

## **Vt. State treasurer visits Pownal fire pond**

### *Staff report*

Wednesday July 17, 2013

POWNAL -- State Treasurer Beth Pearce was in town Tuesday to view a fire pond the town received money to clean out after it was rendered useless by Tropical Storm Irene.

According to a statement released by Pearce, Pownal received \$11,000 in Title III funds to have silt removed from the pond, which is located at the Pownal Elementary School. The Bennington Rescue Squad also received Title III money for equipment it lost in the storm, which caused historic levels of flood damage to the state.

"I am pleased my office was able to facilitate the reimbursement of more than \$25,000 to the Town of Pownal and to the Bennington Rescue Squad for emergency services related to flooding caused by Tropical Storm Irene," said Pearce. "We want to utilize every funding option available to assist Vermont communities in making a full recovery. I especially appreciate the work of Rep. Bill Botzow (D-Pownal/Woodford) and other legislative, town and emergency officials, to work quickly to identify qualified expenditures so that we could take advantage of these available funds."

In July of last year, Pownal Select Board Chairman Stephen Kauppi said the pond, used by the Pownal Valley Fire Department, had become a mud hole. The board authorized to have pond repairs paid for through a capital fund, while former Auditor Clint Hutchins would seek sources of reimbursement.

According to the Treasurer's Office, the Bennington Rescue Squad received \$14,181 to cover the cost of personnel, and equipment lost in the storm. Pearce's office said five Vermont towns received \$110,000 in Title III funds.

"I appreciate that the Treasurer found a way to help a small rural community like Pownal with a much needed safety and infrastructure repair. Her resourcefulness in notifying communities about these funds is a great help to our towns as we continue with our recovery efforts," said Botzow in a release.

The Title III funds are from the Secure Rural Schools Act. Hutchins had been tasked by the board to explore the possibility of getting funding through it, as the pond did not qualify for Federal Emergency Management Agency help. Because the pond is technically within the Green Mountain National Forest, it qualified for Title III funds.