



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Getting Hooked on Fishing in Cny, Nny

PATTY RITCHIE July 14, 2014

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Whether it's on the mighty St. Lawrence River, Lake Ontario, Sandy Pond, or any of the other many bodies of water that dot our region, there's not much that's better than casting your line on a summer day.

Not only is fishing a way of life here in Central and Northern New York, it's also a major economic driver; helping to reel in \$1.8 billion annually for our state. While this industry helps to create jobs and has a significant impact on our bottom line, there's still plenty of room for growth and countless opportunities for attracting even more sportsmen to our region.

That's why I'm pleased to have secured \$150,000 in special funding to support fishing tournaments and boost tourism in our region. This funding will help to promote 15 upcoming fishing tournaments, including nine in St. Lawrence County, four in Jefferson County and two in Oswego County. Not only will it help to encourage more people to take part in our local tournaments, it will also help to raise awareness of the fantastic recreational opportunities available in our region.

This special funding is just one way I'm helping to improve the outdoors experience for anglers and encourage newcomers to try the sport. Here are a few of the other ways I'm

working to support sportsmen:

- Supporting the allowing of fishing licenses to run for a year from date of purchase instead of expiring at end of season;
- Rolling back the Legislature's 2009 increase in fees in an effort to encourage more people to try fishing;
- Supporting \$6 million in State Budget funding to repair and upgrade fishing access; and
- Increasing the number of statewide free fishing days from two to eight.

New York is home to thousands of lakes and ponds, as well as tens of thousands of miles of rivers and streams. Whether you're an experienced angler or have yet to pick up a pole, this summer, I encourage you to get out and explore the many natural resources throughout our state.