



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## A Safer, More Successful Hunting Season

PATTY RITCHIE October 16, 2012

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### **CLICK HERE TO TAKE THE 2012 SPORTSMEN'S SURVEY**

While many people across the state are missing the sunny skies and warm temperatures, there's another part of the population that's welcoming the cool weather and shorter days with open arms: sportsmen. Hunting and fishing are two of the most popular forms of outdoor recreation in New York State. In fact, nearly 700,000 New Yorkers, and more than 50,000 people from out of state take to our forests, streams and fields every season to take advantage of the wide variety of terrain and wildlife we have to offer. Not only are hunting and fishing great pastimes, they are economic drivers too; responsible for generating more than \$1.5 billion every year.

Being a hunter myself, I'm always looking for ways to improve the experience for sportsmen. That's why I called on outdoorsmen from across Central and Northern New York, to share their thoughts on hunting and fishing in our state through my 2012 Sportsmen's Survey.

Nearly 1,300 weighed in, offering their opinions on everything from crossbow regulations to gift cards that could be used to pay for sportsmen's fees.

Results of the survey indicated that 81 percent of respondents use a rifle or shotgun when hunting, and an overwhelming majority, 84 percent said they typically hunt deer.

Here are some more of the survey's key findings:

- 61 percent of sportsmen supporting the use of crossbows during the regular archery season
- 2 percent of people express opposition for lowering the junior hunting age below the current 12 year-old minimum
- 66 percent support DEC's adjustment of this year's hunting calendar in the Northern Zone to avoid dates late in December
- 58 percent support granting sportsmen permission to use motorized access to state land in the Adirondacks
- 64 percent of participants support DEC relaxing its rules on bait fish, such as minnows, to allow people to catch their own bait
- 80 percent support a law I sponsored that would require the DEC to offer "gift cards" that could be used to pay sportsmen's fees

Sportsmen also left me a number of their own suggestions. To read those comments, [click here](#). To take a look at the full survey results, [click here](#).

### **CLICK HERE IF YOU'D LIKE TO TAKE THE SURVEY**

I'd like to thank the sportsmen who took the time to participate in my survey (and if you're a sportsman who didn't participate, I still welcome your thoughts. You can voice your opinion by [clicking here](#)). I look forward to using your suggestions make the hunting and fishing opportunities in New York State, not only

more successful, but safer too. As you know, a big part of the outdoors experience is making sure hunters stay out of harm's way. Before the next time you head out, I encourage you all to view the Department of Environmental Conservation's Hunting Safety page, which can be found [here](#). Best wishes for an enjoyable and safe hunting season!