



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Anchors Away! Ritchie Gets Ok for Early Dredging at Sandy Pond Channel

PATTY RITCHIE June 7, 2012

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### **Longer Boating Season as Work Starts Month Sooner Than Planned**

State Senator Patty Ritchie announced good news for boaters and residents in the area of Sandy Pond in Oswego County.

Working with residents and county, state and federal officials, Senator Ritchie has won approval for an early start to dredging the sand-choked channel that connects the pond to Lake Ontario, adding a full month to the summer boating season.

“As the weather gets warmer and more boaters head out on the water, it’s important we clear this channel, to make sure they do so safely and easily,” said Senator Ritchie.

“By opening up this waterway, we’re not only ensuring boaters are kept safe, we’re also investing in our tourism and fishing industries—both critically important to the local economy—and adding to the summer

fun for so many local boaters who can now get out on the water sooner than ever,” Senator Ritchie said. Sandy Pond is the site of one of the only freshwater sand dunes in the Northeast, and also one of the most active sportsmen’s communities in the region.

This year, low water levels, a lack of run-off and few ice banks last winter on Lake Ontario all combined to make the channel to Lake Ontario nearly impassable for many boats, and made navigation hazardous for those that could traverse the channel.

Dredging was to begin after the Sandy Pond Channel Maintenance Association’s (SPCMA) permit date of July 15’ but with Senator Ritchie’s help, the group is now expected to start work as soon as Monday.

With the summer boating season quickly approaching, the SPCMA called on Senator Ritchie to support their request for authorization to dredge earlier than the permit date. Permission from the Army Corp of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of State was necessary.

“The Sandy Pond Channel Maintenance Association would like to thank Senator Ritchie for her help with getting the necessary permit to dredge earlier than scheduled,” said Cathleen Goodnough, the group’s president. “It’s critical for us to get the channel cleared as soon as possible, to ensure that boaters can navigate our waters safely.”

Senator Ritchie thanked Sandy Creek Town Supervisor Nancy Ridgeway, the Army Corp of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, state DEC Commissioner Joseph Martens, and Dave Bimber of the DEC’s Division of Environment Permits, Secretary of State, Oswego County Legislator Margaret Kastler and other local officials who helped the SPCMA move forward with their project.

Photos and more information about Sandy Pond channel and the dredging operation are available at the [SPCMA’s website](#).