

McCain supports Rosemont, confident on San Pedro's progress

By *Bill Hess* Aug 21 2012

SIERRA VISTA — After Republican U.S. Sen. John McCain's town hall in Sierra Vista was finished on Tuesday, he spoke to the *Herald/Review* on other issues. During the interview, McCain said he sees progress between the city and the Army on Fort Huachuca in addressing the local water issue, especially in protecting the San Pedro River.

"They (the city and the fort) are doing a great job. They have made progress in the past 10 years, but still have a ways to go," he said.

Saying he hopes to see the river habitat continue to improve, McCain said it is now "in better shape." However, some environmental groups, especially the Center for Biological Diversity, contend the river is in worse shape because of the inaction of the city and the fort.

McCain met with post and city officials before the Tuesday town hall meeting.

The biological diversity center has filed numerous lawsuits or notices of intentions to sue because of what it claims are poor water management leading to the destruction of critical habitat for some species which depend on the river's flow. McCain also told the *Herald/Review* he supports the proposed Rosemont Mine in Pima County.

The future mine could be a light of economic hope — albeit a dim one — because of the state's overall economy. The mine expects to create 400 jobs, with an additional 2,000 established to support the operation.

But if the federal budget is drastically reduced because of sequestration, which is facing the country on Jan. 1, there will be far more losses in the state than gains.

"I support the Rosemont Mine," McCain said.

It makes no sense for America to have to import copper from New Guinea, Chile or Mexico, he said.

As the mine works to obtain approvals, the Senator said he knows the management will ensure the environment is protected and that necessary infrastructure, such as roads, will be built to take financial pressure off of area taxpayers.

In the national political arena Republicans and Democrats cannot seem to find a way of working together and this will have a negative impact on the country, the Senator said.

The state's senior U.S. Senator said the atmosphere in Washington, D.C., "is toxic."