



In 1901, Phelps, Dodge and Company completed the Morenci Southern Railroad to connect Morenci copper mines to the Arizona & New Mexico Railroad at Clifton, Arizona, on the San Francisco River 1,400 feet below the mines. The Morenci Southern surveyors had to find a way to negotiate the 1,400-foot rise in elevation, which was accomplished by a series of five loops. The highest loop was at Morenci, followed by three loops in the canyon constructed in part with wood trestles and the final loop incorporated a tunnel. The MS was nicknamed "the cork screw railroad of America." The steep grades and sharp curves limited the MS trains to only three cars and a caboose and two hours were required for the 18-mile trip. In 1914, a switchback replaced three of the loops.

This northward view of the MS at Morenci shows the processing plant in the distance, near the end-of-track.



Closer view of the MS at the Morenci processing plant and splitting of the line near the end-of-track.