

## **Potential Vernal Pool Questions for Consultants**

### **Investigator Qualifications**

- What is your training & experience in vernal pool identification?

### **Hydrology**

- Are there any seasonally flooded wetlands or watercourses on the property?  
(Vernal pools typically have a seasonally flooded hydrologic regime. *If there are no seasonally flooded wetlands or watercourses on the property, there probably are no vernal pools there, and it is not necessary to ask the remaining questions.*)
- If a seasonally flooded wetland or watercourse is present, for how long do you believe it retains water in most years? (Most vernal pools retain water for a minimum of two months in the spring and early summer.) What is the basis of this conclusion?

### **Investigation Date(s) and Level of Effort**

- On which date(s) and for how long did you inspect each seasonally flooded wetland or watercourse?

### **Investigation Methods & Results**

- If you inspected the seasonally flooded wetland or watercourse when it held water, did you:
  - wade into it? If so, what were the average and maximum water depths?
  - sample it with a dip net? If so, approximately how many samples did you take?
  - perform a cover search of forested areas within 500 feet of it for salamanders and wood frogs?
  - wear polarized sunglasses? (These help to reduce glare and enhance the visibility of the water column.)
  - observe amphibian adults, egg masses or salamander larvae or frog tadpoles; hear wood frog choruses; or see fairy shrimp?
  - identify any amphibian larvae that were present? Did you rear them for positive identification?
- If you inspected the seasonally flooded wetland or watercourse when it was dry, did you:
  - observe any of the following dry season vernal pool indicators:
    - water marks on tree trunks
    - woody vegetation on raised hummocks
    - algae or moss draped on branches or logs
    - gray water-stained leaves
    - sparsely vegetated basin depression
    - fingernail clams or caddisfly cases
  - perform a cover search in and/or near it for amphibian metamorphs (recently metamorphosed juveniles)

### **Conclusion**

- What is the basis of your conclusion that the property does/does not contain a vernal pool(s)?