

March 1, 2010

Dear Cumberland Landowner:

In spring 2009, the Town of Cumberland began the process of mapping and developing an inventory of potential vernal pools in our community. The project is part of a two-year study funded through a grant from Maine Audubon and Toyota, and in response to a State of Maine requirement to begin regulation of “significant” vernal pools.

Last year, you were notified that one or more *potential* vernal pools exist on your property. Most landowners took advantage of this free assessment program conducted by trained, volunteer Cumberland residents. Approximately 25 volunteers visited over 150 potential vernal pools last spring collecting data and counting wood frog and salamander egg masses. Phase II of the project will take place this spring, and between mid April and Mid May, volunteers will visit each pool twice to collect data. The volunteer assigned to your property will contact you to let you know when he/she will visit your property.

The enclosed brochure describes vernal pools, their importance in our ecosystem, and the State requirements in more detail and we encourage you to take a moment to read it. A few other points regarding the project are listed below:

- There is no charge for the assessment and the Town inventory will expedite any development process by providing a state-accepted map of significant vernal pools.
- This assessment project is strictly voluntary and you can elect not to participate by returning the enclosed postcard. However, if a potential vernal pool exists on your property and you opt out of the study, the State will consider any potential vernal pool to be “significant” and the property owner will be responsible for demonstrating otherwise at the property owner’s expense and possibly delay any development project.
- If you are interested in finding out where the potential vernal pool are located on your property, you can view the maps on the Cumberland website.
- If you have any questions, please e-mail vernalpools@cumberlandmaine.com or contact Town Manager, William Shane at 829-2205 or wshane@cumberlandmaine.com .
- If you would like to become a vernal pool volunteer, please send an e-mail to the vernal pool e-mail address above.

Thank you for participating in this important project and we look forward to providing a summary of the data when Phase II is complete.

Sincerely,

Sam York, Chairman
Cumberland Lands and Conservation Commission