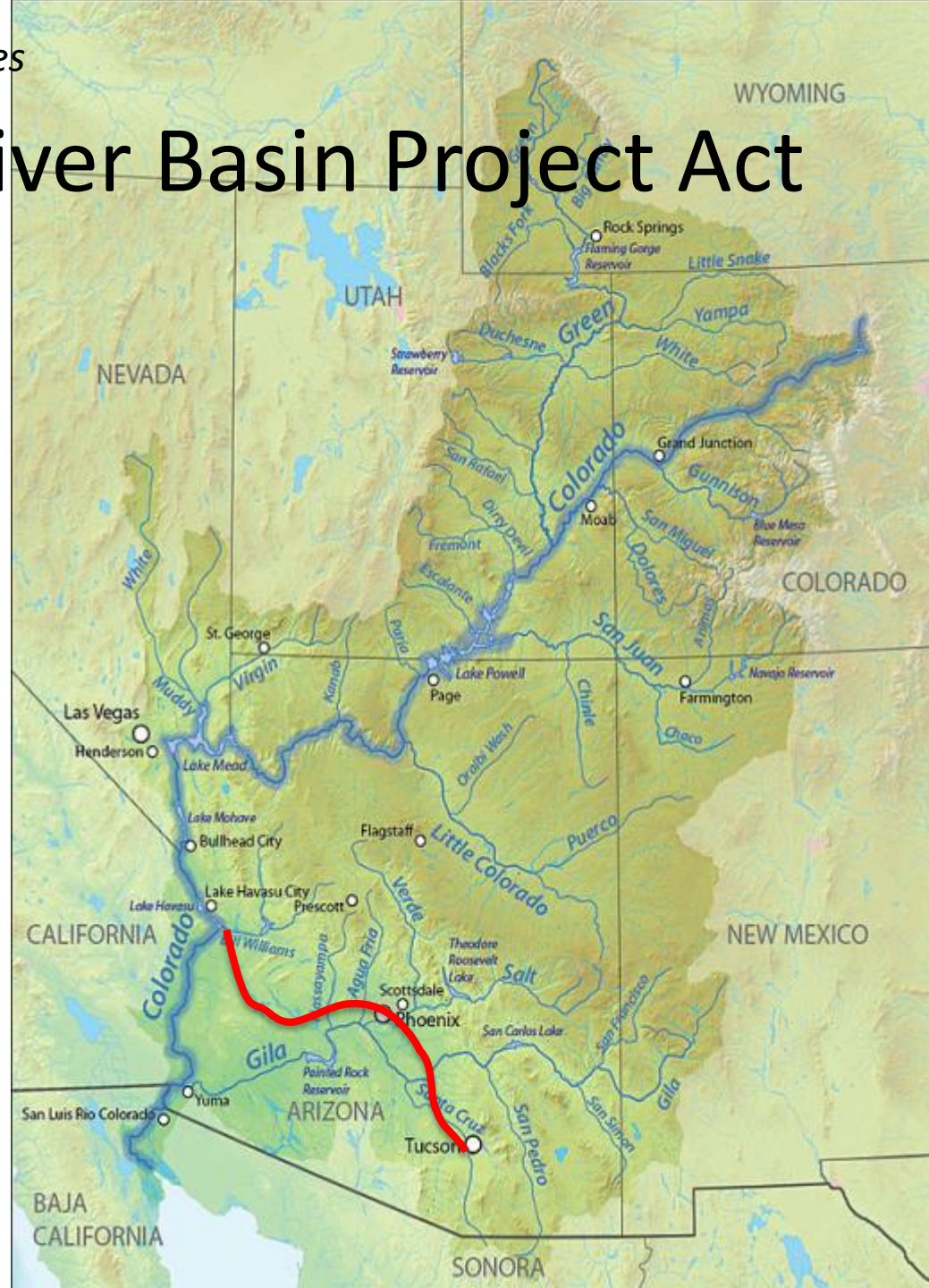
Arizona v California 1963

- Confirmed Colorado River Compact apportionments as legally binding.
- CA could not claim further water through prior appropriation.
- ...but CA does have priority in case of reduced discharge



1968 Colorado River Basin Project Act

- Authorises construction of the CENTRAL ARIZONA PROJECT



Governance and hydro-social landscapes

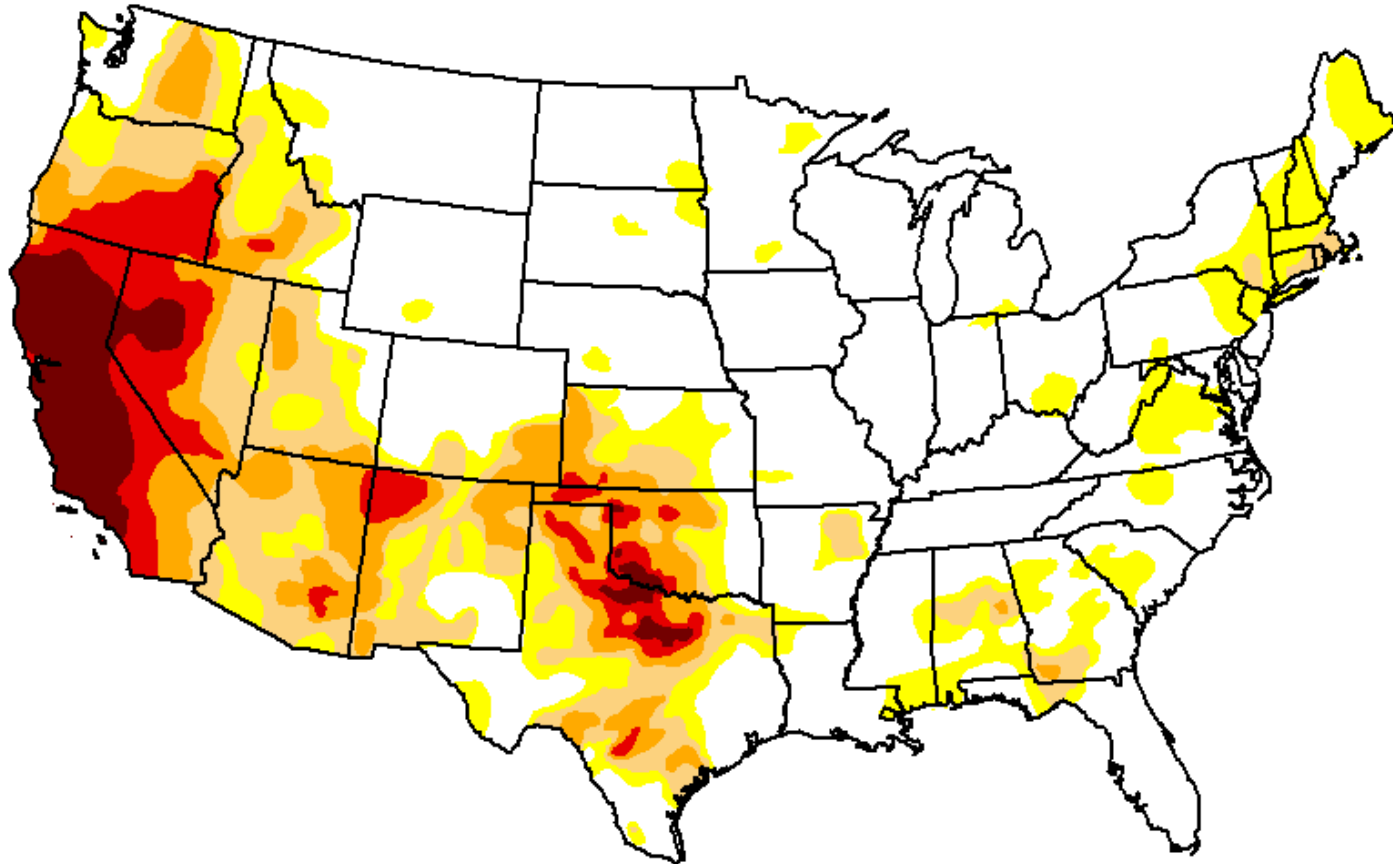
Central Arizona Project



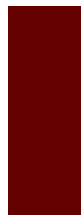
Central Arizona Project



U.S. Drought Monitor (Oct 14, 2014)



Intensity:



Exceptional and widespread crop/pasture losses; shortages of water in reservoirs, streams, and wells creating water emergencies

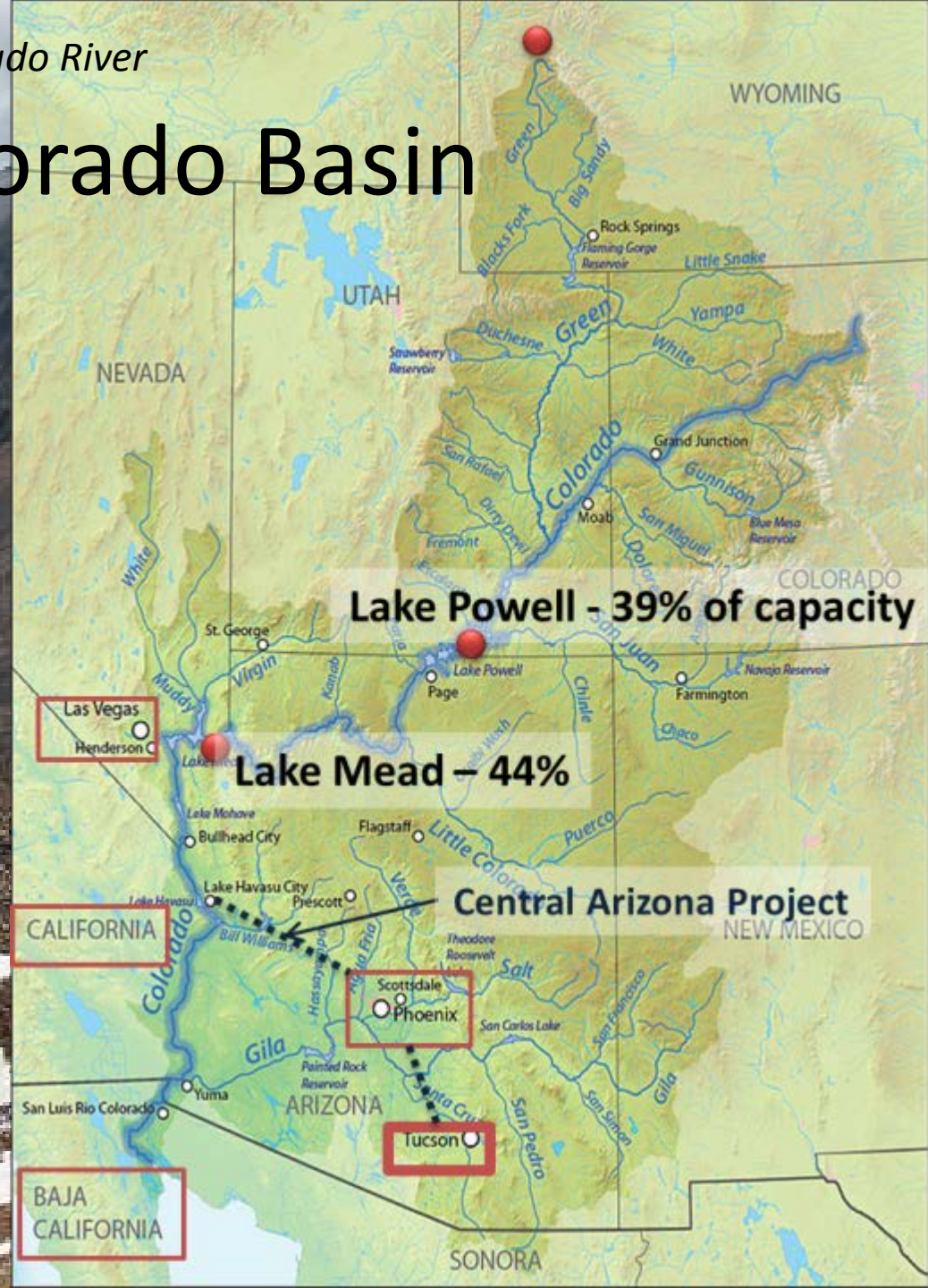
Author:

Mark Svoboda
National Drought Mitigation Center



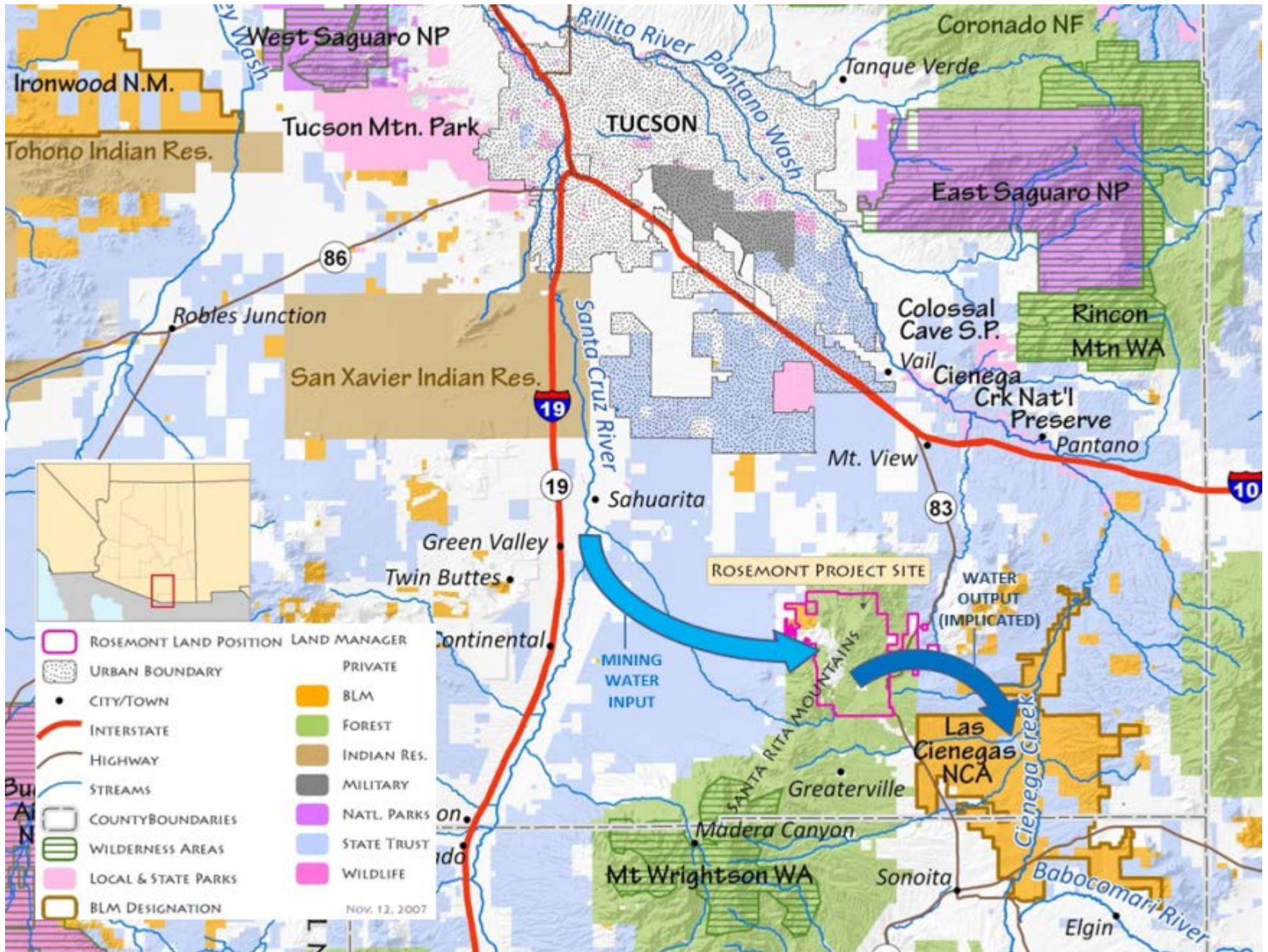
The Colorado Basin

- Rockies snowpack shrunk by 20 per cent since 1980
(Pederson et al. 2013)
- 25 percent chance the Colorado River will not be able to meet all anticipated demands between 2020 - 2025
(WRRRC 2013)



The Rosemont Copper Project

The Rosemont Copper Project



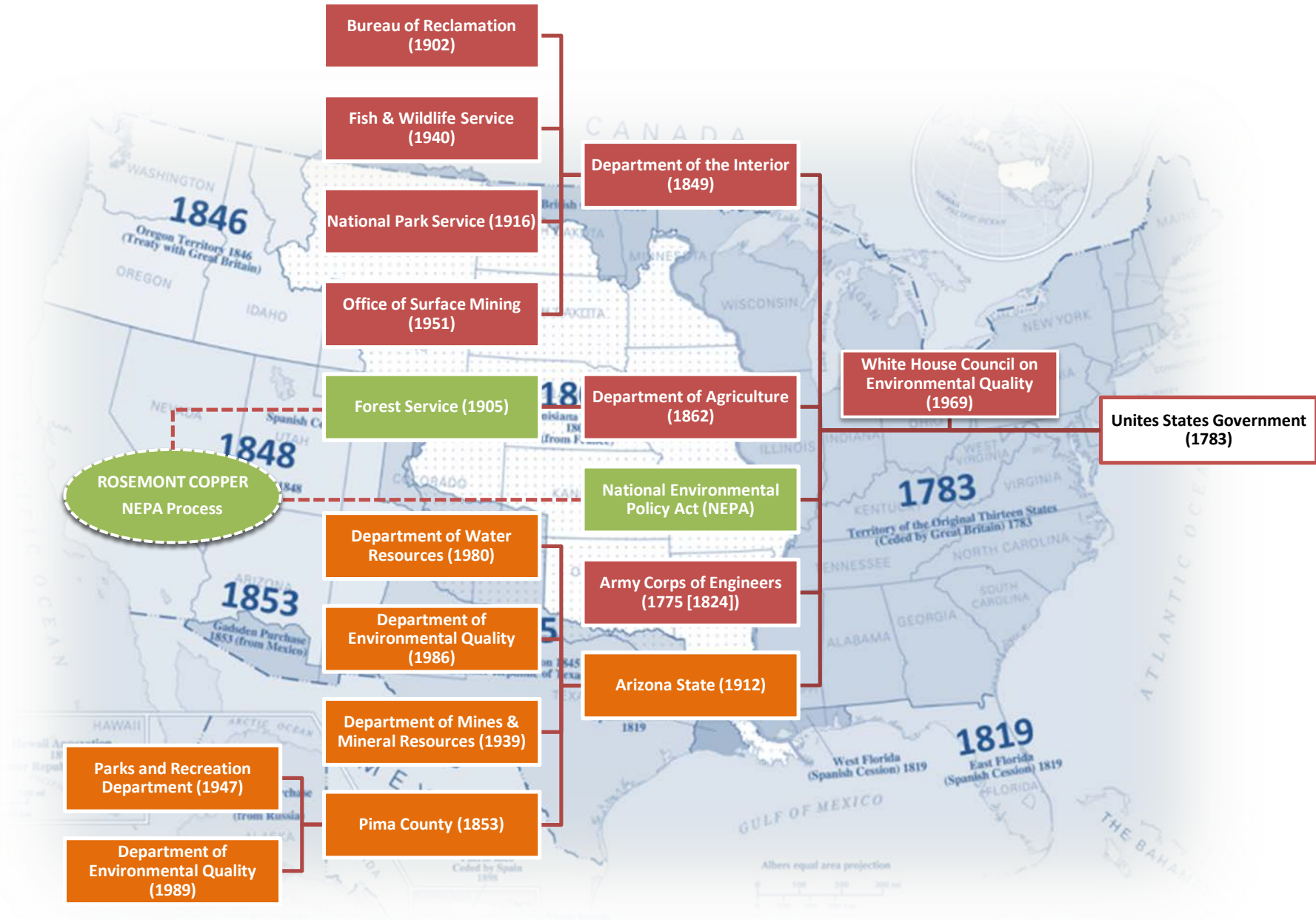
The Rosemont Copper Project



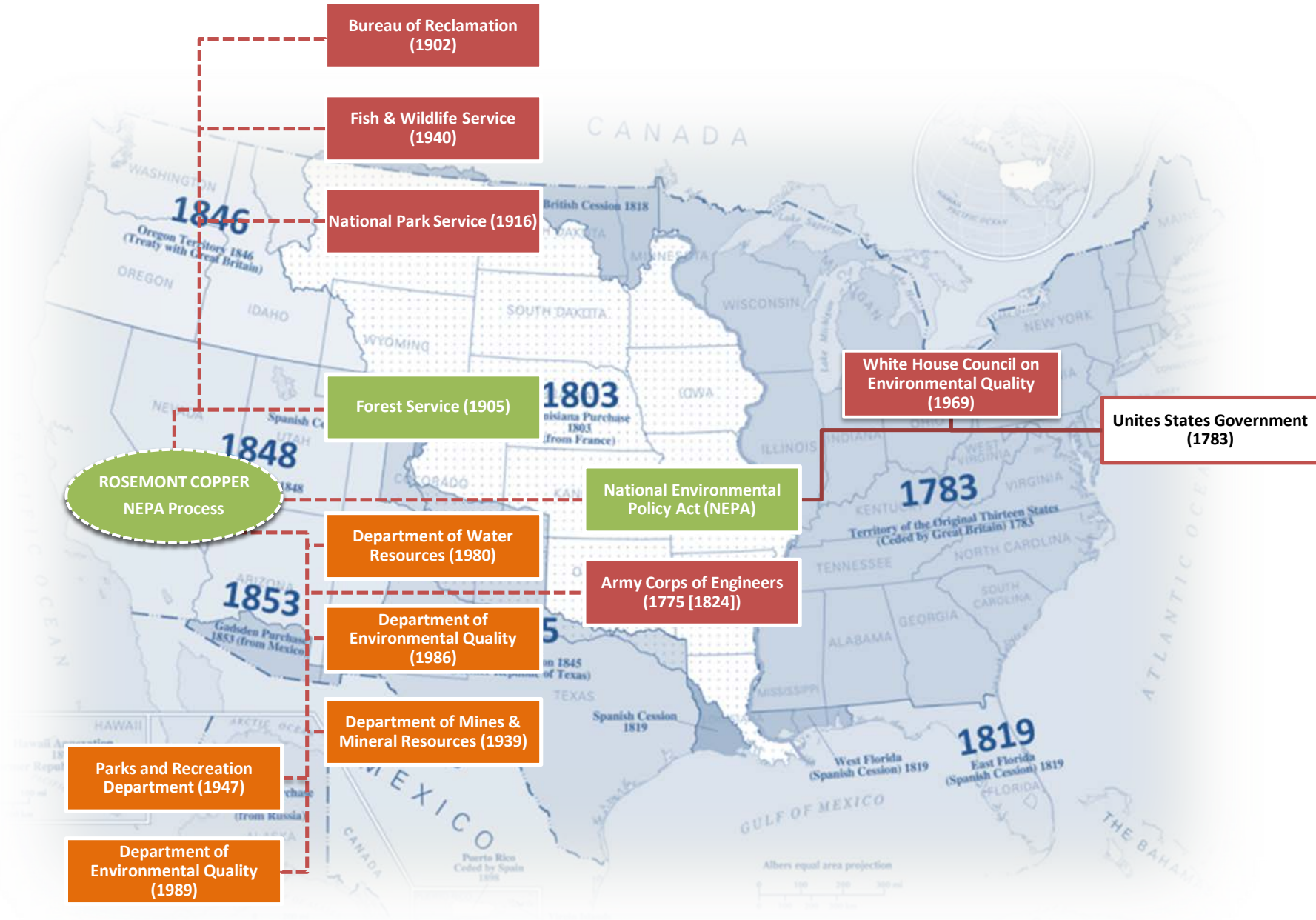
The Rosemont Copper Project

- A Political-Ecological Perspective
 - Foregrounding the mine in its geographically and historically specific context
 - Viewed as the capitalist commodification of nature (production of surplus for exchange value)
 - Mapping the actors – Official and unofficial ‘stakeholders’
 - Locating ‘the political’
 - Discourses – “Sustainability”, “Democracy” and “Participation”
 - Tactics
 - Subjective Experiences

The Rosemont Copper Project



The Rosemont Copper Project



The Rosemont Copper Project

United States Government
(1783)

White House Council on
Environmental Quality
(1969)

Fish & Wildlife Service
(1940)

National Park Service (1916)

Bureau of Reclamation
(1902)

Army Corps of Engineers
(1775 [1824])

Forest Service (1905)

ROSEMONT COPPER
NEPA Process

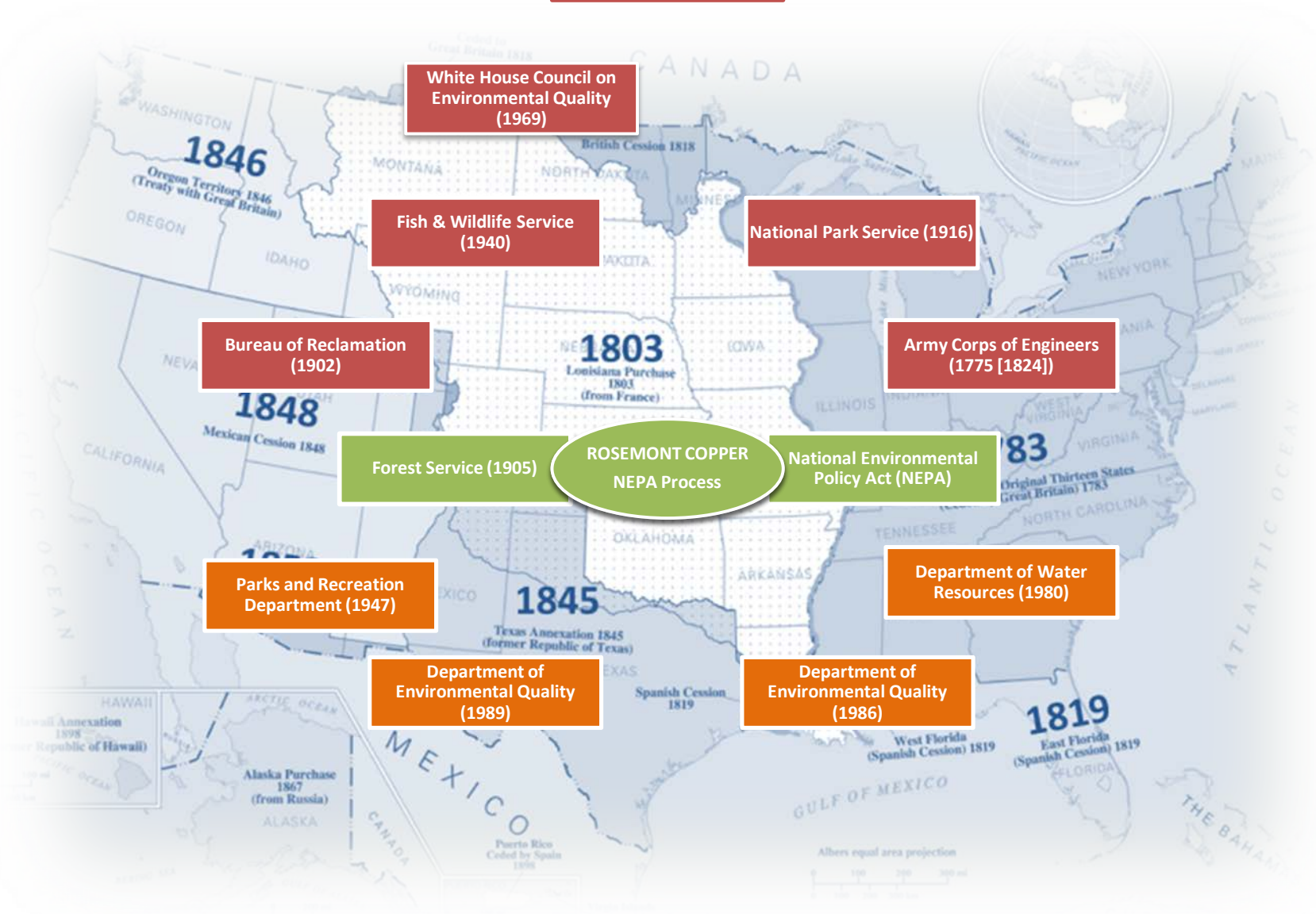
National Environmental
Policy Act (NEPA)

Parks and Recreation
Department (1947)

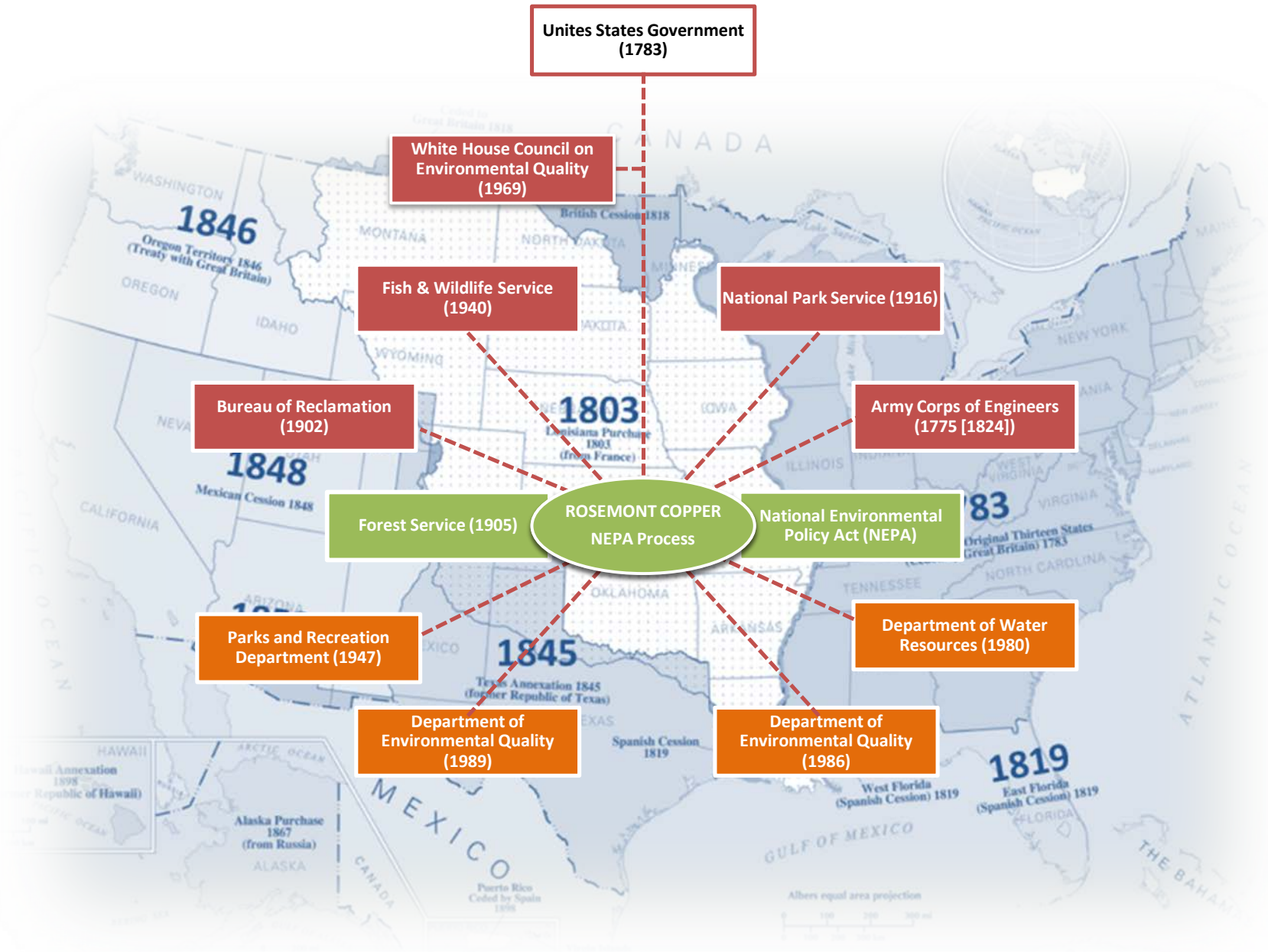
Department of Water
Resources (1980)

Department of
Environmental Quality
(1989)

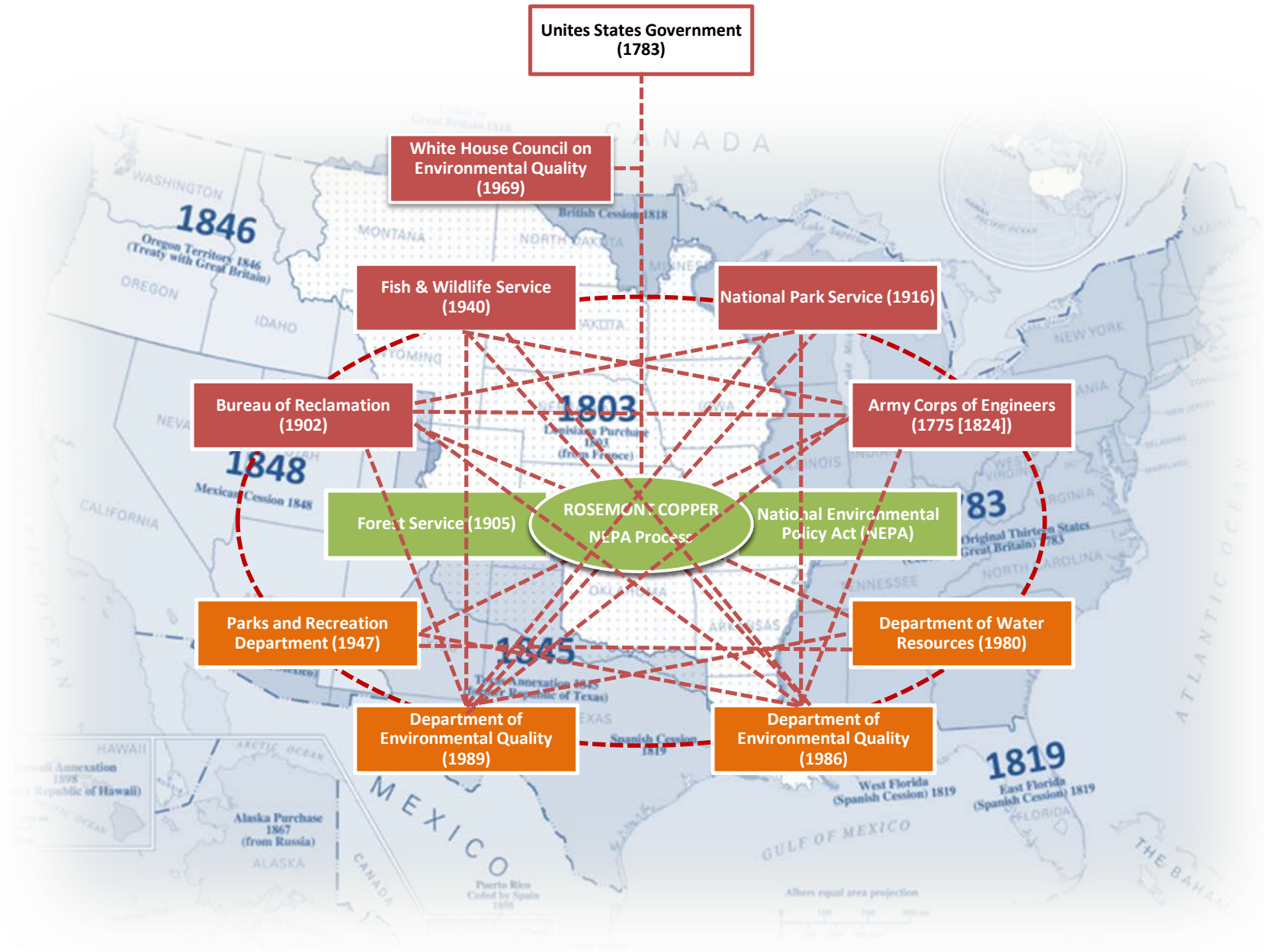
Department of
Environmental Quality
(1986)

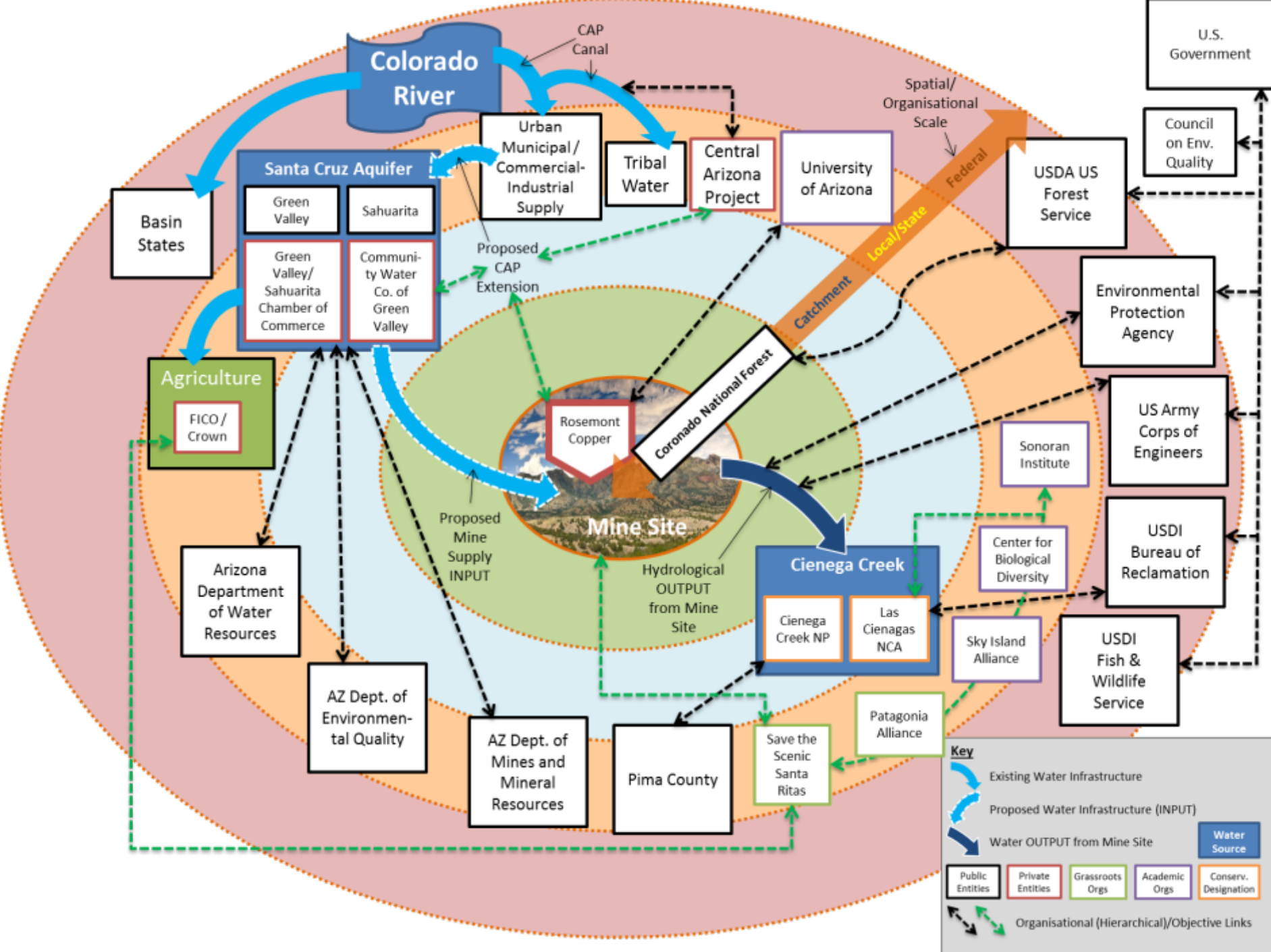


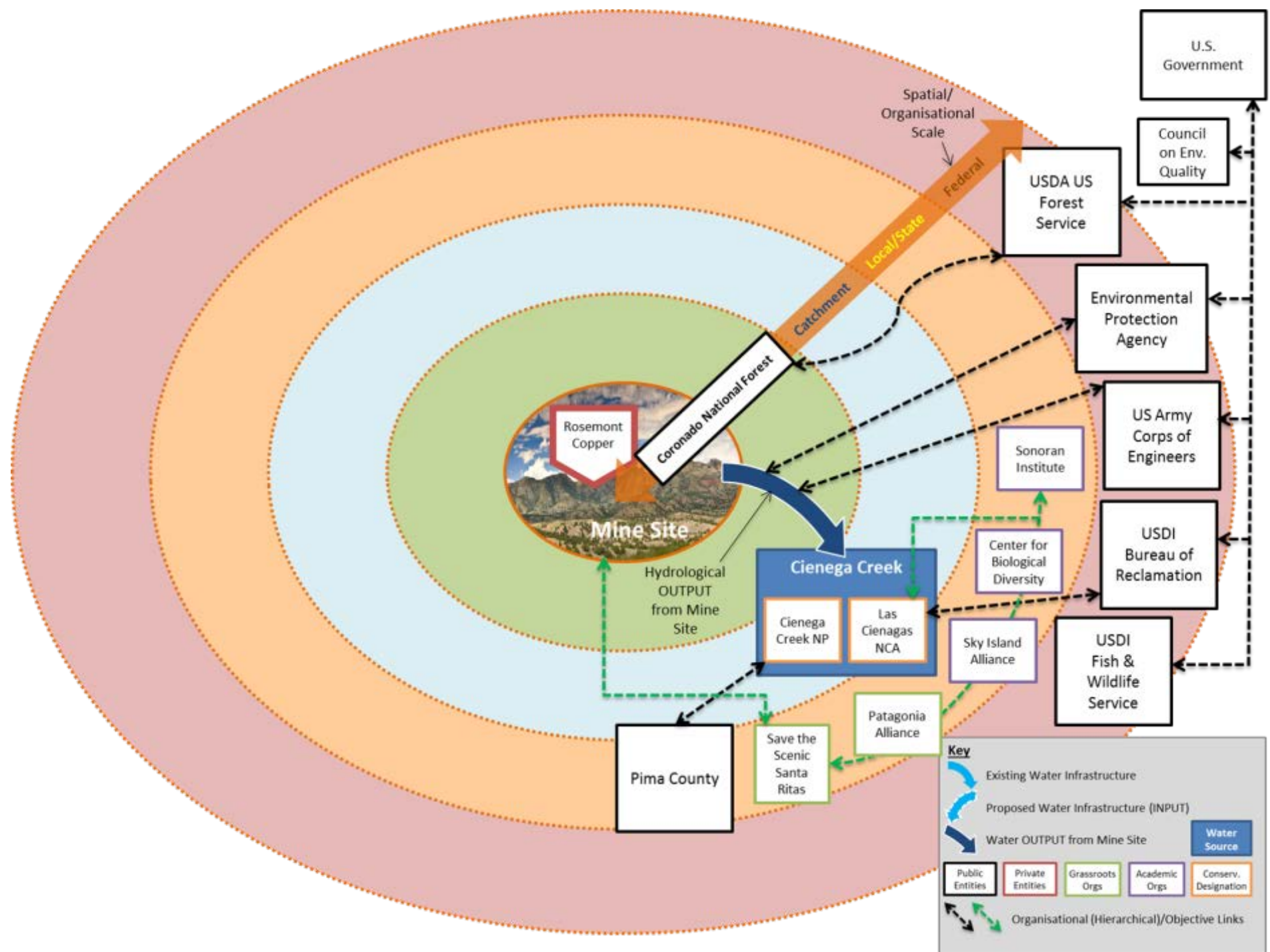
The Rosemont Copper Project

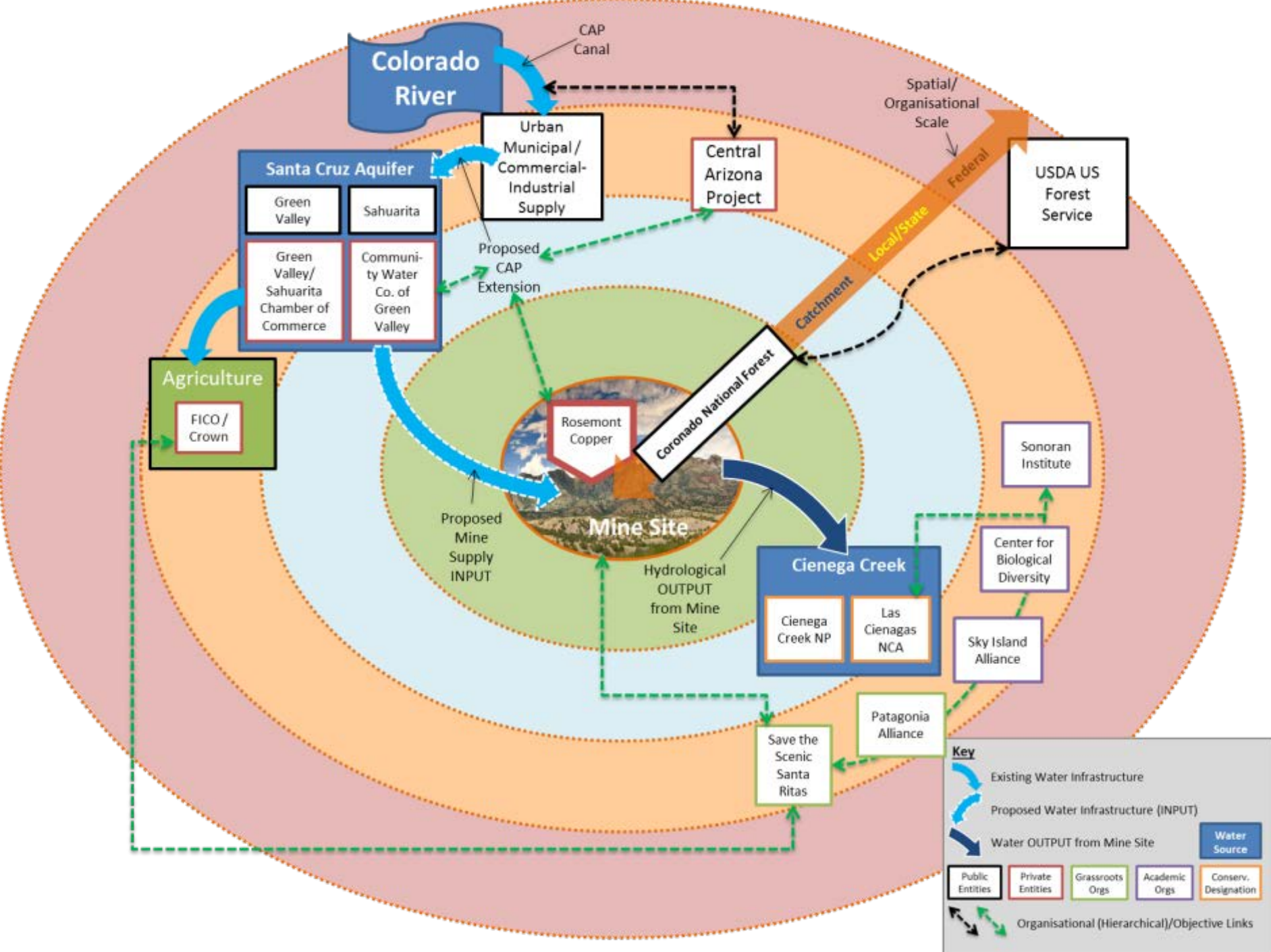


The Rosemont Copper Project









“Locating the political”

- “The decision-making space [for the NEPA process in the case of Rosemont] is constrained by the mining law of 1872”
 - Allows for patents to be claimed for hard rock mining on public land which must be considered by the responsible federal agency.
 - Means that the question is not “whether” but “how?”
 - But opposition to mining in southern Arizona is not a case of “we want a pretty mine”; it’s “we don’t want a mine at all”.

Summary

Historical Context

Territorial expansion of the US



The Rosemont Copper Project

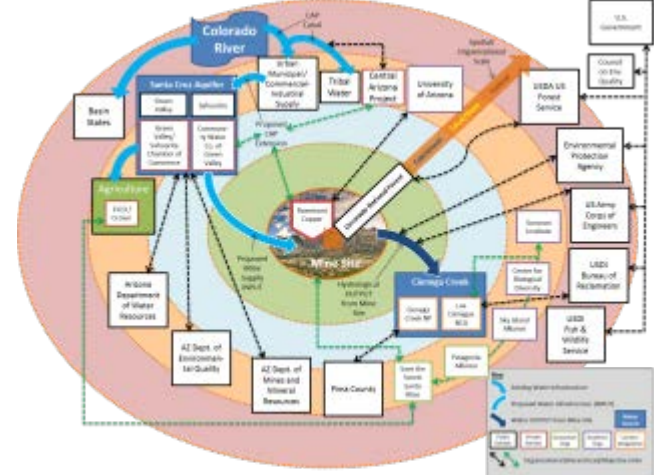


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