



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## World Class Fishing on Lake Ontario Setting Records

SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE September 28, 2018

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### Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Anglers across the northeast already know the secret. Thanks to some record breaking fishing this summer, the rest of the country is taking notice too. Lake Ontario is the place to catch that once in a lifetime, trophy fish.

Recently, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) shared some data showing that recreational fishing for trout and salmon on Lake Ontario has been “outstanding” along the entire New York shoreline.

The DEC measures fishing success by what is known as “catch rates”—or, the amount of fish caught on each boat trip. During the spring and summer, the catch rate for Chinook Salmon set a record at 227 percent higher than the average for 2013-2017. For the same period, the catch rate for all trout and salmon types was more than 37 percent higher than the previous records.

In addition, the grand prize at the Spring Lake Ontario Counties (LOC) Trout and Salmon Derby went to Oswego, where an angler came up with a 28.1-pound Chinook salmon.

When fishing is this good, it is a tremendous asset to all our communities. When anglers visit our bodies of water to fish, it benefits our hotels, gas stations, marinas, stores and other small businesses. In New York State, sport fishing generates roughly \$1.8 billion in annual economic activity, as well as supports nearly 17,000 jobs. Lake Ontario alone brings in \$112 million in value.

As the calendar flips to fall, fishing in our region will only get stronger. Our rivers—the St. Lawrence, the Oswegatchie, the Black River, the Oswego River and the world-famous Salmon River will continue to attract anglers.

These world-class fishing opportunities are something I have been extremely proud to support over the years, with funding—more than a half a million dollars to support local tournaments and national ones that increase tourism throughout our region. That support also includes a measure that would create a gift card for hunting and fishing licenses (S.754), as well as a bill (S.1467) to authorize special access to hunting and fishing grounds on state land for handicapped individuals.

I highly encourage new and experienced anglers to visit the one or more of the world-class waterways in our region for a fun-filled adventure. For more information on fishing in New York, you can visit the DEC website at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html>.