



Connecticut Fund
for the Environment

Save the Sound®

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Plum Island Art Show comes to Hartford's Legislative Office Building

Hartford, Conn. – A traveling art show highlighting the natural beauty of Plum Island, NY, is coming to Hartford in March. The show, which has appeared around Connecticut and Long Island for about two years, features original paintings by John Sargent and photographs by Robert Lorenz.

It will be on display in the **concourse between the Legislative Office Building and the Capitol and the cafeteria from March 15 to 31**. Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound staffers will be **on site from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on March 19, 23, and 26** to answer questions and offer updates on the status of the multi-year, multi-state fight to preserve Plum Island.

The artists have visited the federally-owned island several times to make pictures of its rocky bluffs, wetlands, historic lighthouse, and wildlife including seals and rare birds. Federal agencies are planning to sell the island and the research lab on it, a move that has spurred a massive regional backlash including a lawsuit led by CFE/Save the Sound, legislation introduced in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and formation of the 100-organization Preserve Plum Island Coalition.

“On our tours, we saw what a beautiful place it was and most of it was kept very natural, because for so long there has been very little activity besides the lab,” **Sargent says**. “It has an incredible beach on the south side, and the largest seal haul-out in southern New England. The bluffs are fascinating glacial geological formations, and there are a number of endangered species. So many people have preconceptions and impressions about the island that are not correct. We wanted to show what is actually there. I was pretty surprised by how special it was.”

“It wasn’t just a matter of documenting what is out there, but showing it in a positive manner that would help people understand what is there and why it should be saved,” **Lorenz says**. “This is my first foray into fine art, but not my first foray into allowing imagery to tell a story. It’s an obvious outcome that it should be saved. I can’t guarantee it, but I’d be very disappointed if the course of events went in the other direction. The effort to save it is slowly building, and

there are an awful lot of groups involved now as the word spreads. Our goal is to get our work closer to the political centers so that the people who are in a position to make a difference can see it. That would be in Hartford, Albany, and Washington, D.C. I'm a dreamer, I guess. But I think we can make this happen."

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