

Vernal Pools in the Watershed

Race Against Time

Vernal pools form in low lying areas, have no permanent outlet, and are usually fed only by snow melt and rain runoff. Most vernal pools dry up by mid-spring to summer.

Vernal Pools are temporary in nature yet support critical breeding sites for several rare and endangered species.

Life in a vernal pool is a race against time to grow to maturity to then move upland in the forest before the pool dries out. Amphibian eggs only need water for a few months of the year to grow to adulthood. And here, they are safe from being eaten by fish.

Protecting Vernal Pools

Vernal pools are just one of the important habitats that are being protected by the Division of Water Supply Protection, or DWSP.

Vernal pools are located and identified during the spring and the Agency maintains accurate and detailed records of those pools to keep them in an undisturbed state.

Land immediately surrounding the pool is critical forest floor environment. The forest is shaded with abundant leaf litter and coarse woody debris for foraging and hibernation of adult amphibians.

Because this habitat extends beyond the pool, DSWP follows the Best Management Practices and all regulations for Certified Vernal Pools. This includes maintaining a 15-foot no-cut zone, a 100-foot shade zone, and a 200-foot low ground disturbance zone around each possible vernal pool. All potential vernal pools, whether Certified or not, are treated as vernal pool habitat areas with all of the same protections.

April 19



April 26



May 17



June 7

