



# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

No. 1882

H.P. 1253

House of Representatives, May 5, 2025

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**Resolve, Directing the Department of Environmental Protection to  
Conduct Rulemaking Regarding Significant Vernal Pools**

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Received by the Clerk of the House on May 1, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative CLUCHEY of Bowdoinham.  
Cosponsored by Senator TEPLER of Sagadahoc and  
Representatives: ANKELES of Brunswick, BELL of Yarmouth, CAMPBELL of Orrington,  
DOUDERA of Camden, GERE of Kennebunkport, GOLEK of Harpswell, GRAMLICH of Old  
Orchard Beach, Senator: CARNEY of Cumberland.

**Sec. 1. Department of Environmental Protection to amend rules. Resolved:**

That the Department of Environmental Protection shall amend its rules under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 38, section 480-BB to enhance protections for significant vernal pools. The rulemaking must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Updating definitions to include "significant vernal pool buffer" as the portion of the critical terrestrial habitat within 100 feet of the spring or fall high-water mark of the vernal pool depression;

2. Updating the habitat management standards for significant vernal pool habitat to include no disturbance within the significant vernal pool buffer;

3. Updating the habitat management standards for significant vernal pool habitat so that critical terrestrial habitat bisected by property boundaries is afforded the same protections as properties where vernal pool depressions are present; and

4. Adjusting dates related to drying under significant vernal pool habitat identification criteria to July 15th for vernal pools located in northern Maine and July 1st for vernal pools located in southern Maine.

Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

## SUMMARY

This resolve directs the Department of Environmental Protection to amend its rules under the Natural Resources Protection Act regarding enhanced protection for significant vernal pools. This rulemaking must include:

1. Updating definitions to include "significant vernal pool buffer" as the portion of the critical terrestrial habitat within 100 feet of the spring or fall high-water mark of the vernal pool depression;

2. Updating the habitat management standards for significant vernal pool habitat to include no disturbance within the significant vernal pool buffer;

3. Updating the habitat management standards for significant vernal pool habitat so that critical terrestrial habitat bisected by property boundaries is afforded the same protections as properties where vernal pool depressions are present; and

4. Adjusting dates related to drying under significant vernal pool habitat identification criteria to July 15th for vernal pools located in northern Maine and July 1st for vernal pools located in southern Maine.