

**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)  
COMPLIANCE RECORD FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS (CX)  
U.S. Department of Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

**PART I. – PROPOSED ACTION**

**BLM Office:** AZP020

**NEPA No.:** DOI-BLM-AZ-P020-  
2014 - 0016 - CX

**Case File No.:** AZA- 016812

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Telephone (AZA-016812)

**Applicant:** Qwest Corporation

**Location of Proposed Action:** Arizona, Gila & Salt River Meridian T 4 S, R 7 W, sec 31, T 5 S, R 7 W, sec 05, 06 & 08, T 4 S, R 8 W, sec 13

**Description of Proposed Action:** The holder (Qwest Corporation) request permissions to renew their existing telephone line.

Latitude/Longitude 33.2987°N, 113.0144°W ( 33°, 17', 55.3" N; 113°, 0', 51.8" W)

ROW consists of:

-one (1) direct buried copper cable, two (2) cabinets, three splice pedestals

-10 feet wide by 20,743.00 feet long

-renewal is for 30 years, all facilities are existing and is used year round.

The existing terms and conditions, which the holder is in conformance with would continue to apply.

**Part II. – PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW**

**This proposed action is subject to the following land use plan(s):** The Lower Sonoran Record of Decision and Approved RMP allows, (LR-1.3.3) propose minor linear and nonlinear LUAs will continue to be authorized on an as needed case-by-case basis in area outside of LUA Avoidance and Exclusion area.

**Decisions and page nos.:** Lower Sonoran Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan, Page 2-77

**Date plan approved/amended:** September 2012

This proposed action has been reviewed for conformance with these plans (*43 CFR 1610.5-3, BLM Manual 1601.04.C.2*).

**PART III. - NEPA COMPLIANCE DETERMINATION REVIEW**

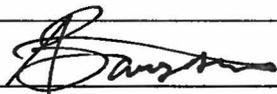
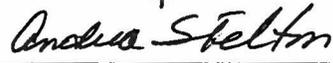
**A. The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9 BLM NEPA Handbook H1790-1 (E-9) Renewals and assignments of leases, permits, or rights-of-way where no additional rights are conveyed beyond those granted by the original authorizations. ;**

And

**B. Extraordinary Circumstances Review:** In accordance with 43 CFR 46.215, any action that is normally categorically excluded must be subjected to sufficient environmental review to determine if it meets any of the 12 Extraordinary Circumstances described. If any circumstance applies to the action or project, and existing NEPA documentation does not adequately address it, then further NEPA analysis is required.

**IMPORTANT:** Appropriate staff should review the circumstances listed in Part IV, comment and initial for concurrence. Rationale supporting the concurrence should be included in the appropriate block.

**Part IV. - EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION**

PREPARERS:	DATE:
Ben Parsons 	6/23/15
Andrea Felton 	5/29/14
Cheryl Blanchard 	6/23/15
Ron Tipton  see A.H. BSA docs	06/05/14

  
 PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST

6/25/15  
 DATE

The action has been reviewed to determine if any of the extraordinary circumstances (43 CFR 46.215(a)-(l)) apply. The project would:

(a) Have significant impacts on public health or safety.

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	
		Preparer's Initials 

(b) Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	
		Preparer's Initials 

(c) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102 (2) (E)].

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	
		Preparer's Initials 

(d) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	
		Preparer's Initials 

(e) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principal about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	
		Preparer's Initials 

(f) Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	
		Preparer's Initials <u>JB</u>

(g) Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by the bureau.

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	<i>Any ground-disturbing activity in the area of Butterfield Trail will be reviewed for Sec. 106.</i>
		Preparer's Initials <u>CB</u>

(h) Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	
		Preparer's Initials <u>RCT</u>

(i) Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	
		Preparer's Initials <u>JB</u>

(j) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).

Yes	No	Rationale:
	X	
		Preparer's Initials <u>JB</u>

(k) Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).

Yes

No

Rationale:

X

Preparer's Initials

CB

(l) Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).

Yes

No

Rationale:

X

*There is no direct disturbance with the project, therefore the spread of noxious weeds is entirely due to the action*

Preparer's Initials

**PART V. - COMPLIANCE REVIEW CONCLUSION**

I have reviewed this plan conformance and NEPA compliance record, and have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required.

**MITIGATION MEASURES/OTHER REMARKS:**

APPROVING OFFICIAL:

*DLSIL*

DATE:

*6-23-2015*

TITLE:

*Field Manager (Acting)*

Note: The signed conclusion on this compliance record is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. A separate decision to implement the action should be prepared in accordance with program specific guidance.

Proj. # BLM-200-11-239  
Case # AZA-016812  
Date: June 22, 2015

**COMMENT DOCUMENT WORKSHEET**

I, Cheryl Blanchard, in review of the above-noted Proposed Action, have the following comments:

It is understood that Qwest/Century Link has applied for a renewal of a buried telephone line near Painted Rock Dam. Legal location is T. 4 S., R. 7 W., Section 31; T. 5 S., R. 7 W., Sections 5, 6, and 8; T. 4 S., R. 8 W., Section 13.

After checking for previous inventory in AZSITE and in the Phoenix District cultural resource files, it was determined that a field survey would need to be performed along a portion of this right-of-way. No previous work had been documented along the northern segment of the line. Blanchard walked a single transect along this segment to cover the right-of-way and was assisted in these efforts by BLM staff. Field work was accomplished on September 4, 2014. Previous inventory had been performed along the long, southerly segment of the line. Cultural Resource Project # BLM-020-11-117 was the title of the report on file that documents this work. Blanchard performed inventory along this segment in the course of surveying for a fence-line in 1998. Therefore, both segments have been fully inventoried for cultural resources.

One cultural site was previously recorded. The cultural site is the Butterfield Overland Stage Route, site AZ T:15:32(ASM). Many other segments of this historic trail have the characteristics that would make it eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. When this project was initially installed in 1981, the trenching for the buried cables cut through this historic trail segment. At this point in time, the ground surface has healed so thoroughly, that the original trench cannot be seen. The trenching activities originally were very narrow, since very little of the profile of this historic trail swale was altered. The highway cut lies only about 20 meters to the south of the place where the buried cable cuts through the Butterfield Overland Stage Route segment. The Butterfield Overland Stage Route is a trail currently being studied for the feasibility of designation to National Historic Trail status. Since the buried cables have already been installed many years ago, minor physical damage was done at that time. Any future operations or maintenance activities shall be reported to the BLM prior to any ground disturbing work being done. The proposed work will be reviewed at that time for Section 106 compliance.

No impacts to any significant cultural resources are anticipated as a result of the renewal of this right-of-way. A finding of "No Adverse Effect" for cultural resources is appropriate for this action.

Recommendations:

Clearance Not Recommended

Unconditional Clearance Recommended

Clearance Recommended with the Following Stipulations

Standard Stipulations

Any cultural and/or paleontological resource (historic or prehistoric site or object) discovered by the holder, or any person working on his behalf, on public or Federal land shall be immediately reported to the Bureau of Land Management authorized officer. The holder shall suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until written authorization to proceed is issued by the authorized officer to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values.

Specialized Stipulation(s) as Follows:

1. Any ground-disturbing activities to be done in the area of these coordinates shall be reported to the authorized officer and the BLM Archaeologist. (UTM coordinates: 3655470 m N, 312440 m E; 3655460 m N, 312500 m E. Latitude and Longitude are: 33.021571, -113.008118 and 33.021491, -113.007474.

2. The ground-disturbing activities at this historic trail segment location shall be monitored by a qualified archaeologist.

Signature



Wildlife specialist comments for the Qwest Corp Telephone Line ROW (AZA-016812):

*Project Description* – Qwest Corporation requests renewal of their existing telephone/telegraph line ROW, consisting of:

- An existing buried copper line
- 2 cabinets
- 3 splice pedestals

The existing buried line ROW exists in a 10 foot wide by 20,743 foot long area located 16 miles northwest of Gila Bend, AZ (G&SR T4S, R7W, sec 31, Figure 1). The proposed duration for this ROW is 30 years. Existing terms and conditions, which the holder is in conformance with, would continue to apply.

*ESA and BLM Sensitive Species/Habitat* – Listed or sensitive species/habitat (Table 1) identified using the USFWS's Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) decision support tool (<http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>) are not expected to occur within the action area. If listed or sensitive species were to be present (e.g. Sonoran desert tortoise occupying Category 3 habitat) renewal of this existing ROW would not be expected to have an effect.

**Table 1.** USFWS-IPaC generated ESA species/habitat list (06/04/2014).

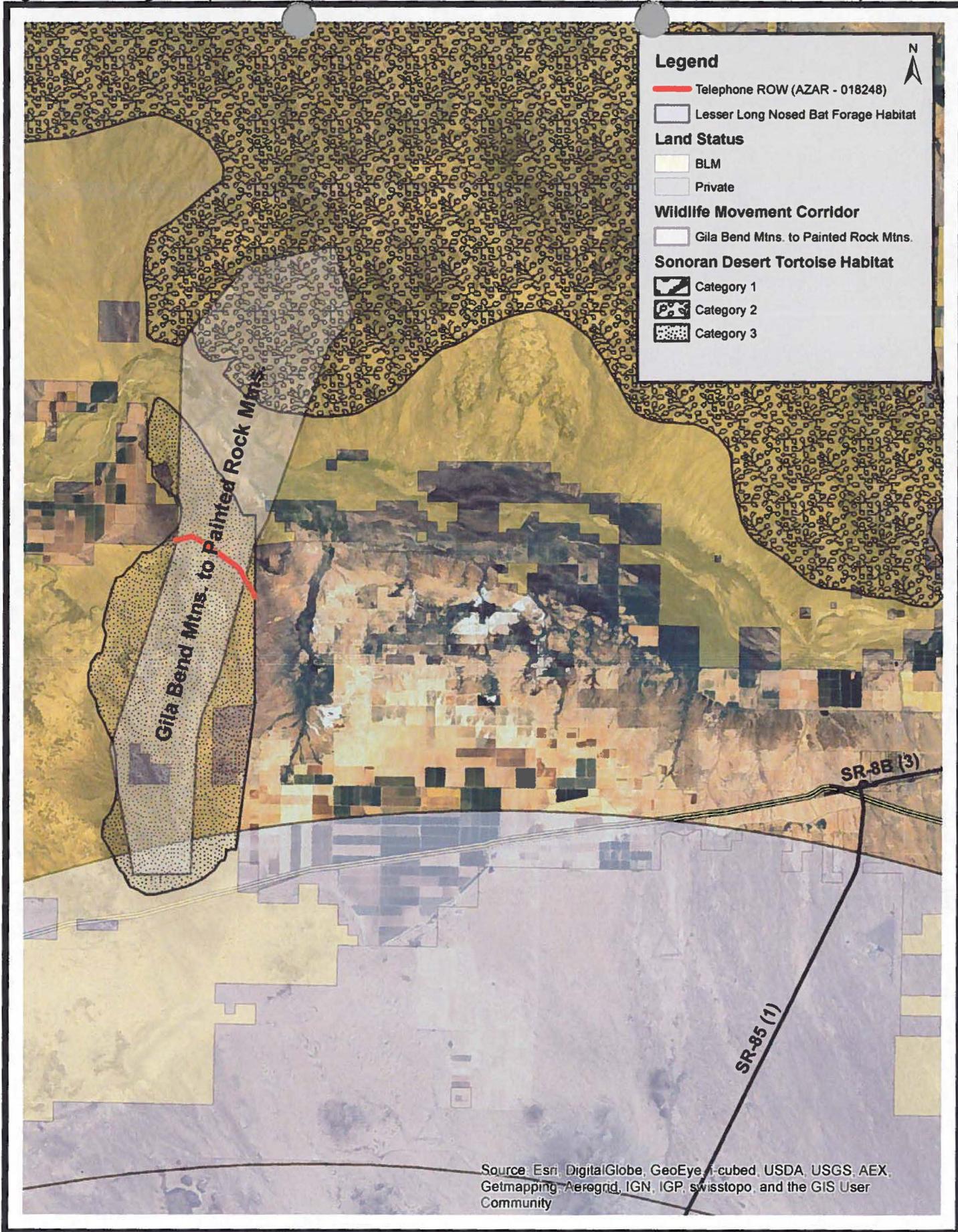
Birds	Status	Present (Y/N)
California Least tern ( <i>Sterna antillarum browni</i> )	Endangered	N
Southwestern Willow flycatcher ( <i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i> )	Endangered	N
Sprague's Pipit ( <i>Anthus spragueii</i> )	Candidate	N
Yuma Clapper rail ( <i>Rallus longirostris yumanensis</i> )	Endangered	
Yellow-Billed Cuckoo ( <i>Coccyzus americanus</i> )	Proposed Threatened	N
<b>Fishes</b>		
Roundtail chub ( <i>Gila robusta</i> )	Candidate	N
<b>Mammals</b>		
Sonoran pronghorn ( <i>Antilocapra americana sonoriensis</i> )	Endangered	N
<b>Reptiles</b>		
Sonoran desert tortoise ( <i>Gopherus morafkai</i> )	Candidate	N
Tucson Shovel-Nosed Snake ( <i>Chionactis occipitalis klauberi</i> )	Candidate	N

**Critical habitats in project area:** None.

*Determination and Rationale* – The proposed 30 year renewal of this existing telephone ROW does not involve new disturbance. Additionally, the area (10' wide by 20,743' long) occurs outside of riparian corridors. The existing ROW bisects the Gila Bend to Painted Rock Mountains wildlife movement corridor and Sonoran desert tortoise Category 3 habitat (least desirable). However, renewal of the ROW for this existing buried telephone line is not expected to affect wildlife movement or Sonoran desert tortoise individuals or habitat. The ROW is 16 miles north of the nearest lesser long nosed bat 40 mile forage buffer surrounding known maternity roosts. The lack of ground disturbance associated with renewal of this ROW and the buffer distance to the nearest documented ESA listed, candidate or BLM-sensitive species/habitat prevents action related effects. For these reasons renewal of the Qwest Corporation's buried telephone line ROW (AZA - 016812) is expected to have "*No Effect*" on ESA listed or BLM sensitive species/habitat nor is it expected to lead to a trend resulting in the future listing of any species/habitat.

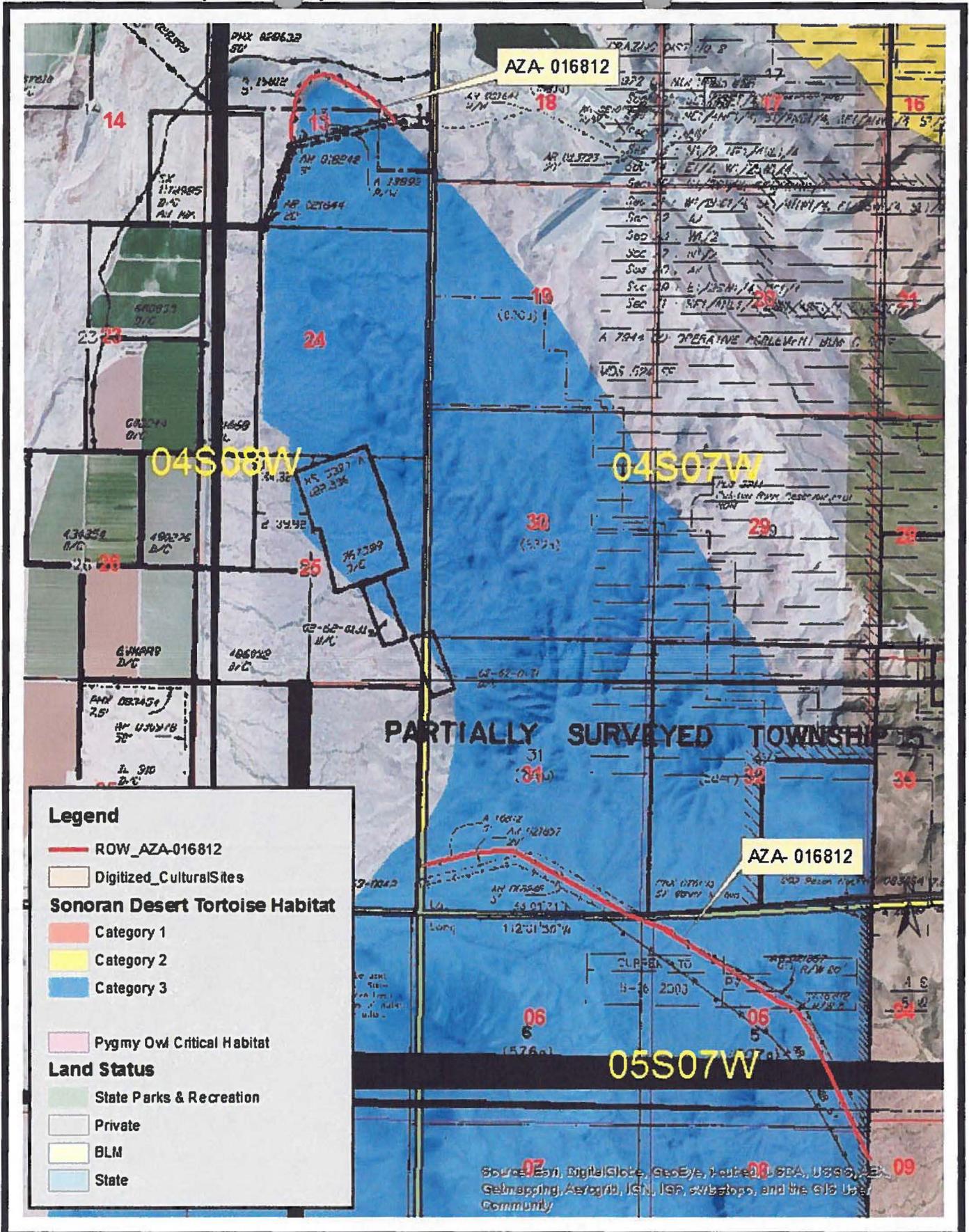
/s/ Ronald Tipton  
BLM-Wildlife  
BLM-Phoenix District (LSFO/SDNM)  
21605 North 7th Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85027

Figure 1. Existing ROW (AZA-016812) relative to documented ESA listed, candidate, or BLM sensitive species/habitat.



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management for the use of the data for purposes not intended by the BLM.





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