



State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Jim Doyle, Governor
Matthew J. Frank, Secretary
Ronald W. Kazmierczak, Regional Director

Sturgeon Bay Service Center
110 S. Neenah Avenue
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin 54235
Telephone 920-746-2860
FAX 920-746-2863
TTY Access via relay - 711

October 27, 2010

After nearly 75 years of service the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is poised to replace the Research Vessel Barney Devine with a new research vessel, the R/V Coregonus. The Coregonus should be ready for sea trials at ice out in the spring of 2011 and WDNR is currently exploring what to do with the Barney when she is decommissioned sometime in late 2011. Options include sale as surplus state property or donation to a non profit group interested in acquiring the Barney for historical preservation and interpretation.

The new research vessel will be built by Burger Boat Company in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, the same company that built the Barney Devine back in 1937. The Barney Devine, originally named the Albert J, was built for Ludlow White of Alpena, Michigan. In 1937 Mr. White paid Burger Boat Company \$5,500.00 for the 50 foot vessel and another \$6,620.00 to Kahlenberg Brothers of Two Rivers, Wisconsin for the Kahlenberg engine to power the Albert J.

The vessel was acquired by the Wisconsin Conservation Department (WCD) for \$8,500.00 in 1940 to be used as a law enforcement vessel. In 1941 it was renamed the Barney Devine after Chief Warden Barney Devine who had died in December 1940 while still in office. From 1940 through 1969 the WCD Bureau of Law Enforcement utilized the Barney Devine on Lake Michigan for commercial fish enforcement. During the late 1960s commercial fishing rules changed making on the water enforcement of the commercial fishing rules less important. So in 1969 the vessel was transferred to the WCD (now Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources) Bureau of Fish Management for use as a fisheries research vessel. In 1972 Fisheries had the Barney Devine (now a research vessel) repowered with a Cummins diesel engine and refitted with an aluminum pilot house.

The R/V Barney Devine is a conventional Great Lakes gill net fish tug with a steel displacement hull. It is well suited for lifting gill nets during all seasons and in all but the most extreme sea conditions on the Great Lakes. The R/V Barney Devine is typically conducting Lake Michigan fisheries gill net surveys from early May through the end of December. Included in those surveys are coordinated lake wide spring and fall gill net surveys for lake trout and burbot, as well as seasonal gill net surveys for juvenile lake whitefish, spawning lake whitefish, yellow perch, and bloater chubs. In recent years the Barney Devine has also been utilized to conduct gill net surveys for chinook salmon and as a platform for other fisheries or limnological research with other WDNR bureaus and agencies.

Although the Barney Devine has been well maintained the vessel is now nearly 75 years old. It has become technologically obsolete and the maintenance expense is expected to increase dramatically. There have been a lot of technological advances in fisheries sampling gear since 1937 and the Barney Devine is not suitable for utilizing these new techniques. Typical of steel hulled displacement vessels the Barney Devine has a top speed of approximately 10 knots and moving the vessel from Sturgeon Bay to Milwaukee for seasonal surveys can take 15-16 hours.

Recognizing the technological limitations and advancing age of the Barney Devine, WDNR Fisheries staff worked on plans to replace the vessel for over a decade. Fisheries staff worked closely with SeaCraft Design, naval architects in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin to develop a vessel design that would maintain our ability to utilize gill nets but also expand our abilities to include additional types of fisheries and limnological sampling gear. The new research vessel will be named the R/V Coregonus. Coregonus is the genus of nine species of fish native to Lake Michigan including lake whitefish, lake herring, and bloater chub.

The R/V Coregonus will be capable of gill netting allowing fisheries staff to continue all of the work that has historically been completed with the Barney Devine. Additionally, the Coregonus will be capable of trawling, and be a suitable platform for hydro acoustic work, SCUBA diving, and the deployment of other fisheries and limnological equipment, enabling Fisheries staff to expand its survey capabilities. The Coregonus is a state of the art vessel with a semi-planing hull, multiple water tight compartments, and onboard laboratory equipment. The Coregonus will have a top end cruising speed of approximately 20 knots, which will reduce transit time and increase efficiency. The design for the Coregonus incorporates many safety features and will dramatically improve vessel and crew safety.

A small committee of current and past WDNR Fisheries and Law Enforcement staff has been formed to make a recommendation to the Fish Management Board regarding what to do with the Barney when the time for decommissioning comes. With this letter we are hoping to identify potential non profit groups that would be interested in acquiring the R/V Barney Devine for historical preservation and interpretation.

If your non profit group is interested in possibly acquiring the Barney please respond in writing to Paul Peeters no later than December 10th, 2010. To help the committee evaluate your request you should articulate with as much detail as possible, your plans to display, preserve, and interpret the Barney and the important role it has played in Wisconsin Lake Michigan history. If you have any questions regarding the R/V Barney Devine or the department's plans to decommission the Barney, you can contact me by email or by phone.

Paul Peeters

Lakeshore Fish Team Supervisor
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
phone: (920) 746-2865
fax: (920) 746-2863
e-mail: paul.peeters@wisconsin.gov