

For over 50 years, the Sunrise-Sunset Lakes, Perch Pond Association has been dedicated to preserving the natural beauty and harmonious ecology of our waters, to promoting the health and safety of property owners, and to fostering friendships and service in order to build and maintain a better community of lake residents.

The Association was organized by property owners from Perch Pond and the western side of Sunset Lake and first chartered as a non-profit organization by the State of Vermont in October 1969. Around 1978 Sunrise Lake was added as a member to the Association.

The founding members of the Association were:

Charles Conner, President
Kermit Upton, VP
Harold Loggins, 2nd VP
Kenneth Brown, Secretary-Treasurer

Effective October 13, 1969

With broad goals of supporting the improvement of the lakes and their adjoining properties, the earliest Officers and Directors of the Association focused on issues such as high bacteria counts at various lake locations; unmaintained sanitary facilities at some cottages; safety concerns around speedboating incidents; and the poor condition of the main access road for their cottages.

Through the 1970s, volunteer committees set up to deal with environmental issues and road maintenance formed partnerships with the Town of Benson and the State to tackle these problems, and to find ways to increase the awareness of property owners of their role in keeping lake waters clean.

Early meetings and social events were held at the homes of lake residents; however, by 1976, membership outgrew this practice, and the Association held its Annual Meeting and social event at the lodge at Camp Sunrise for the first time. Water quality in both lakes had improved significantly by 1978, the year before the volunteer Lay Monitoring of water quality program was begun by the State.

The 1980s saw continued progress, with the State's issuance of Regulations for Motor Boats on Perch Pond and Sunset Lake (later extended to Sunrise Lake) and increased attention on the ecology and quality of lake waters. In 1985, the invitation to property owners on Sunrise Lake to join as Members, and, in May 1989, the renaming of the organization as the Sunrise-Sunset Lakes, Perch Pond Association created the organization as it exists today.

The latter part of that decade saw the first sightings of Eurasian Water Milfoil in our waters, an occasion which led to an added goal for the Association of working to control invasive species in the lakes. The battle against invasives is now an ongoing effort, one that has required the dedication of a small group of volunteers and the support of the Town of Orwell, as well as financial assistance from lake residents, to bring under control.

Since the 1980s, Member and volunteer support have been critical factors in the ability of the Association to continue its efforts to organize and promote activities aimed at preserving our lakes and ponds, and bringing residents together. Association leadership has partnered with local and state agencies on several environmental, ecological, and safety projects; built relationships with the Scouts' Green Mountain Council, local businesses, and law enforcement officers; communicated regularly with Members to keep them informed of the latest news around the lakes; planned meetings and events to build community; and created helpful signage for visitors to the lakes encouraging them to preserve the cleanliness and beauty of the our waters.