



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Senator Ritchie's Community Spotlight: The Salmon River Fish Hatchery

SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE September 27, 2019

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

All across New York State, you can find waterways known for world-class fishing. We happen to have one of the very best right in our own backyard, the Salmon River.

Anglers from across the country make it a point to spend a day, or even a week in Oswego County to try to reel in the type of salmon or trout you just cannot find most anywhere else. This destination has resulted in a significant boom for the Central New York economy. Not

only do we see successful fishing industry businesses such as fishing guides, river and lake charters, bait shops and more, but also restaurants, stores and motels are constantly full during the fishing season.

One of the biggest reasons for the success of the area's fishing industry is the nearby Salmon River Fish Hatchery. Each year, the hatchery stocks more than 100 local, public waters—including Lake Ontario—with more than 3.5 million trout and salmon species.

Operated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Salmon River Fish hatchery also offers visitors the chance to learn about the region's fish, its waterways, and the local environment. People can also see the actual fish that will one day populate the water, from their various life stages, to the spawning process, to the collection areas. Today, it draws tens of thousands of guests annually.

That shows just how critical it is that we invest in this facility and in turn, the entire fishing industry. The more we can continue to draw in people from around the world—the more we help our communities and businesses thrive. The latest numbers show the hatchery has an economic impact of more than \$86 million dollars.

Last fall I took a behind-the-scenes tour of the facility's inner workings and learned more about the hatchery's operations and special features while visiting with various staff members. I was also witness to some of its other major needs.

It was because of that visit, that I was recently able to secure a round of funding, totaling \$1.4 million for the hatchery to not only enhance the visitor experience, but also ensure it can help populate the local waters for decades to come. Funding secured will help the hatchery purchase equipment to improve the spawning process, as well as upgrade the visitors' center.

I look forward to seeing the impact these improvements will have on the facility, which truly is the NYS DEC's flagship hatchery. In the meantime, the hatchery is now open to the public, with self-guided tours and tours for groups, which can be arranged in advance. I encourage you to visit this important facility, and learn more about the critical role it plays in the success of our area's fishing industry.