

October 2011  
DOE/EA-1665

**U.S. Department of Energy, Western Area Power Administration**  
**Finding of No Significant Impact**  
**Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project**

**Summary**– The U.S Department of Energy (DOE) Western Area Power Administration (Western) plans to rebuild a 26.6-mile-long portion of the existing Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line (Proposed Action or Project) located in Mohave County, Arizona. The existing Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line originates in Bullhead City, Arizona, at the Davis Dam Switchyard and extends northwest of Kingman, Arizona, four spans east of Mohave Electric Cooperative’s (MEC) Kingman Tap Substation, and one span west of the line’s connection to UNS Electric, Inc’s. (UNSE) 69-kV Coyote Pass–Kingman Transmission Line.

Western is the lead Federal agency responsible for preparing the Environmental Assessment (EA). The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) are cooperating agencies. A new right-of-way (ROW) authorization for the Project is required from BLM for a portion of the transmission line that crosses its lands.

The EA, titled “Draft Environmental Assessment Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line Rebuild” (DOE/EA-1665) was distributed on May 11, 2011 for pre-approval review by Federal, state, tribal, and local agencies that have jurisdiction or permitting authority for the Proposed Action , and affected landowners. In response to comments received, a final EA was prepared to clarify and correct information in the draft EA. The final EA is approved concurrently with this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Based on findings and analysis in the EA, Western has determined that, with the resource protection measures (RPMs), the Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project would not result in any significant environmental impacts. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be required. The basis for this determination is described in this FONSI.

Additional information and copies of the EA and FONSI are available to all interested persons and the public through the following contact:

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**Purpose and Need**– Western’s purpose for rebuilding the Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line is to improve the safety and reliability of providing electrical service to its customers in an environmentally and economically feasible manner. Western proposes to rebuild the existing Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line because 1) the individual line components (wooden structures, insulators, conductors) have been in service well beyond their projected service life spans, and safety and reliability have decreased due to extreme weather exposure, rot, vandalism, lightning strikes, and normal aging; and 2) the customers’ load on the line has increased considerably over the years.

The Davis Dam Substation serves as a distribution point for the power generated by Davis Dam. The Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV circuit is the only point of service for the two substations owned by UNSE and MEC, and any problems on the line require temporary outages to all. The transmission line was built around 1946 and, because of its age, requires above-normal maintenance to maintain safety and reliability. The structures’ conditions make them unsafe for climbing by maintenance personnel. Although individual structures are grounded, there is no lightning protection for the transmission line. Given the existing age and condition of the line, more frequent and longer unplanned power outages and higher maintenance costs are anticipated if the line is not rebuilt. Replacing the aging wood structures with steel monopole structures, as well as adding overhead ground wire to protect the line from lightning, would increase the reliability of the line and reduce future maintenance costs and efforts.

The access roads to the transmission line have also degraded over the years and are not suitable for use without maintenance. Many locations along the access roads are steep and have eroded over time. Repairing the access roads would enable crews to safely reach structures more quickly, resulting in less repair time and shorter customer outages.

For the BLM, the purpose of the Proposed Action is to facilitate Western’s ability to reconstruct the Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line where it exists on BLM administered public lands. The need for BLM’s action is to meet its obligations under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) to respond to Western’s application for additional existing access roads, additional ROW width between existing structures 25/2 and 25/7, and temporary use permits for laydown areas and construction areas outside of the existing ROW.

**Project Description**– Western plans to rebuild a 26.6-mile-long portion of the existing 27.3-mile Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line within the existing ROW in order to improve the reliability of the transmission service. The line has been in service well beyond its projected service life, customer load on the line has increased considerably over the years, and reliability has decreased due to natural aging, extreme weather exposure, vandalism, and lightning strikes. The western-most 0.7 mile of the existing line was rebuilt as part of the Davis Dam Switchyard in 2010.

The Project footprint of the rebuilt transmission line would be identical to the 100-foot-wide ROW of the existing transmission line and all associated access roads, with the exception of an additional requested 25 feet of ROW between existing structure 25/2 and 25/7, which is a 4,000-foot distance.

The Project involves the removal of the existing wood pole H-frame structures and conductors and installation of new “weathering” steel monopole structures (eventually turning a natural shade of brown), new conductors, new switch assemblies, and an overhead ground wire for lightning protection. In some instances, mainly where the transmission line crosses mountainous areas, three-pole weathering steel structures would be used. Short-term temporary ROW would be required for laydown areas, conductor and ground wire pulling, and tensioning and splicing sites.

The majority of the transmission line alignment is located on land administered by the BLM, Kingman Field Office and private lands. Smaller portions the line cross lands administered by the National Park Service (NPS) (Lake Mead National Recreation Area [NRA]), Reclamation, and Arizona State Land Department (ASLD). As a consequence of construction activities, ground disturbance would occur as a result of grading areas for structure placement and removal; improving existing access roads for vehicle and equipment access; and installing structures, conductors, and overhead ground wire. Project construction activities and improvement of access along the transmission line would be conducted within permanent ROW and temporary use areas. Disturbed surfaces would be restored to the original contour following construction and cleanup as required by BLM, Lake Mead NRA, or county and private owners.

**Agency Consultation and Public Participation Process**– Western initiated agency correspondence regarding the proposed Project by inviting agencies to become cooperating agencies on the environmental assessment effort. Invitation letters were sent on March 31, 2009 to the Lake Mead NRA, Reclamation, The United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps of Engineers), and the BLM. Reclamation and BLM accepted the invitation to become cooperating agencies.

Western notified interested Federal, state, and local agencies; tribes; organizations; companies; and members of the general public about the Proposed Action via initial scoping letters on August 19, 2010.

An initial tribal coordination letter was sent to eight tribes on April 30, 2009. A second letter was sent to seven tribes on May 20, 2010 to provide a status of the Project and to continue consultation. An additional tribal coordination letter was sent to six tribes on August 19, 2010. Western sent out a secondary set of scoping letters to the tribes to gain feedback about the cultural impacts of the proposed Project on March 1, 2011. Each letter contained a courtesy copy of the Draft Cultural Resources Inventory Report.

Western sent out additional coordination letters to agencies and tribes on March 25, 2011 regarding changes in design of the structures to be used for the proposed Project. On March 1 and April 7, 2011, Western sent another set of coordination letters to agencies and tribes, respectively, to gain feedback about the cultural impacts of the proposed Project.

Western distributed Newsletter #1 to public land owners and interested parties on August 19, 2010 to inform known stakeholders about the proposed Project and to solicit their input. Advertisements soliciting public input were published in *Laughlin Nevada Times* and *Mohave Valley Daily News* newspapers on Wednesday August 25, 2010. Five public responses were received as a result of the public scoping process.

Western distributed the draft EA for pre-approval review of the proposed Project on May 11, 2011 to the Federal, tribal, and state resource agencies. Copies were also placed in the Bullhead City Branch Library, Mohave Valley Campus Library, Kingman Public Library, and the Laughlin Public Library for public viewing, as well as posted on the DOE’s NEPA website and Western’s Desert Southwest Region website. Western distributed Newsletter #2 to public land owners and interested parties in July 2011 after distribution of the draft EA. Comments received were incorporated into the final EA and considered in

Western's determination of whether an EIS is required. The final EA is approved concurrently with this FONSI.

Consultation with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in accordance with procedures provided in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR Part 800, "Protection of Historic Properties") was conducted for the Project. Western made a determination of "no historic properties affected" and received concurrence on this determination from the Arizona SHPO on June 10, 2011.

**Alternatives**– DOE's NEPA regulations require that an EA include a discussion of the No Action Alternative (10 CFR 1021.362 [c]). Under the No Action Alternative, Western would not reconstruct the Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line and BLM would not issue a ROW authorized under FLPMA to Western. Western would continue to maintain and operate the Davis–Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line as it currently exists.

**Environmental Impacts**– Findings on the impacts and their significance resulting from the Proposed Action are based on information contained in the EA. In reaching conclusions about the Proposed Action's environmental impacts, Western considered RPMs and construction practices as defined in the EA. The existing environmental conditions and potential environmental impacts were identified and evaluated for the following resources: land use and ownership; biological resources (including vegetation, wildlife, threatened or endangered species, sensitive and special status species, birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act); cultural resources; visual resources; air quality; water resources; geology, mineral resources, and soils; noise; transportation and utilities; socioeconomic and environmental justice; public health and safety; hazardous materials and solid waste; energy policy; and intentional destructive acts. Cumulative impacts are also addressed in the EA.

Western has concluded that the Proposed Action would not result in any significant impacts. The basis for Western's conclusion is summarized below.

#### Land Use and Ownership

The transmission line would be constructed within the same 100-foot-wide ROW, except for the additional requested ROW, and the majority of existing access roads would be used to construct the line. Construction and operation of the Proposed Action and the new ROW authorization under FLPMA from BLM would not result in changes to the existing landowners or land uses and would not conflict with or impede the implementation of any land use plans near the Project or existing utility ROW. Furthermore, because there would be no change in land use, there would be no nuisance impacts attributable to incompatible land uses.

During construction, to ensure public safety, there may be temporary disruption to the Lake Mead and Cerbat Foothills recreation areas where they are immediately adjacent to the construction areas. There would be no changes in recreational opportunities upon completion of the Proposed Action. Operation of the Project would not increase the demand for recreation and would not conflict with, physically alter, or decrease accessibility to established or planned recreational areas. No construction activities would occur within the designated Wilderness Area. While construction activities would take place within the Black Mountain Area of Critical Environmental Concern, the Project would not conflict with allowed uses within it. Western has determined the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to land use and ownership.

## Biological Resources

*Vegetation.* Vegetation would be impacted from construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed Project. Direct impacts may include loss or disturbance of plants from blading, crushing, or other ground-based project activities. Vegetation would be impacted by installing new structures, clearing pulling sites, and widening/grading existing access roads. Vegetation removal would only occur when necessary and would be minimized by using existing roads. After construction, roads would be reclaimed to a width of 12 feet, and disturbed areas would be reseeded according to land management agency regulations and permit guidelines.

Construction activities could result in the introduction or spread of non-native and invasive species. The proliferation of introduced noxious weeds can alter vegetation composition. Western's RPMs, such as washing construction equipment prior to entering the work site, would reduce the spread of noxious weeds. Vegetation removal associated with the Proposed Action would not result in a species being listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened.

*Wildlife.* Direct impacts on wildlife species would result from constructing, operating, and maintaining the proposed Project. Direct impacts may include loss or disturbance of wildlife, or habitat, from blading, crushing, or other project activities. Increased road traffic could disrupt foraging and nesting/mating behaviors, and wildlife would be susceptible to being killed or injured by vehicles. While the Proposed Action would temporarily impact wildlife species directly and indirectly during construction, it would not result in species being listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened. To minimize impacts to migratory birds during the bird breeding season (March 1 to August 31), a pre-construction nest survey to identify active bird nests would be conducted. If breeding birds are identified, species specific spatial buffers would be employed to avoid disturbing nesting birds.

*Threatened and Endangered Species.* One Endangered Species Act (ESA) -listed species, the California condor, may occur within the Project area, however, impacts to California condors are not anticipated. It is unlikely that condors would be observed in the Project area, and while the transmission line could pose a risk of electrocution, this would not be a new hazard as the transmission line already exists and no electrocutions have occurred along the transmission line to date.

*Sensitive and Special Status Species.* Ten BLM sensitive species (Sonoran desert tortoise, banded Gila monster, western burrowing owl, ferruginous hawk, Swainson's hawk, American peregrine falcon, pale Townsend's big-eared bat, spotted bat, greater western bonneted bat, and California leaf-nosed bat) may occur within the Project area. Only one of the sensitive species, the peregrine falcon, was actually observed within the Project area. Suitable habitat was observed for the other species. Impacts to these species could occur as a result of Project activities; however, RPMs would be implemented to minimize impacts to sensitive and special status species.

*Special Interest Species.* Two special interest species (desert bighorn sheep and golden eagle) may occur within the Project area. The Black Mountains support the largest contiguous population of desert bighorn sheep in the world. To minimize potential impacts to bighorn sheep, no work would occur within bighorn sheep habitat during the lambing or rearing season (December 1 to May 31).

Impacts to golden eagles could occur from Project activities as the Project area contains suitable nesting and foraging habitat for the species, and there are active nests within ten miles of the Project. Construction of the project would result in temporary increased human activity and noise levels. No golden eagles were observed during field reviews.

*Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).* The Project area falls within the Black Mountains Ecosystem Management ACEC and two wildlife linkages (Mount Perkins-Warm Springs Wildlife Linkage and Hualapai Mountains-Cerbat Mountains Wildlife Linkage). Impacts to the ACEC and the wildlife linkages will be limited as the Project involves replacement of an existing transmission line. The Project should not impose an impediment to the biological goals and objectives of the Black Mountain Ecosystem Management Plan largely because the transmission line already exists and the majority of the impacts are temporary in nature and/or will only slightly modify that habitat.

Based on the above findings, and with the incorporation of RPMs listed in the EA, Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to biological resources.

### Cultural Resources

As a result of previous surveys and less formal efforts, 87 previously recorded cultural resources were identified within one mile of the Project area, including access roads. During the survey of approximately 832 acres of land associated with the Proposed Action, four archaeological sites, eight historic structures, and 124 isolated occurrences were identified. Representatives from the Fort Mohave Indian Tribe and the Hualapai Tribe participated in some segments of the survey. All of the sites, historic structures, and isolated occurrences are recommended as ineligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Western consulted with the Arizona SHPO, who concurred with the recommendation. Western has determined that no historic properties would be affected by the proposed action because Register-eligible resources are not present in the Project footprint and that no further preservation treatment would be needed. Western has determined the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to cultural resources.

### Native American Religious Concerns

Western consulted with eight tribes to identify natural and cultural resources within the Project area that may be important to the tribes, such as traditional cultural properties that may be potentially impacted by the Project. The tribes identified general landscape-level concerns, but had no concerns about specific Project impacts. Should any previously unidentified resources be discovered during construction, provisions have been made in the RPMs to protect such discoveries. The Proposed Action would not lead to the loss, destruction, or inaccessibility of a traditional cultural property or a sacred site. Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to Native American religious concerns.

### Visual Resources

The Project is located mostly in the BLM Visual Resource Management Classes III and IV areas, which allow moderate to high levels of change to the landscape character. The upgrading of the structures to monopoles would not pose obvious changes in the visual setting to the existing landscape. The new monopole structures would be similar to the existing structures in terms of color and line, and would be visible primarily to viewers (travelers, residents, and recreationists) within foreground-middleground distance zones (up to five miles). The new structures would therefore have a minor effect on the visual resources of the area.

Some disturbance to the ground and vegetation would occur during construction activities. Where soils are disturbed, every effort would be made to match the color to the existing environment upon completion. Excavated material would be removed from the site. Efforts would be made to match any import fill to existing ground color and to have no visible increase to Visual Resource Management areas. The effects to the immediate area would be minor or negligible and would be consistent with the

management goals of the area. Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to visual resources.

### Air Quality

Project activities that could affect air quality include use of construction vehicles and equipment, transportation to and from the site, construction/installation activities, and development or improvement of unpaved roads, dirt parking areas, and related construction sites. The primary sources of air pollution during Project construction would include construction vehicles and equipment which would produce short-term exhaust emissions including particulate matter (PM)<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), and volatile organic compounds. Construction activities may produce fugitive dust from disturbed soils including PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The principal sources of emissions during Project operation would be attributed to the vehicles used by personnel traveling along the transmission line during maintenance or repair activities.

Because these emissions would be temporary and localized, and the Proposed Action includes RPMs to abate dust emissions during construction, potential air quality impacts would not exceed Federal and state air quality standards and would be minimal. No Clean Air Act permit is required for this construction activity. Constructing, operating, and maintaining the transmission line would not alter the existing Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designation of the region and would not expose sensitive receptors to detrimental air pollution. Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to air quality.

### Water Resources

*Wetlands and Groundwater.* Since there is already an existing transmission line, Project related impacts would only occur during the construction period. The Proposed Action Alternative would not affect wetlands or riparian areas because these resources do not occur within the Project area. The Project would have no effect on local groundwater supply, because water required for dust control and/or equipment operation would come from off-site sources and would not affect the water supply. To protect groundwater quality from construction-related leaks and spills, Western or its construction contractor would prepare a Spill Prevention Notification and Cleanup Plan prior to initiation of construction activities. The contractor would also prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan in compliance with the Arizona Pollution Discharge Elimination System.

*Drainage.* The Proposed Action Alternative would impact up to 50 washes as a result of improving access roads, removing existing pole structures, and installing new structures. The majority of impacts would result from grading existing access roads. Narrow washes would require blading (instead of culverts) in order to accommodate construction traffic; washes wider than four feet would not require blading. Once construction is completed in the area, channel banks would be restored to their original topography and scarified, if necessary, to allow the existing seed bank to revegetate the bank. All of the washes impacted would qualify for the Corps of Engineers' Nationwide Permit (NWP) 12 or 14 because less than 0.5 acre of each wash would be disturbed. Disturbance would be less than 0.1 acre, the threshold for notifying the Corps of Engineers, for all but two washes. These two washes would involve disturbance of between 0.1–0.5 acre each, and Western would comply with the terms of its NWP.

*Floodplains.* The Proposed Action Alternative could impact approximately 16,000 linear feet of designated floodway areas (Zones A and AE) in the Sacramento/Golden Valley where it crosses ten washes with a delineated flood hazard zone. As many as 12 transmission structures would be removed and replaced that are within regulated floodways. In order to minimize adverse effects on these floodplains, conductors would span the washes and structures would be located outside designated flood hazard zones to the extent possible. In locations where it is not possible to replace the structure outside a

designated floodplain, Western would obtain the necessary engineering studies and permits. Western has determined the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to water resources.

#### Geology, Mineral Resources, and Soils

The effects of the Project on geologic resources would be minor and would mostly stem from grading pads and drilling holes for new transmission structures. Disturbed areas would be stabilized for safety purposes and to protect soils and geology. The structures themselves would be engineered to withstand relatively low-gravity force and low frequency of earthquakes that characterize the regional seismic hazard. Structures would not likely fail due to soil compression or expansion, but concrete foundations would have to be treated because most Project soils are highly corrosive of untreated concrete. Construction or maintenance activities would be expected to create only minor additional exposure to geologic hazards.

Removing structures along the existing transmission line alignment would cause only minor effects on soils resources because the alignment is already disturbed. Likewise, existing roads used to access existing or proposed new ROW are previously disturbed; their use would produce only minor additional erosion. However, installing new structures and new overland access would create new soil disturbance along the transmission line. At completion, pads not needed for normal maintenance would be returned to their original contour and drainage pattern.

Effects to paleontological resources could result from construction activities in the Sacramento/Golden Valley due to the presence of Pleistocene period soils and unknown or moderate fossil potential. However, the potential to unearth fossils is low throughout the rest of the Project area. Western has determined the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to geology, mineral resources, and soils.

#### Noise

Due to the rural nature of the Project area, construction and operation of the proposed Project would result in minor, short-term impacts. Temporary noise may affect recreationists, nearby dispersed residents, and residents located in the Cerbat Foothills and Golden Valley during construction of the transmission line, but would be short-term in nature. The remainder of the Project is located primarily in undeveloped or rural areas with no nearby receptors to noise.

Noise would result from transmission line construction, operation, and maintenance. During construction, noise would be generated by equipment and vehicles including cranes, trucks, and tractor graders. Noise generated during transmission line maintenance activities would include vehicles travelling along access roads and the proposed permanent ROW for structure and line inspection, and equipment and crews conducting maintenance or repairs. To minimize potential noise impacts to nearby receptors, Western or their construction contractor would comply with the RPMs associated with vehicle mufflers and engine idling procedures. Furthermore, the Proposed Action is not expected to conflict with the local noise standards or ordinances. Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact for noise.

#### Transportation and Utilities

Construction and operation of the Proposed Action would not result in any potentially significant transportation or traffic impacts. Except for the major road crossings such as State Route (SR) 68, construction would take place in undeveloped or rural areas where no traffic congestion presently exists. Short-term traffic and transportation impacts would occur during construction of the new transmission line at major road and highway crossings. Western's RPMs would ensure alternate access for the general



public, and would result in no long-term access impacts and minimal safety concerns as a result of constructing the Project. Impacts to surrounding airports and associated flight paths would not be expected from construction of the Project. Western's RPMs to inform airstrip operators of the Project would further reduce potential impacts. As a result, safety impacts to ground and air transportation from implementation of the Project would be negligible. Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to transportation and utilities.

#### Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice/Title IV

The Proposed Action is not expected to result in growth-inducing impacts, nor would it inhibit growth. Some beneficial socioeconomic impacts to local businesses would result from construction worker spending during Project construction. Because the construction workforce would be small, with no permanent migration to the area, substantial effects are not expected for temporary housing demand or public services. The Project would not impede the movement of people, goods, or services between communities and would not limit access to public facilities.

The U.S. Census Bureau data confirmed that no protected populations are within the Proposed Action area. The Project is located in primarily undeveloped desert areas, with minimal permanent residents in the immediate vicinity. No measureable socioeconomic effects or effect on minority or low-income populations are expected. Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to socioeconomic resources.

#### Public Health and Safety

Due to the remote nature of the Project area, potential impacts to public health and safety would be minimal. Project implementation would not result in significant impacts to emergency infrastructure, transportation, and public and worker safety. Resource protection measures have been identified for implementation during construction so the Proposed Action would not result in serious injuries to the public or workers in the area or interfere with emergency response capabilities or resources. During construction, standard health and safety practices would be conducted following Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) policies and procedures and Western's Power System Safety Manual.

Population density in the Project area is low, and few if any individuals would experience long-term exposure to electric and magnetic fields. There would be no increase in voltage of the rebuilt transmission line, so the magnetic field would remain the same. Due to the Project's remoteness and low population, there are no sensitive land uses such as schools and hospitals, emergency communications, or electronic health/safety devices close to the infrastructure that would be affected by implementing the Proposed Action. Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to public health and safety.

#### Hazardous Materials and Solid Waste

Hazardous materials anticipated to be used during Project construction are small volumes of petroleum hydrocarbons and their derivatives (e.g., fuels, oils, lubricants, and solvents) required to operate Project installation and construction equipment and are routine in nature. Project construction or demolition activities would not generate any hazardous emissions. No hazardous emissions or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste would be handled near sensitive land uses, such as residences. The Project would not require long-term storage, treatment, disposal, or transport of hazardous materials. The construction contractor would remove solid waste from the Project area, including the wood H-frame structures, and transport it to an appropriate facility for disposal. Western's RPMs require the contractor to complete and have a Spill Prevention Notification and Cleanup Plan on file with Western. Western requires that crews handle regulated materials under Federal, state, and local laws and leave no regulated

material on-site. For these reasons, and the implementation of the RPMs associated with the Project description, Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to hazardous materials and solid waste.

#### Energy Policy

The Proposed Action would upgrade an obsolete transmission line with a more durable transmission line requiring less maintenance and would improve the efficiency of providing power to customers. The upgraded line would reduce maintenance frequency, reduce the potential hazards from broken poles and downed power lines, reduce climbing hazards due to cracked and rotted structures, and reduce safety hazards from wood crossarm failure. The result is a substantial improvement of energy efficiency and worker safety that should continue for the projected life of the new facility.

Construction of the Project would be designed to be in compliance with Federal, state and local laws and would adhere to the RPMs described in the EA and Western's Construction Standards 13. The Project as proposed adheres to Executive Order 13212, which requires agencies to expedite permit review and completion of energy-related projects. Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not cause a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative detriment to energy policy.

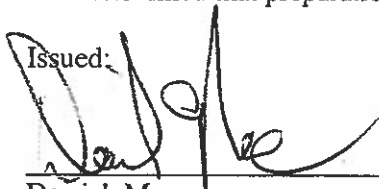
#### Intentional Destructive Acts

Electrical transmission lines, like other elements of the U.S. energy infrastructure, could be the target of vandals, terrorist attacks, or sabotage. Acts of vandalism and theft are more likely to occur than acts of sabotage and terrorism. Possible intentional destructive acts could vary from ordinary vandalism, such as people using firearms to shoot insulators, to a pre-meditated attempt to destroy one or more transmission structures with explosives, or an intentionally set wildfire intended to damage the transmission line or disrupt service to electrical customers. Environmental impacts from attacks to the transmission line would be most likely to cause local effects resulting from damage caused by the destruction of the facility as well as efforts to mitigate the impact by repair and reconstruction of damaged infrastructure. Larger scale regional impacts could result should the act result in a secondary effect, such as a wildfire ignition during particularly dry periods.

The existing Davis-Kingman Tap 69-kV Transmission Line in its current configuration is not likely to be considered a lucrative target for intentional destructive acts. The reconstruction of the entire transmission line from Davis Dam to Kingman would strengthen the infrastructure, making it even less susceptible for targeting. Western has determined that the Proposed Action would not likely increase the likelihood of intentional destructive acts.

**Determination**— The analyses contained in the EA indicate that the Proposed Action, implemented with the RPMs, is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Western has determined that preparation of an EIS is not required.

Issued:



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U. S. Department of Energy

10/10/11  
Date