

Water Quality Committee Role

The water quality committee was identified as a standing committee in the new Perkins Pond by-laws. It is ripe for development but here is what I think that it should be responsible for:

Volunteer Lake Assessment Program (VLAP): This program is run by the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). Perkins Pond association has been in the program since 1987. It consists of taking samples from the pond at least 3 times during the year (July, August, September). If possible, a sampling in June should be done. The samples are collected and taken to the LSPA lab at Colby-Sawyer College where they are analyzed and data sent to the Perkins Pond VLAP coordinator and the NHDES. In addition, there is usually a sampling done by the DES intern during one of the sampling dates. When the DES intern accompanies the VLAP samplers, the intern takes all the samples for that event with them to the Concord DES lab. The VLAP coordinator schedules the dates with Colby-Sawyer lab, picks up the materials at Colby-Sawyer, conducts the sampling and returns the samples to Colby-Sawyer. Each year after all the samples are analyzed, the NHDES publishes results on-line for review. The results are briefed to the association by the VLAP coordinator at the spring or fall meeting. There should be two VLAP samplers during each sampling event and ideally two trained samplers.

Weed Watchers: The coordinator for weed watchers organizes and trains volunteer weed watchers to monitor for invasive species infestation. This person should be familiar with the invasive species that are threats, the primary threat being milfoil. Ideally, several times per season the pond should be patrolled to look for any plants that are not native and might be invasive species. The NHDES Invasive Species program coordinator and the LSPA are experts that can help identify any suspect species. If milfoil or another invasive species are found in the pond, the state DES must be immediately notified so a plan of action can be done to hopefully stop the spread of the invasive species. Special attention should be paid to the boat ramp area. A report should be made to the association at the spring or fall meeting, as well as training to members of the association.

Education: This group would provide education to other members of the association about the pond environment and how to mitigate human impacts on the pond. This would include information about any pond rules and also the shoreline protection act and how it governs our conduct around the pond. This education can be provided at the spring and fall meetings, through the Perkins Ponder and any other means that the group can come up with, like mailings or informal education days, perhaps at the boat ramp.

Association projects that can help water quality: This group would research and provide suggestions for “self-help projects around the pond, such as cleaning out tributaries and helping to reduce runoff into the pond from the road and other impervious surfaces. They would organize “clean-up” projects such as around the boat launch or help neighbors with projects at their property that will reduce storm water runoff.