



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## **Ritchie Secures \$150,000 for Local Fishing Tournaments**

Patty Ritchie

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ISSUE:

- [Recreation and Tourism](#)
- [Hunting and Fishing](#)

### **Funding Will Help Promote Events, Raise Awareness of Region's Waterways**

State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced she has secured \$150,000 in special funding to support fishing tournaments and boost tourism in the Central and Northern New York regions. The funding will support 15 tournaments, including nine in St. Lawrence, four in Jefferson and two in Oswego County.

Included in the funding is support for the 2014 BASS Eastern Divisional Championship, which will take place in September in Waddington as well as funding for the NYS BASS Masters tournament, which will be held in August in Ogdensburg.

“Here in Central and Northern New York, our rivers, lakes and streams are phenomenal natural resources that not only offer world-class opportunities for fishing, they also attract tourists to our area, boosting our local economy and creating jobs,” said Senator Ritchie.

“I’m thrilled to be able to provide this funding to our local fishing tournaments in an effort to help them get the word out to anglers and raise awareness of the fantastic recreational opportunities our region possesses.”

Local leaders are praising Senator Ritchie’s efforts to promote fishing and help raise awareness of our region’s waterways:

"Senator Ritchie's \$30,000 grant will help us welcome back the Bassmasters Elite Tournaments to Waddington and help us market the St. Lawrence River as one of the best places for bass fishing in North America," said Waddington Mayor Janet Otto Cassada.

"Senator Ritchie’s grant will help Ogdensburg host the New York State Bass Tournament and put our community on the map as one of the premier fishing destinations in the nation," said Ogdensburg Mayor William Nelson. "Promoting our waterfront will help us bring anglers and their families to our stores, our restaurants and our lodging establishments, helping us to create new jobs and revitalize our economy."

“Used for everything from fishing to boating, the St. Lawrence River is one of our greatest natural resources and I’m pleased that Senator Ritchie was able to secure the funding necessary to encourage even more people to visit our river and take advantage of all we have to offer,” said Justin Taylor, Clayton Town Supervisor.

“Every year new visitors come to fish on Sandy Pond—and they can’t believe what a fantastic spot it is. We can’t thank Senator Ritchie enough for this funding, which will help to draw even more anglers and other tourists to our local community,” said Lee Harvey, President of the Sandy Pond Sportsmen's Association.

“When it comes to fishing, Oswego County is truly a world-class destination and tournament fishing here attracts serious anglers from all over the northeast and mid-Atlantic states. Funding provided by Senator Ritchie should help us bring even more participants to these very popular events and assist in our efforts to encourage even more tourists to pay a visit to our region, check out our outdoor recreational opportunities and support our local economy,” said David Turner, Director of Oswego County Community Development, Tourism & Planning.

Senator Ritchie’s announcement comes in advance of “Free Fishing Weekend,” an event that will take place from June 28-29 allowing New York residents and visitors fish for free without a license in any of the state’s 7,500 lakes and ponds or 50,000 miles of rivers and streams.

Senator Ritchie has been a strong supporter of New York State’s \$1.8 billion fishing industry by supporting the allowing of fishing licenses to run for a year from date of purchase instead of expiring at end of season, a roll back of the Legislature’s 2009 increase in fees in an effort to encourage more people to try the sport and \$6 million in State Budget funding to repair and upgrade fishing access. Additionally, Senator Ritchie also supported increasing the number of statewide free fishing days from two to eight; a change that is part of Governor Cuomo’s NY Open for Fishing and Hunting initiative.

Tournaments receiving funding include the following:

### **St. Lawrence County**

City of Ogdensburg: NYS BASS Masters and NYS Junior Bass Masters: \$12,500

Village of Waddington: BASS Eastern Divisional Championship and BASSmasters Elite Tournament: \$30,000

St. Lawrence River Walleye Association: \$5,000

St. Lawrence Valley Sportsmen's Club: \$5,000

Black Lake Ice Fishing Derby: \$5,000

Chippewa Bay Ice Fishing Derby: \$2,500

St. Lawrence County Chamber Carp Tournament: \$10,000

### **Jefferson County**

Henderson Fishing Tournament: \$10,000

Clayton Fishing Tournament: \$10,000

Cape Vincent Fishing Tournament: \$10,000

Lyme Fishing Tournament: \$10,000

### **Oswego County**

Town of Sandy Creek (Sandy Pond Sportsmen's Association): \$10,000

Oswego County Tourism Fishing Tournament: \$30,000