

# BENSON

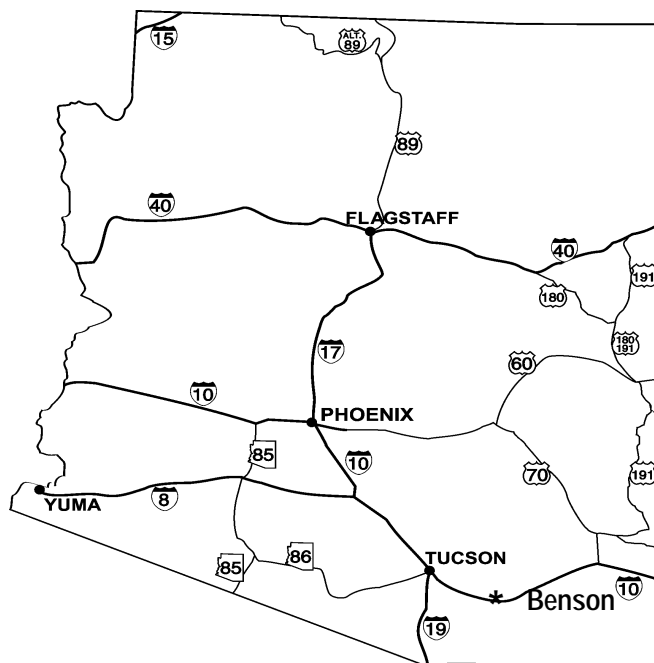
# Community Profile

## Prepared by the ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Benson serves as the western gateway to the scenic and historic attractions of Cochise County and has copyrighted the name "Home of Kartchner Caverns State Park." Located in the historical San Pedro Valley, it offers proximity to both Tucson and Sierra Vista. Its rugged mountains, grassy valleys, moderate climate, and proximity to many historical sites makes it a popular tourist attraction. The City of Benson was founded in 1880, when the Southern Pacific Railroad came through southern Arizona. Until 1910, Benson was the railroad hub of southern Arizona. It was named for Judge William B. Benson of California, a friend of Charles Crocker, then-president of the railroad.

FOUNDED: 1880  
 COUNTY: Cochise County  
 DISTANCE TO PHOENIX: 156 miles  
 HIGHWAYS: SR-90, SR-80, I-10  
 ENTERPRISE ZONE AVAILABLE

INCORPORATED: Yes - 1924  
 ELEVATION: 3,685 feet  
 DISTANCE TO TUCSON: 45 miles



## POPULATION

	1990	2000	2004
Benson	3,824	4,711	4,785
Cochise County	97,624	117,755	130,220
Arizona	3,665,228	5,130,632	5,833,685

Sources: Arizona Department of Economic Security and U.S. Census Bureau.  
 NOTE: Local sources estimate the trade area population to be 10,000.

## PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Benson is situated along several trade routes – Interstate 10, U.S. 80, state Highway 90 and the main line of the Union Pacific Railroad. AEPCO and Apache Nitrogen Products are major employers. Many residents work in Tucson or Sierra Vista. Both retail chain and specialty stores are available. The city supports a large retired population and is a winter refuge for people from colder climates. Its nearby historic and scenic sites are increasingly popular with tourists.

County Employment	2004
Educational & Health Svcs	3,800
Financial Activities	900
Government	11,550
Information	525
Leisure & Hospitality	4,000
Manufacturing	875
Mining & Construction	2,550
Professional & Business Svcs	3,550
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	6,300

Sources: Arizona Department of Economic Security  
 Figures are organized under the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS).

### Major Private Employers

AEPCO	Apache Nitrogen
Benson Hospital	Gas City
SEABHS	

### Major Public Employers

Benson Unified School	City of Benson
-----------------------	----------------

## LABOR FORCE DATA

	1990	2000	2004
Civilian Labor Force	1,322	1,475	1,668
Unemployed	101	80	83
Unemployment Rate	7.6%	5.4%	5.0%

Sources: Arizona Department of Economic Security.

Growth Indicators	1990	2000	2004
New Bldg. Permit	67	105	N/R
Taxable Sales (\$)	32,545,650	69,330,760	80,360,400
Net Assessed Valuation (\$)	10,786,085	20,335,260	27,093,333

Sources: Arizona State University; AZ Dept. of Revenue; AZ Tax Research Foundation  
 N/R: No Report

## SCENIC ATTRACTIONS

Cochise County, land of the great Apache chief Cochise and the notorious renegade Geronimo, was truly "the last frontier," subject to raids by the Chiricahua Apaches until the late 1880s. Nearby is the world famous "Kartchner Caverns State Park" and "Old Tucson's" Mescal movie site. Other attractions include: Tombstone, 20 miles from Benson; "Gammon's Gulch" Movie Set & Museum; historic Fort Huachuca, with its 1880's buildings and an Indian war days museum; the Amerind Museum which features remnants of prehistoric Indian cultures; and the Holy Trinity Monastery along the San Pedro Riparian Area are all "must see" local attractions. In addition, there are numerous mountain ranges that provide rock hounding, photography, picnicing, hiking, camping, bird watching and hunting opportunities.

## TAXES

Property Tax Rate	1990	2000	2004
Elem/High School	6.27	8.99	7.08
City/Fire District	0.47	0.62	0.65
Countywide	6.26	5.70	5.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13.00</b>	<b>\$15.31</b>	<b>\$13.42</b>

Sources: Arizona Tax Research Foundation  
 Note: Tax rate per \$100 assessed valuation.

NOTE: School district participates in Cochise Technical District (CTD).

## Sales Tax Rate

City	2.50%
County	0.50%
State	5.60%

Sources: League of Arizona Cities and Towns, Arizona Dept. of Revenue

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Benson offers a broad range of community facilities including two parks, one golf course, four tennis courts, an Olympic-size pool, a bowling alley, a library, senior citizens center, many baseball, football, track and soccer fields. There is also a museum/gallery.

### Educational Institutions

	Public	Private
Community College	Y	N
Elementary	Y	Y
High School	Y	N
Middle School	Y	N
Vocational/Technical College	N	Y

### Financial

Number of Banks: 4

### Governmental Agencies

Fire Department: Staffed City/Local Fire Department

Law Enforcement: City Police Department

**Airports** Benson Municipal Airport (E-95/elevation 3829) (Runway 10/28)  
 (4,000 ft. x 75-ft.) (paved/lighted) (Jet A/100LL fuel available 24/7)

### Medical

One community hospital.

### Hotel and Lodging Facilities

Number of Rooms: 398

Meeting Rooms: 5

Capacity of Largest Facility: 150

## Industrial Properties

Several sites with all utilities, railroad and freeway access are available. For more information contact the Benson Economic Development Committee.

## Utilities

Electricity	Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Coope	520.586.2238
Natural Gas	Benson Municipal Natural Gas	520.586.2245
Telephone	Qwest (statewide)	800.244.1111
Water & Sewer	Benson Municipal Water & Sewer	520.586.2245

Cable Providers: Yes

Cable Internet Service Provider: No

Digital Switching Station: Yes

Fiber Optics: Yes

Internet Service Provider: Yes

## Weather

Month	Average Temperature (°F)		Average Total Precipitation (Inches)
	Daily Minimum	Daily Maximum	
January	28.8	63.0	0.68
February	32.0	66.4	0.74
March	36.6	72.3	0.51
April	42.1	79.2	0.23
May	49.1	87.8	0.10
June	58.5	96.6	0.37
July	65.7	96.4	2.69
August	64.1	93.5	2.79
September	57.1	91.1	1.32
October	44.8	83.0	0.62
November	34.1	71.7	0.57
December	29.7	63.1	0.71
Yearly Avg	45.2	80.3	11.34

Western Regional Climate Center, wrcc@dri.edu. Period of record 1894-1975. Average Total Snowfall 1.8".

This profile was prepared by the Arizona Department of Commerce Communications Division in cooperation with local sources.

For further information, contact:

Benson-San Pedro Valley Chamber of Commerce  
 P.O. Box 2255  
 Benson, AZ 85602  
 520.586.2842 Fax: 520.586.1972  
 Email: info@benzonchamberaz.com  
 Web: www.bensonchamberaz.com

## ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

*Our Job is JOBS!*

1700 W. Washington, Suite 600  
 Phoenix, AZ 85007  
 602.771.1100 FAX: 602.771.1200  
<http://www.azcommerce.com/>

Reproduction of this publication for commercial use is prohibited by A.R.S. 39-121. Permission to reprint may be granted upon written request of the Arizona Department of Commerce.

Prepared on 6/2005