



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

## New law bans invasive and destructive feral pigs

BETTY LITTLE October 23, 2013

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State Senator Betty Little announced legislation she sponsored banning the importation and possession of Eurasian boar, known as feral swine, was signed into law by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo on Tuesday, October 22.

Senator Little had worked closely with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and environmental organizations, including the Adirondack Council, to develop and build support for the measure.

“When we talk about invasive species, asian clams, zebra mussels and milfoil come to mind, not wild pigs,” said Senator Betty Little. “But many upstate counties, including in the North Country, have reported feral swine and these animals are highly destructive posing a threat to livestock, wild animals, native plants, crops and orchards. Addressing this issue now will save money and property.”

“Invasive wild boars have already damaged Adirondack Park farms and forests and they are a serious threat to the park’s environmental health and economic future,” said Adirondack Council Executive Director William C. Janeway. “We commend Senator Elizabeth Little of Queensbury for sponsoring and promoting this bill in conjunction with the Assembly. We thank Governor Andrew Cuomo for signing it into law.”

A 2012 USDA study on feral swine in New York concluded that, “breeding populations are thought to be a result of escaped swine from shooting preserves and breeding facilities.” The removal of 35 boars in Clinton County beginning in July 2011 cost the DEC and a division of the USDA \$68,000 or more than \$2,600 per animal.

Eurasian boars are difficult to contain due to their size and aggressive nature. Eurasian boars mature in 6 to 10 months and can breed up to twice a year, with litters averaging 6-8 piglets.

The new law immediately prohibits the importation, breeding or release to the wild of Eurasian boar, prohibits the possession, sale, distribution or transportation of Eurasian boar effective on September 1, 2015, and authorizes the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to adopt rules and regulations necessary to implement and administer this new section of law.

The measure also adds a section to the Environmental Conservation Law providing a definition of "Eurasian boar" that specifically excludes domesticated pigs.

Fines of \$500 would be imposed for the first and second violations of the law with penalties increasing to \$1,000 or more for subsequent violations.

Other groups supporting the legislation include the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York, the Nature Conservancy, Environmental Advocates of New York, Catskill Mountainkeeper, Humane Society and ASPCA.