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The Washington Post
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Dear Matt:

I enjoyed talking with you last night and hope I didn't overwhelm you with useless information.

You had asked for more exact dates on the negotiations lead up to the passage of the Yavapai Ranch Land Exchange legislation and whether SunCor lobbied Senator McCain for its passage. To the best of my records, here they are:

The crucial meeting at the Capitol chaired by Lori Faeth, Governor Napolitano's Policy Advisor for Natural Resources, took place on August 4, 2004. At this meeting the attendees included as well as myself and Lori:

Joseph Donaldson, Mayor, City of Flagstaff
David Wilcox, City Manager, Flagstaff
Dennis Wells, City Manager, Williams
Bill Lee, City Manager, Camp Verde

Lucy Murfitt, Senator Kyl's Office
Andy Jacobs, Senator Kyl's Office

Heather Wicke, Senator McCain's Office
Ann Begeman, Senator McCain's Office
Paul Hickman, Senator McCain's Office
Nick Matiella, Senator McCain's Office

Joanne Keene, Congressman Renzi's Office

Mike King, Prescott National Forest
Ernie Del Rio, Prescott National Forest

Out of this meeting came the compromise between the two Senators on the exchange legislation. This became S. 849, and in it, McCain included numerous protections for the Verde River, but ones that were acceptable to me and to the cities involved. Nevertheless, this bill was held at the end of the session by the Senate Democrats. Finally, the Senate substantially revised the legislation and then only allowed it as part of a package that was unacceptable to the House so it died at the end of that session.

A new bill, S. 161 was introduced in the spring of 2005, which was identical to the Senate Democrats' revised version of S.849. After more Democrat holdups it passed the Senate July 26, 2005. It passed the House after the summer recess and was signed into law in 11-22-05.

I had met with a representative of SunCor about 2003. He had absolutely no interest in any of the exchange parcels.

Then in the late summer of 2005, a real estate broker working with me had spoken to Steve Betts at SunCor and they had some interest. This came to my attention when SunCor sent me a written expression of interest on October 11, 2005, and we started discussions with them. We both signed a (non-binding) letter of intent on December 16, 2005, at which time we stopped negotiating with other parties. We negotiated with SunCor for about six months and signed a final contract on June 12, 2006.

As you can see from this timetable, Sen. McCain had finally agreed to the exchange in August, 2004. The reintroduced bill passed the Senate in July of 2005, and this was Sen. McCain's last contact with it. This was three months before SunCor entered the picture. The exchange was signed into law *before* even the letter of intent was signed in December of 2005, and more than six months before the agreement with SunCor was signed.

In summary, SunCor had not remotely entered the picture at the time Sen. McCain decided to support the exchange, and it was to be another eighteen months before they actually invested in the ranch.

I hope this is what you wanted. Please feel free to call me if you need any other information. I hope you have a chance to come back out here and visit the ranch one of these days,

Sincerely yours,

Fred

Fred Ruskin