



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie Calls for Classification of Newly Acquired Adirondack Lands that Promotes Tourism, Outdoor Recreation

PATTY RITCHIE December 29, 2016



State Senator Patty Ritchie is calling on the New York State Adirondack Park Agency (APA) to recommend that over 20,000 acres of recently acquired land be classified in a way that would allow it to be used for recreational activities, which in turn would boost tourism, create jobs and attract more people to Northern New York.

Earlier this year, the state completed its largest Adirondack land acquisition in over a century when it purchased the Boreas Ponds Tract in Essex County from the Finch, Pruyn &

Company paper company. The APA is currently in the process of weighing how to recommend the lands be classified.

In a letter sent today to the APA, Senator Ritchie called on the agency to pursue a classification that would strike a balance between promoting economic activity through outdoor recreation and protecting New York's natural beauty.

"From snowmobiling and boating to hiking and snowshoeing, opportunities for outdoor recreation in New York State—and especially in places like Adirondack Park—are second to none. It's these activities that allow people of all ages, many of whom reside in my district, to experience the beauty of nature, take in the fresh air and get active," said Senator Ritchie in her letter.

"Equally as important is the fact that New York's natural resources and the opportunities they support for outdoor recreation are major drivers of our economy, generating billions of dollars annually, attracting tourists and creating jobs in communities throughout our state. With the Boreas Ponds Tract, New York State has a great opportunity to tap into the potential this land has for further increasing economic activity and attracting tourists, while at the same time preserving the beauty of this special region of the Empire State."

Senator Ritchie's letter also pointed to the fact that the lands already have existing infrastructure that could be used for a variety of recreational activities.

"As you are aware, the property was used in previous years for commercial purposes, and as such, the land already has infrastructure—including over 50 miles of roads and bridges—that today could be used for snowmobiling, hiking, cycling and other outdoor activities by people of all ages and abilities," she added.

“Should the state pursue other alternatives—namely classifying the property largely as Wilderness—many would be prevented from accessing the lands, namely families with children, the elderly, disabled individuals and others who are not able to walk long distances.”

The APA will accept comments on the classification of the Boreas Ponds Tract until December 30th and then will make recommendations to the Governor.

A copy of Senator Ritchie’s letter can found by clicking on the PDF link at the top of the page.