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LD 1882

As a child growing up in the early 80s, I spent a lot of time in the woods exploring the changes that each new season brings. In the spring, I was always excited to come across the small ponds that would appear once the snowpack melted. These pools were always brimming with life while the rest of the forest was still waking up from a long winter. I loved watching water striders glide effortlessly across the water and trying to get close to frogs before they disappeared beneath the surface.

It wasn't until I was a senior in high school and took a science elective that I learned that these small bodies of water that brought me such joy were known as vernal pools and that they were a critical part of a healthy forest ecosystem. I spent an entire semester mapping, exploring, and studying how vernal pools provide essential breeding grounds for insects and amphibians. I learned that even though vernal pools are short-lived each year, they play a significant part in the life-cycle of many species. Not only are they an important breeding ground and hatchery, but the woods surrounding a vernal pool becomes a habitat for these species as well.

Being introduced to the importance of vernal pools as a high schooler gave me a greater appreciation of the complexity of a forest ecosystem. When hiking through the woods, many people would just see a vernal pool as an unremarkable depression filled with water, but when you take the time to explore them you realize that they are teeming with life. That is why I feel it is so important to support LD 1882 and give state-recognized Significant Vernal Pools the protection that they need in order to ensure the environmental health and well-being of the Maine woods.