

Audit/ Kelso surprised by action

■ From B-1

lawyers and courtrooms," Jewell said. "It's a wise and prudent investment."

But George, Senate co-chairman of the Legislative Audit Committee, said Fort James was looking at a much larger judgment, and the DNR stepped in to help the company with a "preemptive strike."

"The people of the Fox Valley have been subjected to damage of many of their natural resources by this company, and now some people feel they are being ripped off by the DNR," he said.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service last month estimated overall compensation costs in the range of \$178 million to \$333 million.

The price tag is related to public compensation for environmental damage caused by polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs. The potentially cancerous chemicals, used by paper companies in a de-inking process, were released into the river from 1957 to 1971.

Rep. Carol Kelso, Assembly co-chairwoman of the Audit Committee, said she met with George on Thursday to discuss potential audits and the agreement between the state and Fort James never came up.

"I was flabbergasted to hear about this," she said. "I don't know where he's going or what he's looking for. It sounds like he doesn't know the campaign is over."

Kelso, R-Green Bay, said that if George is concerned that illegal closed meetings took place he should talk to Attorney General Jim Doyle rather than the Legislative Audit Bureau.