RECORD OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

A. **Proposed Action:** Western plans to conduct maintenance work to maintain or improve the reliability and safety of electrical transmission along 17 miles of the Test Track (formerly Maricopa)-Saguaro 115-kV Transmission Line between Electrical District 5 and Saguaro Steam Plant Substations. The work includes replacing wood poles, cross arms, and knee braces in-kind at 27 structures (41/4-8, 42/4, 43/6, 44/7, 45/4, 46/6, 47/2, 49/2, 49/6, 50/2, 50/6, 50/8, 51/4, 52/3, 54/3, 55/7, 56/1 57/1-3, 57/8 & 58/2-3), because the wood poles failed stability tests, cross arms are beyond repair and arms and braces need to be changed to a more modern configuration. We will store material and equipment at Empire Substation, located at the intersection of Harmon and Toltec Buttes Road, which already has a perimeter fence and graveled surface. We will use existing access roads to bring personnel and equipment to work areas located along the transmission line. We expect to begin work on or around February 28, 2011 and finish by December 31, 2011.

These activities are proposed for the portion of the Test Track Saguaro Transmission Line located between Friendly Corners and Marana in Pinal County, Arizona. The legal description is presented in Table 1. Western's transmission line right-of-way crosses private land or Arizona State Land Department lands. The corresponding USGS topographic maps are Friendly Corners, Samaniego Hills, and Red Rock, Arizona.

Table 1. Project Area Legal Description.

Township	Range	Sections
9 South	7 East	5, 25, 36
9 South	8 East	31
10 South	8 East	1, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
10 South	9 East	3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18
10 South	10 East	15, 16, 17, 18

On the Gila and Salt River Baseline and Meridian.

B. **Categorical Exclusion Applied:** 10 CFR, Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, B1.3: "Routine maintenance activities and custodial services for buildings, structures, rights-of-ways, infrastructures (e.g., pathways, roads, and railroads), vehicle and equipment, and localized vegetation and pest control, during which operation may be suspended and resumed... Routine maintenance activities, corrective (that is repair), preventive, and predicted, are required to maintain and preserve buildings, structures, infrastructures, and equipment in a condition suitable for a facility to be used for its designated purpose. Routine maintenance may result in replacement to the extent that replacement is in kind and is not a substantial upgrade or improvement..."

C. **Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410 (b):**

1. The proposed action fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix B to Subpart D.

   a. The proposed action was reviewed for the requirements of the Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act, and all applicable Department of Energy Orders.
   b. The proposed action does not require the siting, construction, or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities.
   c. The proposed action does not disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled and unpermitted releases.
   d. The proposed action was reviewed and surveyed for impacts to cultural and sensitive biological resources. Cultural and sensitive biological resources have been determined to not be affected.

2. There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and

3. The proposal is not "connected" to other actions with potentially significant impacts, is not related to other proposed actions with cumulatively significant impacts, and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211.

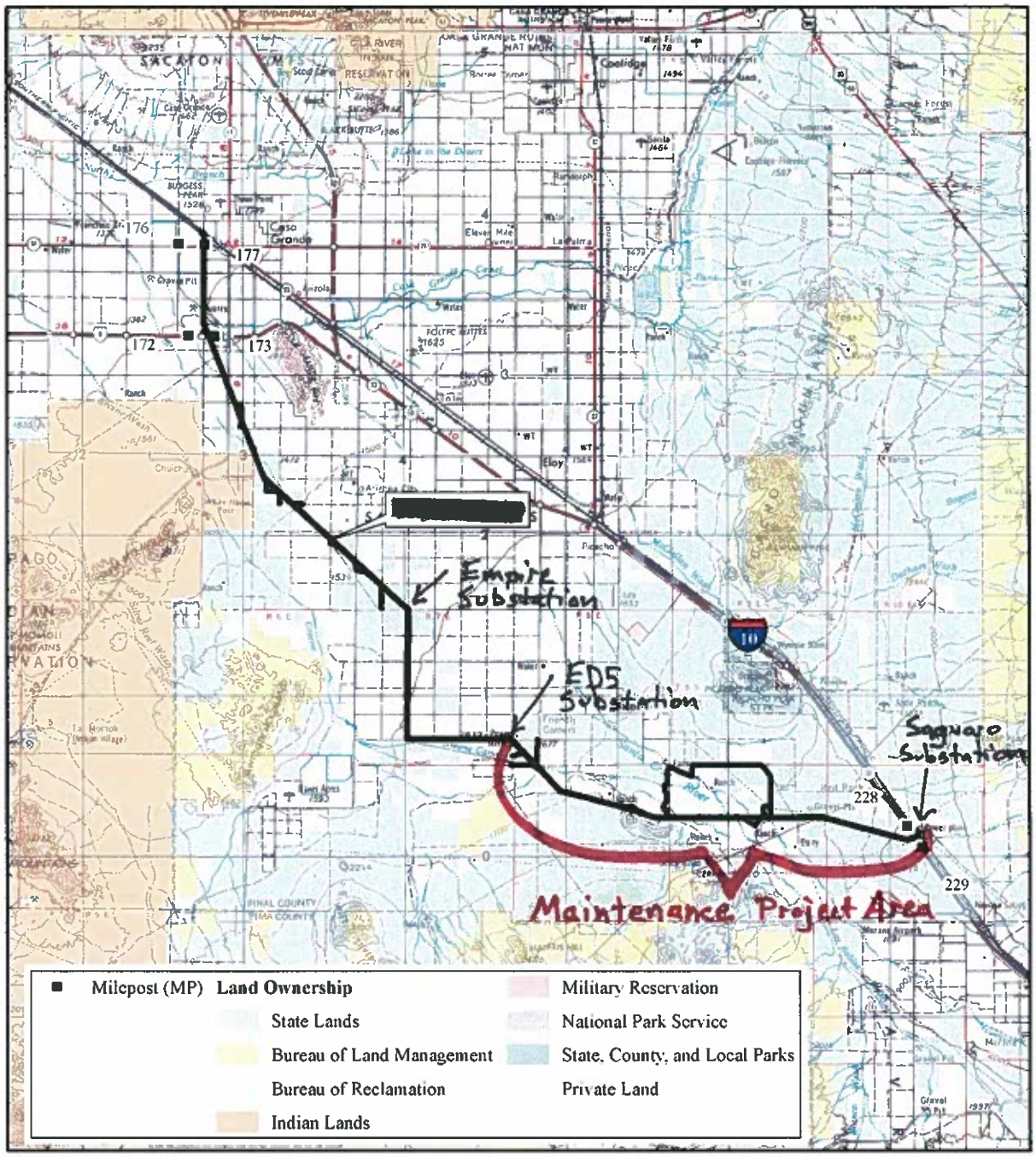
D. <u>Determination:</u> Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession (or attached) concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1A), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class of actions, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

E. <u>Special Conditions:</u>

1. Western's maintenance crews shall minimize impacts to barrel, hedgehog, fishhook, pincushion, and saguaro cactus to the extent possible. These plants are known to be present at or near Structures 46/6 and 47/2.
2. Western's crew shall avoid placing fill material in existing washes.

John R. Holt
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date 2/9/11



Data Sources:
USGS 7.5' Ajo, Ariz., 1982
USGS 7.5' Mesa, Ariz., 1979
USGS 7.5' Phoenix, Ariz., 1975
USGS 7.5' Tucson, Ariz., 1978

0 10 20
Miles

N

Casa Grande to Saguaro Portion of the Test Track (Formerly Maricopa) Saguaro 115-kV Transmission Line Maintenance and Upgrade Project
Pinal County, Arizona

Figure 1: Project Area Map