RECORD OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

A. Proposed Action: Western proposes to conduct vegetation removal between structures 0/3 and 0/4, 1/5 and 1/6, 3/1 and 3/2, 4/2 and 4/3, around structure 4/8, between structures 5/1 and 5/2 and around structure 5/4 of its Saguaro-Oracle 115-kV transmission line, within Western's existing right-of-way. Western will access the vegetation removal areas using crew trucks along the existing access roads. Western will use a front end loader with a cut shredder attachment to knock down and chip wood vegetation. The debris will be left in the right-of-way as protective ground cover. This work is necessary to maintain the safety and reliability of the bulk electrical system.

The attached map shows the project area on private land situated within Sections 13 and 15 of Township 10 South Range 10 East and Sections 16 and 17 of Township 10 South Range 11 East on the Gila & Salt River Meridian, Pinal County, Arizona. Corresponding U.S.G.S. 7.5-minute topographic is Red Rock and Desert Peak, Arizona. This work is planned to begin the week of March 21, 2011.

B. Categorical Exclusion Applied: 10 CFR, Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B,B1.3: "Routine maintenance activities and custodial services for buildings, structures, right-of-way, infrastructures (e.g., pathways, roads and railroads), vehicles and equipment, and localized vegetation and pest control, during which operations may be suspended and resumed…Routine maintenance activities, corrective (that is, repair), preventive and predictive are required to maintain and preserve buildings, structures, infrastructures and equipment in a condition suitable for a facility to be used for its designed purpose... "

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, contaminates, or CERLA-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. Determination: 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. Special Conditions:

1. If Tortoise are encountered utilize "Guidelines for Handling Desert Tortoise Encountered on Roads and Vehicle Ways" (attached).

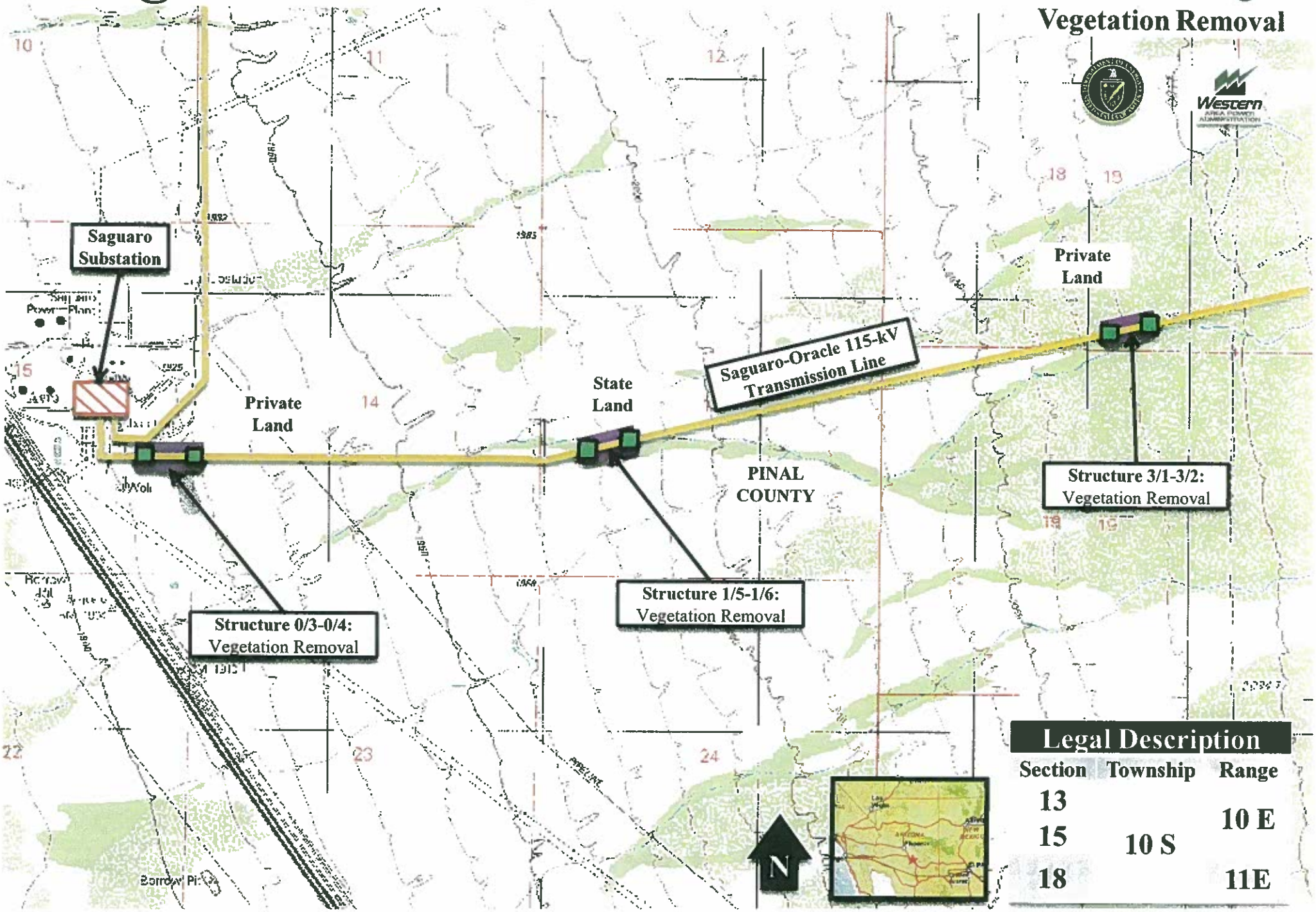
John R. Holt

John R. Holt
NEPA Compliance Officer

4/7/11
Date

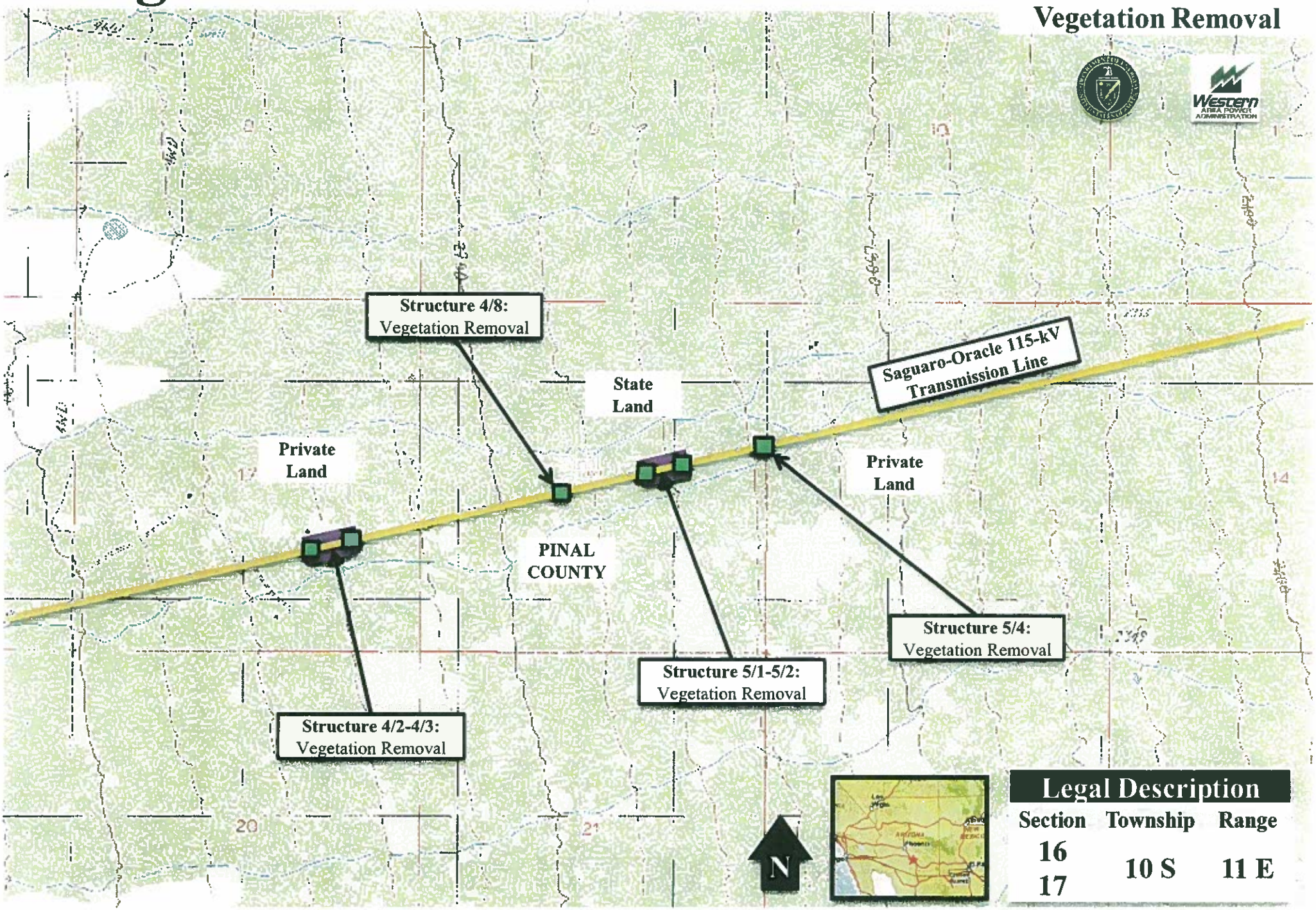
Saguaro-Oracle 115-kV Transmission Line

Vegetation Removal



Legal Description

Section	Township	Range
13	10 S	10 E
15		
18		11E

Saguaro-Oracle 115-kV Transmission Line

Vegetation Removal