

Governor launches Trade Alaska program for exports

HARBIN, HEILONGJIANG, CHINA — Gov. Steve Cowper earlier this month launched his Trade Alaska program, aimed at reshaping the economy through attracting investment and opening new export markets.

The governor announced the appointment of a working group comprised of 15 people from the business, academic and professional community.

They, along with Cowper and four other ex-officio government representatives, will make up the Trade Alaska Board of Advisors.

The board will be responsible for guiding the overall trade and export efforts of the state. Its primary task will be to create an information network to connect private enterprise with promising markets.

"Trade Alaska is an organization of Alaskan citizens who are willing to give their time to help other Alaskans succeed," Cowper said in his letter to new board members. "I believe Trade Alaska will be a major catalyst for the Alaska of the '90s and beyond."

Cowper's Administrative Order establishing the board states, "This type of activity will help to reduce Alaska's dependence on oil revenue through stimulation of the economy, and to increase the wealth and well-being of Alaskans through the creation of jobs and opportunities."

Members of the new board include:

- Lee Gorsuch of the Institute of Social and Economic Research in Anchorage.

- Dave Van Amburg, a private consultant in Anchorage.

- Becky Gay, executive director of the Resource Development Council in Anchorage.

- Jerry Meyers, a Fairbanks

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architect.

- Eric Eckholm, owner of a Juneau-based marketing and communications business.

- Terry Gardiner, a partner in Silver Lining Seafoods in Ketchikan.

- Tim Towarak, from the school district in Unalakleet.

- Sandy Cesarini, an owner of Sea Hawk Seafoods in Valdez.

- Connie Yoshimura, from Fortune Properties in Anchorage.

- Mano Frey, head of Laborers Local 341 in Anchorage.

- Dr. Alex Hill, telecommunications manager of the University of Alaska Computer Network in Fairbanks.

- Raghir Basi, director of the Center for Entrepreneurship of the Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage.

- Julian Mason, an Anchorage attorney.

- Judy Meidinger, a member of the board of directors of Koniag Corp. of Kodiak.

Ex-Officio members include:

- Gov. Steve Cowper.

- Tony Smith, commissioner of the Department of Commerce and Economic Development.

- David Rose, executive director of the Alaska Permanent Fund.

- Dr. Donald O'Dowd, president of the University of Alaska.

- Dan Dixon, director of the Office of International Trade.

The board is expected to meet about 10 times a year.