



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

My 'Outdoors Report' Offers News for N.y. Sportsmen

PATTY RITCHIE October 31, 2011

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Last winter, I was approached by an avid hunter who had undergone a knee replacement operation. He's recovered from the surgery and is walking fine, but since the medical procedure, he's chosen to stop hunting because he's not certain he can haul a deer out of the woods on his own.

With more veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with permanent injuries, I think it's important to help hunters of all ages to stay active and to enjoy the outdoors despite various kinds of disabilities. That's why I introduced S. 5230, a bill that would allow disabled hunters to use ATVs to get to their favorite hunting and fishing spots on state land.

It's just one of the bills that I highlight in my new "Outdoors Report," which includes information about a host of ways I'm working to support sportsmen and encourage more New Yorkers to enjoy the outdoors.

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With more people staying active later in life, helping hunters and anglers to enjoy their outdoor recreational pursuits, even if they have mobility issues, seems like a common sense approach to expanding disability rights for veterans and non-veterans alike.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that hunting and fishing has a \$1.8 billion impact across New York State's economy, and over 700,000 New Yorkers are issued hunting and fishing licenses every year. That's why outdoor recreation is a key part of my legislative agenda.

A few of the bills I've been working that are featured in the report include:

- **Heroes Sporting License** – This new law, which I helped pass, simplifies the rules for transferring a lifetime sporting license to a relative of a member of the Armed Forces who dies in combat (S.3764-A);
- **Veterans' Fishing Clinics** – This new law, which I cosponsored, authorizes free fishing clinics for disabled veterans, where no fishing license is required (S.656-A);
- **Fishing Schools** – Waives the license requirement for participants in a fishing class sponsored by a school or college (S.794);
- * **Protecting Gun Owners' Privacy** – This bill, which I cosponsored, would protect gun owners' privacy by limiting release to the public of personal information contained on gun license applications (S.2488-B);
- **Lifetime Sportsman License** – Allows disabled veterans to purchase reduced fee, lifetime licenses (S.193);

- **Right to Hunt** – An amendment to the State Constitution that I cosponsored that would guarantee our right to hunt, fish and trap (S.2382-A);
- **NY Fishing Trail** – A bill I cosponsored seeks to promote fishing and fishing tournaments as a way to encourage tourism (S. 552), and
- **Coyote Season** – Expands the hunting season from Oct. 1 to May 31 for coyotes, who are increasingly killing and harassing deer, rabbits, turkey and other small game (S.2486).

If you'd like to know more about what I've been doing to promote outdoor sports, [Order Your Copy of my Outdoors Report](#), or call my office in Watertown at 782-3418.