RECORD OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

A. **Proposed Action:** Western proposes plans to replace hardware and poles as well as blade access roads along the Parker Blythe #1 & #2 161-kV Transmission Lines. The locations of the proposed actions are shown on the enclosed maps and tables, if other areas along the transmission lines require maintenance, we will be doing maintenance in those areas as well. We will use existing access roads and will plan to use rubber tired vehicles such as pickup trucks, bucket trucks, crew trucks and dozers to complete the job. This work is necessary to maintain the worker safety and reliability of the bulk electrical system.

The attached maps and tables show the project areas situated within San Bernardino County, Riverside County, California and La Paz County, Arizona on the Gila and Salt River Baseline and Meridian and San Bernardino Meridian. The right-of-way crosses lands managed by Arizona State Land Department, Bureau of Land Management, tribal lands and private land. The corresponding U.S.G.S 7.5-minute topographic maps are also listed in the attached tables. This work is planned to begin at the beginning of December 2009 and to be completed by the end of November 2013.

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..."

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 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.) A qualified biological Monitor will be present to conduct tortoise monitoring for the entire project. If a tortoise is found, there will be no handling.
2.) We will need a report from the monitor regarding any desert tortoise encounters.
3.) Before work can be completed on tribal lands maintenance must contact T.J. Lafoon at the Colorado River Indian Reality Office.
4.) No work outside the ROW will be conducted without surveys for sensitive plants and animals.
5.) Minimize the removal of existing vegetation within the project areas to the greatest extent possible, and salvage and replant cacti and other protected plants.
6.) Avoid Archaeology sites shown on maps, and you must have a monitor present when working near any sites.

John R. Holt
NEPA Compliance Officer

12/4/09
Date