

Governor seeks lobbying, public relations firms for ANWR effort

Gov. Steve Cowper's office in Washington, D.C., is seeking a lobbying firm and a public relations company to help press the state's efforts before Congress to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration and development.

Solicitations for the two efforts were to appear in Alaska newspapers and are being sent to companies that have expressed an interest in the project. Each contract is for about \$9,000 a month and will complement the work of state officials in the Washington office.

"Congressional debate on whether to open ANWR is gearing up," Cowper said. "We'll need a full court press to convince members of Congress to permit exploration and development, and that's why we're looking for help with lobbying and public information."

The lobbying contract seeks a company with established relations with

key members of Congress, especially the leadership and members of those committees which will review ANWR legislation. The firm will be used to enhance the state's efforts and will be directed by Cowper's Washington office.

The public relations contract emphasizes contact with Outside media, and the company selected will prepare and distribute press kits and provide regular information to key media. The effort also includes coordination of a grassroots campaign to push for ANWR development.

Written proposals for both contracts are due by June 8 to John Katz, director of State/Federal Relations and head of Alaska's Washington office. Proposals will be reviewed and selected by a panel headed by Katz.

Cowper strongly supports opening ANWR to oil exploration and development.