Canola line RT73 has been considered a regulated article under the regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because it contains gene sequences from plant pathogens. The subject canola line has been field tested since 1996 under APHIS permits. In the process of reviewing the permit applications for field trials of this canola line, APHIS determined that the vectors and other elements were disarmed and that the trials, which were conducted under conditions of reproductive and physical containment or isolation, would not present a risk of plant pest introduction or dissemination.

In the Federal Plant Pest Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 150aa *et seq.*), ''plant pest'' is defined as ''any living stage of: Any insects, mites, nematodes, slugs, snails, protozoa, or other invertebrate animals, bacteria, fungi, other parasitic plants or reproductive parts thereof, viruses, or any organisms similar to or allied with any of the foregoing, or any infectious substances, which can directly or indirectly injure or cause disease or damage in any plants or parts thereof, or any processed, manufactured or other products of plants.'' APHIS views this definition very broadly. The definition covers direct or indirect injury, disease, or damage not just to agricultural crops, but also to plants in general, for example, native species, as well as to organisms that may be beneficial to plants, for example, honeybees, rhizobia, etc.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for the regulation of pesticides under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), as amended (7 U.S.C. 136 *et seq.*). FIFRA requires that all pesticides, including herbicides, be registered prior to distribution or sale, unless exempt by EPA regulation. In cases in which genetically modified plants allow for a new use of an herbicide or involve a different use pattern for the herbicide, EPA must approve the new or different use. Accordingly, a submission has been made to EPA for registration of the herbicide glyphosate for use on canola. When the use of the herbicide on the genetically modified plant would result in an increase in the residues of the herbicide in a food or feed crop for which the herbicide is currently registered, or in new residues in a crop for which the herbicide is not currently registered, establishment of a new tolerance or a revision of the existing tolerance would be required. Residue tolerances for pesticides are established by EPA under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), as amended (21 U.S.C. 301 *et seq.*), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) enforces tolerances set by EPA under the FFDCA.

FDA published a statement of policy on foods derived from new plant varieties in the **Federal Register** on May 29, 1992 (57 FR 22984–23005). The FDA statement of policy includes a discussion of FDA's authority for ensuring food safety under the FFDCA, and provides guidance to industry on the scientific considerations associated with the development of foods derived from new plant varieties, including those plants developed through the techniques of genetic engineering. Monsanto has completed consultation with FDA on the subject canola line.

In accordance with § 340.6(d) of the regulations, we are publishing this notice to inform the public that APHIS will accept written comments regarding the Petition for Determination of Nonregulated Status from any interested person for a period of 60 days from the date of this notice. The petition and any comments received are available for public review, and copies of the petition may be ordered (see the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice).

After the comment period closes, APHIS will review the data submitted by the petitioner, all written comments received during the comment period, and any other relevant information. Based on the available information, APHIS will furnish a response to the petitioner, either approving the petition in whole or in part, or denying the petition. APHIS will then publish a notice in the **Federal Register** announcing the regulatory status of the Monsanto RT73 canola line and the availability of APHIS' written decision.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 150aa–150jj, 151–167, and 1622n; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.2(c).

Done in Washington, DC, this 9th day of October 1998.

Craig A. Reed,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 98–27828 Filed 10–15–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Discovery Basin Ski Area Expansion, Philipsburg Ranger District, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, Granite County, Montana

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; intent to prepare environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: A private consulting firm, Land & Water Consulting, Inc., Missoula, Montana, and the Forest Service will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to document the analysis and disclose the environmental impacts of the proposed action to expand the Discovery Basin Ski Area. The project area is located approximately 6 miles southeast of Philipsburg, Montana, primarily in the Summer Gulch and Echo Lake headwaters area.

The proposed expansion of the ski area would implement Phase III of the Discovery Basin Master Plan dated May 1988. A Special Use Permit will be required for the proposed action, which would authorize additional development, construction, and operation of ski area facilities on National Forest Systems lands. The Phase III expansion includes approximately 106 acres of cleared ski runs (6), 2.8 miles of new road, 2 acres of new parking, a restaurant on the top of Rumsey Mountain, expanded snowmaking capacity, and 9,400 feet of new chair lifts (2 lifts). Approximately 1,500 vertical feet of skiing would be added on the north side of Rumsey Mountain, serviced by a new chair lift. The other chair lift would be installed parallel to the existing on the south side of Rumsey Mountain in order to increase uphill skier capacity and reduce lift lines. New access roads would service the new lift station in Summer Gulch.

DATES: Initial comments concerning the scope of the analysis should be received in writing no later than November 27, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Deborah L.R. Austin, Forest Supervisor, c/o Bob Gilman, District Ranger, Philipsburg Ranger District, P.O. Box 805, Philipsburg, Montana 95858.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ed Casey, Interdisciplinary Team Leader or Bill Sprauer, Recreation Specialist, Philipsburg Ranger District, P.O. Box 805, Philipsburg, MT, 59858, or phone: (406) 859–3211.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: To accommodate the additional skiers anticipated with the new restaurant on top of Rumsey Mountain would include approximately 3,000 square feet of indoor space and 1,000 square feet of outdoor deck area. A septic system would be installed to serve the restaurant. Water would be supplied by a well in the base area and a pipeline.

The total area of National Forest lands affected by the ski area would increase from 1,970 acres to 2,220 acres if the expansion is approved.

Approximately 110 acres of the Fred Burr Roadless Area (No. 01–435) would

be affected by ski runs and the tree clearance for those runs. Proposed roads and lifts are outside the roadless area boundary.

Public participation is important to the analysis. Part of the goal of public involvement is to identify additional issues and to refine the general, tentative issues. A scoping notice describing the project will be mailed to those that have requested information on activities on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. If sufficient interest is expressed a public meeting will be held. Preliminary issues identified by Forest Service specialists include effects to wildlife habitats, visual quality, recreation, and adjacent private land.

People may visit with Forest Service officials at any time during the analysis and prior to the decision. Two periods are specifically designated for comments on the analysis: (1) during the scoping process and (2) during the draft EIS comment period.

During the scoping process, the Forest Service is seeking additional information and comments from Federal, State, and local agencies and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed action. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted concerning effects to threatened and endangered species. The agency invites written comments and suggestions on this action, particularly in terms of identification of issues and alternative development.

The draft EIS should be available for review in April, 1999. The final EIS is scheduled for completion in June, 1999.

The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice at this early stage of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp.* v. *NRDC, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978).* Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage but are not raised until after completion of the final environment impact statement may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon* v. *Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc.* v. *Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45-day comment period so substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

The Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest Supervisor is the responsible official who will make the decision. She will decide on this proposal after considering comments and responses, environmental consequences discussed in the Final EIS, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The decision and reasons for the decision will be documented in a Record of Decision.

Deborah L.R. Austin,

Forest Supervisor, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.

[FR Doc. 98–27847 Filed 10–15–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Oaks/Avery Canal Hydrologic Restoration Project, Vegetative Plantings, Iberia/Vermilion Parish, Louisiana

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of a finding of no significant impact.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; the Council on Environmental Quality Guidelines (40 CFR Part 1500); and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Guidelines (7 CFR Part 650); the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, gives notice that an Environmental Impact Statement is not being prepared for the Oaks/Avery Canal Hydrologic Restoration Project—Vegetative Plantings, Iberia/Vermilion Parish, Louisiana.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Donald W. Gohmert, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 3737 Government Street, Alexandria, Louisiana 71302; telephone number (318) 473–7751.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The environmental assessment of the federally assisted action indicates that the project will not cause significant local, regional, or national impacts on the environment. As a result of these findings, Donald W. Gohmert, State Conservationist, has determined that the preparation and review of an Environmental Impact Statement is not needed for this project.

The project involves providing shoreline erosion protection along the north shore of Vermilion Bay between Oaks Canal and Avery Canal. This will consist of planting 27,000 linear feet of shoreline using smooth cordgrass transplants. The vegetation will be placed within the intertidal zone adjacent to the shoreline.

The Notice of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been forwarded to the Environmental Protection Agency and to various federal, state, and local agencies and interested parties. A limited number of copies of the FONSI are available to fill single copy requests at the above address. Basic data developed during the environmental assessment are on file and may be reviewed by contacting Donald W. Gohmert.

No administrative action on implementation of the proposal will be taken until 30 days after the date of this publication in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: October 6, 1998.

Donald W. Gohmert,

State Conservationist.

[FR Doc. 98–27848 Filed 10–15–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–16–M

COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR SEVERELY DISABLED

Procurement List Additions and Deletions

AGENCY: Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

ACTION: Additions to and deletions from the Procurement List.