



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Expanding Opportunities, Trail by Trail

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### Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

It's summertime, and that means getting outdoors. And, for more than 100,000 people statewide, getting outdoors means hitting the trail on your ATV. Recently, I proposed plan that would encourage more people to take advantage of all our region—and our state—has to offer. Under my proposal, a statewide ATV trail would be created; enhancing the riding experience and giving riders new opportunities to explore woods, trails, communities and other places with family and friends.

Funded with existing registration fees for more than 100,000 ATVs currently in the state—including 13,800 in Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties—under my plan at least \$1 million per-year would go towards building a new, integrated trail system that would boost the Upstate economy by

drawing tourists from surrounding states. In other states like Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Maine, similar trail systems have generated hundreds of millions of dollars for local economies.

In addition, the proposal also includes a component that would allow for the use the increasingly popular side-by-side ATV models, which are currently banned in New York State—the only state with such a law. A rider education program, designed to better improve safety on the trails and promote stewardship of trails and the surrounding environment is also included in the plan.

While the legislation to push this plan forward did not come to a vote during the 2015 Legislative Session, I'm fully committed to advocating for its passage in 2016. However, I need your support. If you're in favor of expanding recreational opportunities, boosting local businesses, drawing more tourists to our state and creating jobs, I invite you to sign my petition in support of my plan to create a statewide ATV trail. To sign, please [click here](#).

As someone who enjoys riding ATVs, I know there's no better way to get outside and explore all our state has to offer. As state senator, I'm looking forward to advocating for more—and better—riding opportunities that will increase fun and enjoyment for riders as well as boost our state's economy.