



# 2010 New Hampshire Envirothon Aquatics Cover Letter

## Dear Participants:

This letter will help prepare you for the aquatics section of this year's New Hampshire Envirothon competition. Previous aquatics tests have included the following concepts:

- ✓ Assessing water quality and stream flow data using tables and graphs;
- ✓ Map interpretation, especially topographic maps (be able to figure out which way the water flows and the basic map symbols and characteristics);
- ✓ Macroinvertebrate identification – this is a basic ID, we don't ask for the names but you should have a general knowledge and understanding of the organisms and biodiversity; and
- ✓ Sources of nutrients and other pollutants, pressures of development, and how to remediate pollution problems (a.k.a. Best Management Practices).

Questions often refer to on-site visual aids (such as trays of insects), topographic maps, tabular and graphical data, etc. Be sure to answer each question thoroughly and provide an explanation for your answer when applicable. It is to your advantage to answer each question to the best of your ability, as we give partial credit for acceptable answers. Our test is designed to see how well you apply your knowledge to support your conclusions. We recommend that teams involve all team members to complete the entire exam in the time given.

## Protection of Groundwater – Background Information

Do you know the saying, “Out of sight, out of mind”? This saying applies to groundwater ... it is the forgotten resource! Unlike lakes and rivers, groundwater is not visible and it's not easy to track. It may take months or years to identify pollution, and by then the source may be gone.

Groundwater is important to people and natural systems for a variety of reasons. Many people rely on groundwater as a source of drinking water (about 60% of New Hampshire residents use groundwater.) Lakes and rivers receive groundwater inputs. In years of drought, groundwater discharge will keep streams and rivers flowing.

This year's New Hampshire Envirothon Aquatics test will include some questions specific to groundwater pollution. Read through the following resources carefully.

We will tell you more about the test structure at the training day. We hope to see you all there!

Good luck to you all,

*The New Hampshire Envirothon Aquatics Team*