



TOWN OF KENNEBUNKPORT, MAINE
~ INCORPORATED 1653 ~

Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Maine State Legislature
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

May 5, 2025

Subject: Support for LD 1882 – Rulemaking for Significant Vernal Pools

Dear Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

I am writing to express my support for LD 1882, "Resolve, Directing the Department of Environmental Protection to Conduct Rulemaking Regarding Significant Vernal Pools." This legislation is a crucial step toward closing loopholes in current rules that ensure the protection of Maine's significant vernal pools.

Vernal pools provide essential breeding grounds for amphibians, including wood frogs, spotted salamanders, fairy shrimp and support a diverse array of wildlife. Despite their ecological importance, these significant vernal pools are often overlooked when development is proposed on a site given that the law does not recognize the 250' buffer across property lines. I have seen this firsthand with proposed development pressure in the rural area of Kennebunkport where there have been building permit applications proposing housing within the 250' buffer of a significant vernal pool that was on the other side of a property line therefore did not count as disturbance. LD 1882 would ensure that appropriate regulations are established to safeguard these critical natural resources by allowing for a 100-foot buffer that cannot be disturbed with the 250' critical terrestrial habitat that allows the continued practice of 25% disturbance around the entire buffer.

By directing the Department of Environmental Protection to conduct rulemaking, LD 1882 will help establish clear guidelines for identifying, preserving, and managing significant vernal pools similar to the current practices of Shoreland Zoning that recognize protective buffers past property boundary lines. This will not only benefit Maine's biodiversity but also provide landowners and developers with the necessary framework to balance conservation with responsible land use.

Given the trends of increase development pressure in environmentally sensitive areas, I urge the committee to support LD 1882 and advance its passage to protect Maine's natural heritage for future generations. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Galen L. Weibley
Director of Planning & Development
Town of Kennebunkport