U.S. Department of Energy
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

Submit by E-mail

Proposed Action Title: Road maintenance and brushwork along the Saguaro-Tucson 115-kV Transmission Line.

Program or Field Office: DOE/Western/Desert Southwest Region

Location(s) (City/County/State): Along the existing Saguaro-Tucson 115-kV Transmission Line in Pima County, Arizona.

Proposed Action Description:
Western proposes to conduct vegetation management and access road maintenance along the Saguaro-Tucson 115-kV Transmission Line. The project is located on private lands and lands administered by the Arizona State Land Department between structures 0/4 and 7/4. The project comprises 7.1 linear miles of transmission line with a 100-foot right-of-way. The proposed project is necessary to ensure the continuous and safe operation of the transmission system. Vegetation management will involve routine removal of all tall woody vegetation throughout the ROW corridor which has grown within the minimum safe distance of the conductors and transmission line equipment, or which impedes access to the structures. Vegetation management activities would be conducted using hand crews, mechanical mowers, and application of herbicides safe for use in waterways. All herbicide applications would be conducted by a licensed applicator. No vegetation would be treated outside of the permitted ROW corridor. The existing access roads will be improved by measures such as blading to remove existing vegetation and permit all weather access; grading; surfacing; and installation of erosion-control features, low water crossings, and water diversions, (such as rolling drain dips and water bars). A tractor dozer and pick-up trucks will be used for these improvements. No access work will be conducted within the active channel of the Santa Cruz River.
SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Documentation must be submitted to G0400 10 days prior to the project starting.
A herbicide application permit must be obtained from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality.
Herbicide applications must be conducted by a licensed applicator.
A Western approved herbicide must be used.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:
B1.3 - Routine maintenance

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of 10 CFR Part 1021.

Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

☑ The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

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

☑ The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA Compliance Officer: Lonnie Maranit Date Determined: 4.30.13

Saguaro-Tucson 115-kV Transmission Line Maintenance Project

Special Conditions

1. *Best Management Practices*

a. *Animals*: No pets will be permitted on the work site. Workers will not be permitted to feed, harm, approach, harass, or handle wildlife at any time.

b. *Trash, refuse, concrete, and other materials*: All trash and food materials will be properly contained within vehicles or closed refuse bins while on the site, and will regularly be removed from the site (at least on a weekly basis) for proper disposal. All construction refuse will be removed from the site upon completion of construction. No raw cement/concrete or washings thereof, asphalt, paint, oil, solvents, or other petroleum products, or any other substances that could be hazardous to vegetation or wildlife resources, shall be disposed of on-site or allowed to spill onto soil. Cleanup of any spilled material shall begin immediately.

c. *Minimize Standing Water*: Water applied to dirt roads and construction areas for dust abatement shall use the minimal amount needed to meet safety and air quality standards, to prevent the formation of puddles, which could attract desert tortoises and other wildlife to construction sites.

d. *Speed limit:* To minimize potential impacts to desert tortoise and other wildlife, no vehicles will be permitted to exceed 25 mph while traveling on access roads.

2. *Biological Resources:*

a. *Awareness Training:* The contractor and Western employees shall attend an environmental awareness training program prior to beginning onsite project activities. This program will include information on the biology of sensitive species potentially occurring in the project area and the terms and conditions of the environmental document for this project.

b. *Nesting Birds:* **Project activities will be conducted between October 1 and February 14** to avoid impacts to nesting, migrating, or dispersing birds.

c. *Desert Tortoise*: If a desert tortoise is found within the project area, the project supervisor will be notified immediately, project activities in that location will stop, and the tortoise will be allowed to move away on its own. No tortoises will be handled by project personnel.

d. *Burrowing owl*: Pre-construction surveys will be conducted by a qualified biologist in suitable habitat to locate and avoid active nest burrows. If an active burrowing owl burrow is observed within the work areas at any time of year, a qualified biologist will designate and flag an appropriate buffer area around the burrow where activities will not be permitted. The buffer area will be based on the nature of project activity.

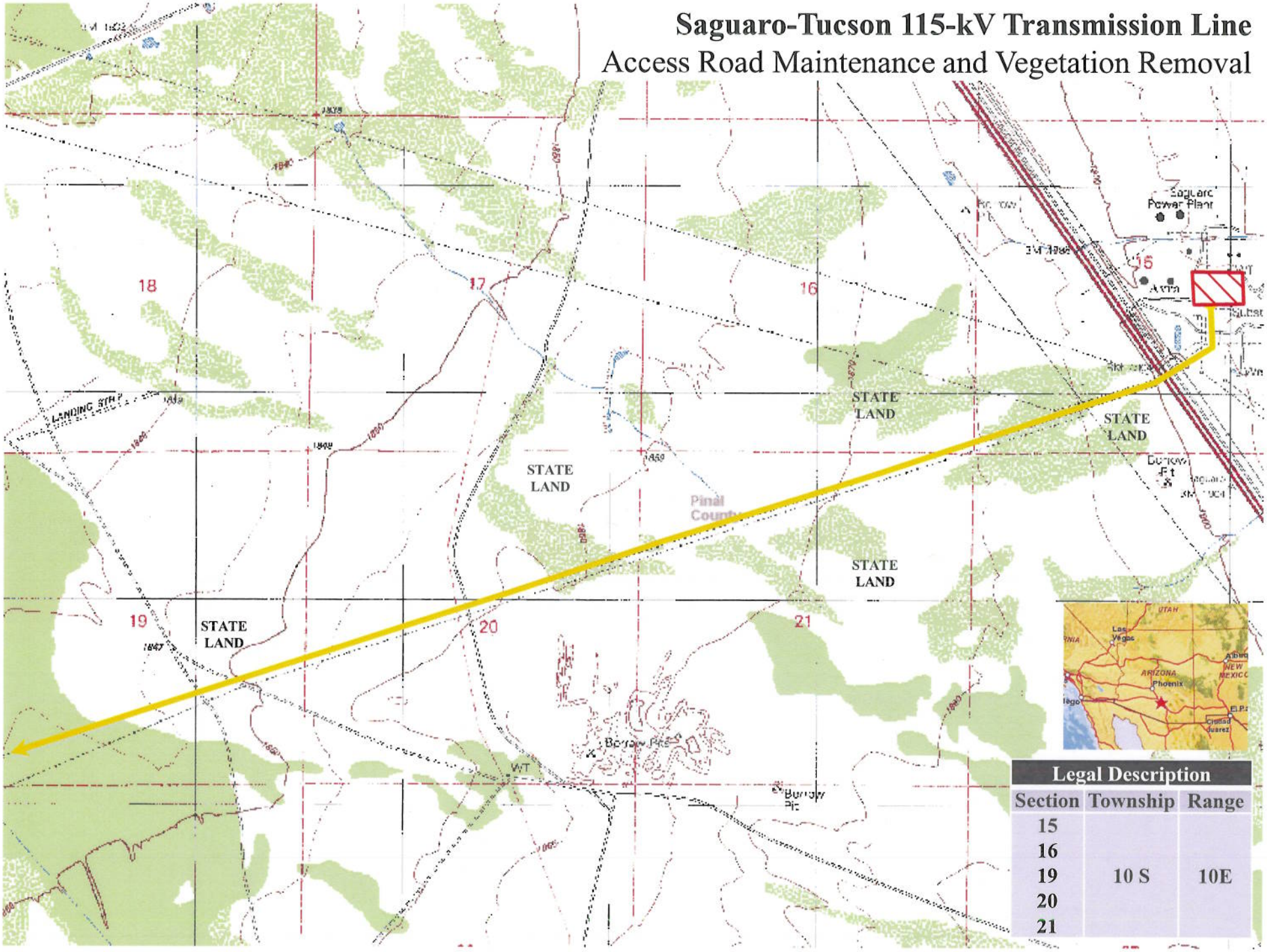
Checklist for Categorical Exclusion Determination, revised Nov. 2011

Application of Categorical Exclusions (1021.410)	Disagree	Agree	Unknown
(b)(1) The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in appendix A or B to subpart D.		X	
(b)(2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal, including, but not limited to, scientific controversy about the environmental effects of the proposal; uncertain effects or effects involving unique or unknown risks; and unresolved conflicts concerting alternate uses of available resources		X	
(b)(3) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. Segmentation can occur when a proposal is broken down into small parts in order to avoid the appearance of significance of the total action. The scope of a proposal must include the consideration of connected and cumulative actions, that is, the proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or § 1021.211 of this part concerning limitations on actions during EIS preparation.		X	
B. Conditions that are Integral Elements of the Classes of Actions in Appendix B. :	NO	YES	UNKNOWN
(1) Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.	X		
(2) Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities;	X		
(3) Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases;	X		
(4) Have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources. An environmentally sensitive resource is typically a resource that has been identified as needing protection through Executive Order, statue, or regulation by Federal, state, or local government, or a federally recognized Indian tribe. An action may be categorically excluded if, although sensitive resources are present, the action would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on those resources (such as construction of a building with its foundation well above a sole-source aquifer or upland surface soil removal on a site that has wetlands). Environmentally sensitive resources include, but are not limited to:	X		
(i) Property (such as sites, buildings, structures, and objects) of historic, archaeological, or architectural significance	X		

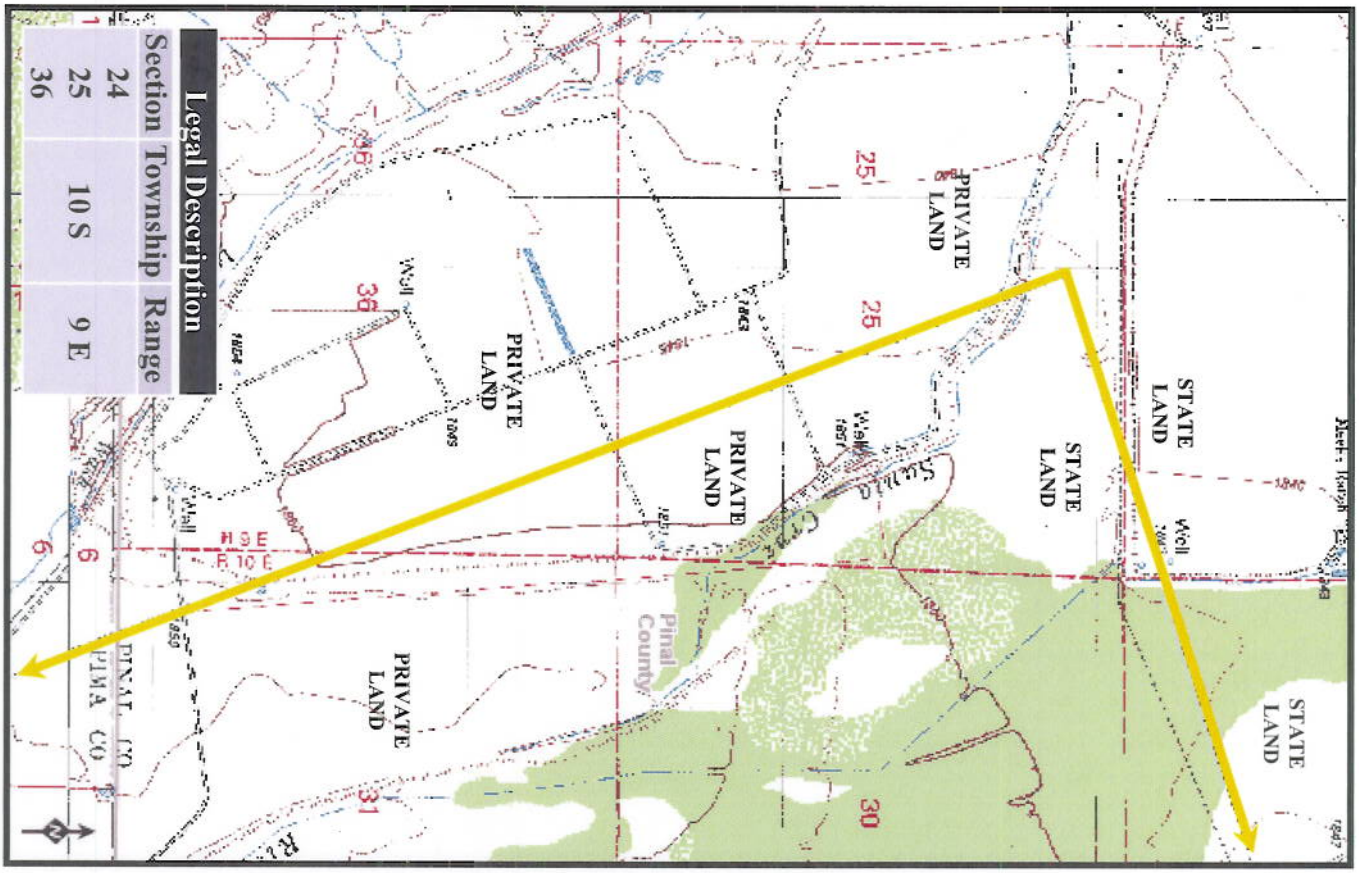
	designated by a Federal, state, or local government, or property determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places;			
(ii)	Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or their habitat (including critical habitat) or Federally- proposed or candidate species or their habitat (Endangered Species Act); state-listed or state-proposed endangered or threatened species or their habitat; Federally-protected marine mammals and Essential Fish Habitat (Marine Mammal Protection Act; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act); and otherwise Federally-protected species (such as under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act or the Migratory Bird Treaty Act);	X		
(iii)	Floodplains and wetlands (as defined in 10 CFR 1022.4, —Compliance with Floodplain and Wetland Environmental Review Requirements: "Definitions," or its successor);	X		
(iv)	Areas having a special designation such as Federally- and state-designated wilderness areas, national parks, national monuments, national natural landmarks, wild and scenic rivers, state and Federal wildlife refuges, scenic areas (such as National Scenic and Historic Trails or National Scenic Areas), and marine sanctuaries;	X		
(v)	Prime or unique farmland, or other farmland of statewide or local importance, as defined at 7 CFR 658.2(a), —Farmland Protection Policy Act: Definitions,‖ or its successor;	X		
(vi)	Special sources of water (such as sole-source aquifers, wellhead protection areas, and other water sources that are vital in a region); and	X		
(vii)	Tundra, coral reefs, or rain forests.; or	X		
(5)	Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.	X		

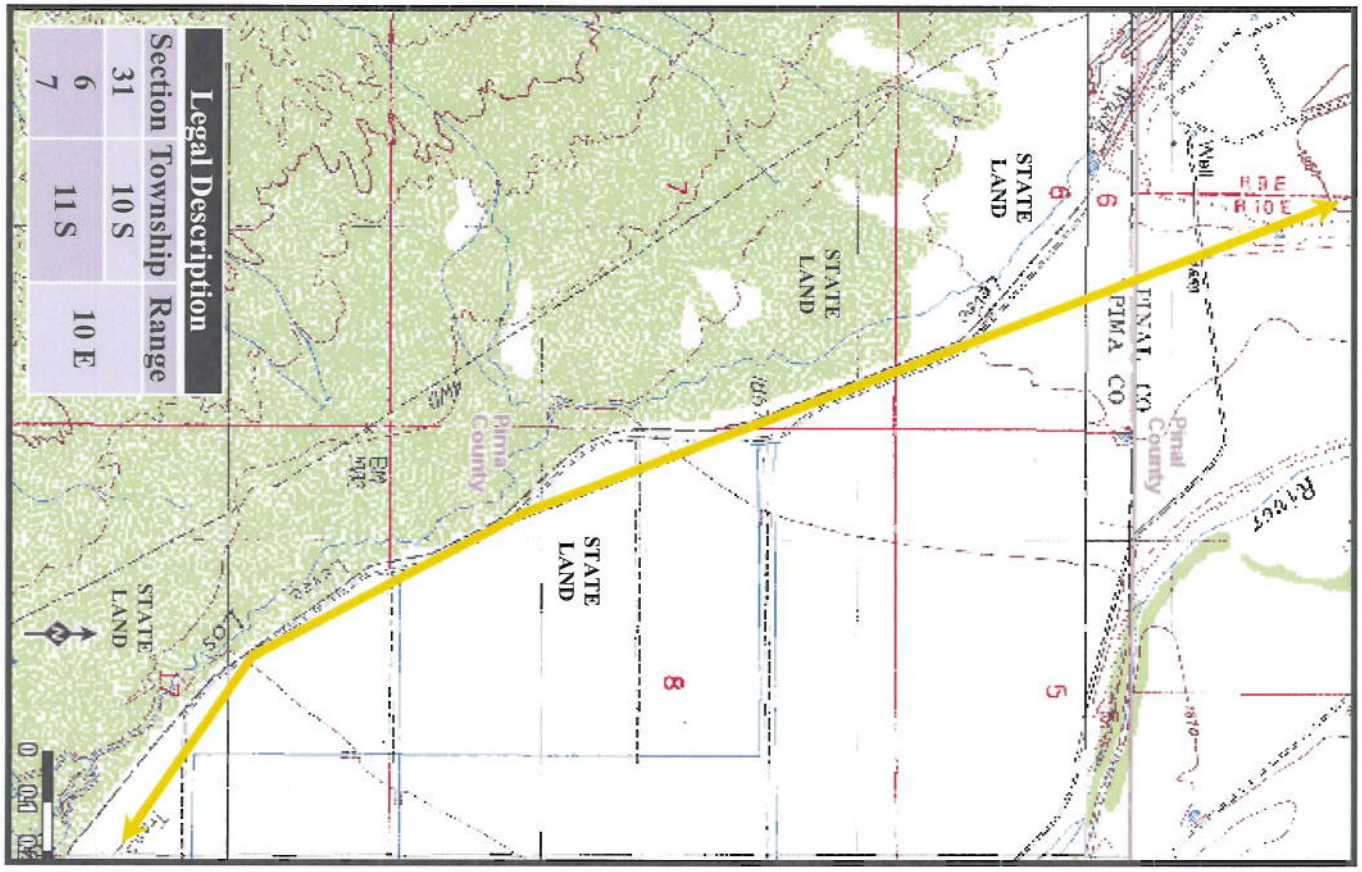
Saguaro-Tucson 115-kV Transmission Line - Access Road Maintenance and Vegetation Removal

Saguaro-Tucson 115-kV Transmission Line
Access Road Maintenance and Vegetation Removal



Legal Description		
Section	Township	Range
15	10 S	10E
16		
19		
20		
21		





Saguaro-Tucson 115-kV Transmission Line - Access Road Maintenance and Vegetation Removal