



Marching in your community

The last six months have seen a resurgence in American activism akin to the 1960s. But while the 1960s brought publication *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, a landmark expose of the dangers of the pesticide industry to the environment and the 1970s saw passage of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, 2017 is frothing to cut down environmental protection.

Fast forward to today. In just a few month's time, Washington has proposed crippling cuts to defund the Environmental Protection Agency and climate science, appointed a former Exxon Mobil executive as Secretary of State and a climate denier as head of the Environmental Protection Agency, and wished to open America's treasured National Parks system to fossil fuel exploration – as if anyone goes to the Grand Canyon to visit a coal mine.

Into this void, where the federal government keeps coming up short, someone is stepping in. That someone is you, and people like you. This time may seem bleak for the environment, but from where we sit at CFE/Save the Sound, with you on our team the future is bright.

You've already made a difference. From lobbying your legislators in Hartford for stronger climate laws to emailing in testimony supporting environmental bills (and opposing industry-backed bills to allow more pollution), you've spoken out on environmental policy with CFE/Save the Sound in Connecticut and New York.



Kendall Barbary

Marching for a cleaner future.

After the election, you spoke up for the environment at happy hour events with your neighbors in New Haven and Mamaroneck. You attended the Women's March after Inauguration Day – carrying signs alongside CFE/Save the Sound staff in support of environmental protection. And you've signed a lot of petitions demanding strong federal environmental policy from the EPA and Administrator Scott Pruitt.

What can you do next?

If you're a Connecticut resident, please write to Governor Dan Malloy and let him know you expect Connecticut to tackle climate change in the absence of leadership from Washington.

Are you a New Yorker? Write to Governor Andrew Cuomo and let him know you want him to permanently preserve Plum Island! (Learn more about the campaign on another page of this newsletter).

Live elsewhere? Email Michelle at mlemere@ctenvironment.org and ask her how to get involved in your state!

Whatever action you take, please also let Michelle (mlemere@ctenvironment.org) know – your impact is magnified when we can track and multiply your actions. And we'd love to hear how else you think CFE/Save the Sound can make a difference for your environment, with your support, for the next four years and beyond. Thank you!

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Planning a landscape project?

How about building a rain garden?

You can prevent pollution to local streams and Long Island Sound – even if you live far from the water! This year, consider building a rain garden. Rain gardens are special gardens designed to capture, filter, and soak up rainwater runoff where it falls. They're also a cost-effective solution to

polluted stormwater runoff right in your own backyard.

Sidewalks and your driveway get you from point A to point B, but these impervious surfaces (along with the roof of your home) also prevent water from soaking into the ground when it rains.

Instead, the rain flows over these surfaces and picks up pollutants like oil, debris, and fertilizers and then carries them downstream, making your rivers and the Sound unsafe for people and animals.

"The beauty of rain gardens is that they are mostly above ground, so they're visible. And because rain gardens are visible, they're not only fairly easy to maintain, they are also great tools for educating people about sustainable water management," said

Kendall Barbery, CFE/Save the Sound green infrastructure program manager.

By helping Save the Sound build a rain garden, YOU can make the Sound healthy. Want to learn more? Visit our stormwater focused website ReduceRunoff.org and email your questions to Kendall at kbarbery@savethesound.org.

And if you can't commit to building a new garden on your property but still want Sound-friendly landscaping, take a look at the tips below!

- Think twice before using fertilizers and pesticides
- Use a rain barrel to capture roof runoff and use it to water your gardens deeply, but infrequently
- Compost your food and yard waste to create healthy, nutrient-rich soil for your garden
- Plant native perennials and bee-friendly plants that are right for your site
- Leave your lawn a little higher (3-4") and leave the clippings



Many hands make light work! Photo credit Kendall Barbery.

Unity & Collaboration: The Unified Water Study

In the wake of science marches around the country on Earth Day – all celebrating the supreme importance of science to our health, society, and policy-making – it only felt right to recognize an exciting science program right here at Save the Sound! We're talking, of course, about the Unified Water Study.

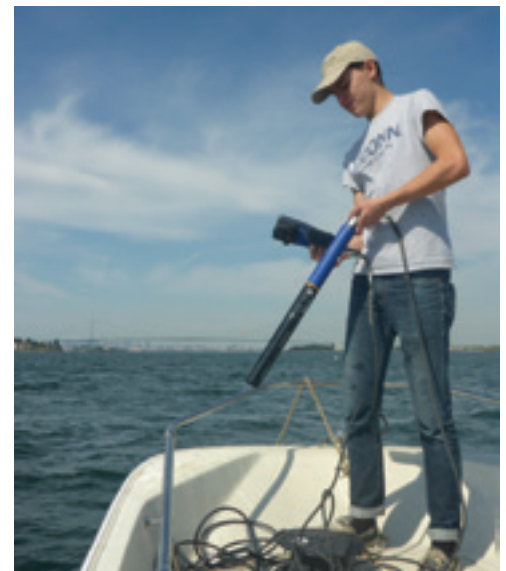
As you probably know, there are bays and harbors in your cities, towns, and villages that struggle with high nutrient concentrations, excessive algal blooms, and low dissolved oxygen. These pollution problems hurt industries like fishing and shellfishing. They close the beaches your family likes to visit in the summer. They suffocate creatures around the Sound. And they're all preventable.

There is a need to gather uniform water quality data on our bays and harbors to support and stimulate local, state, and federal actions to protect and restore them. That's where the Unified Water Study comes in! In response to this need, the Long Island Sound Funders Collaborative has tasked

Save the Sound with facilitating the design and deployment of a uniform water quality monitoring program for Sound embayments.

Save the Sound piloted the study last summer and spent this winter promoting it with the ultimate goal of coordinated monitoring happening in all 116 bays and harbors that circle Long Island Sound. The response has been very enthusiastic with 12 groups signed up to monitor more than 20 bays and harbors in 2017 and more preparing to join the effort in 2018. Local, state, and federal agencies participated in the design of the study, which was spearheaded by Save the Sound's Peter Linderoth, working in collaboration with Dr. Jamie Vaudrey and Dr. Jason Krumholz.

The Unified Water Study measures dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll *a*, temperature, salinity, macrophytes, and water clarity. Monitoring groups must follow all study procedures in their entirety to qualify for participation and to ensure consistent, comparable data. In order to make real change, we need real scientific



Testing the waters...

data. The results will be published in future Long Island Sound report cards.

Together we can work towards cleaner and healthier Long Island Sound bays and harbors for all!

CFE/Save the Sound Survey – thanks for your participation!

1. How did you first learn about Connecticut Fund for the Environment/ Save the Sound?
 - a. 1 – 3 years
 - b. 4 – 10 years
 - c. 10+ years
 - d. I'm not a member
2. How long have you been a member?
 - a. 1 – 3 years
 - b. 4 – 10 years
 - c. 10+ years
 - d. I'm not a member
3. What other environmental organizations do you belong to or support?
 - a. Sierra Club
 - b. Garden Club
 - c. Land Trust
 - d. Environmental Defense Fund
 - e. Greenpeace
 - f. Earth First
 - g. Charity Water
 - h. Earthjustice
 - i. Conservation Law Foundation
 - k. Soundkeeper
 - l. Citizen's Campaign for the Environment
 - m. Audubon Society
 - n. Other (please list):
4. Where does CFE/Save the Sound stand in terms of your preference?
 - a. Number one
 - b. Top three
 - c. Top five
 - d. Top ten
 - e. None of the above
5. What could CFE/Save the Sound do to improve its standing?
 - a. Electronic newsletters
 - b. Email updates
 - c. Phone calls
 - d. Facebook
 - e. Instagram
 - f. Twitter
 - g. Linked In
 - h. Written correspondence
 - i. All of the above
6. How do you prefer to receive information:
 - a. Electronic newsletters
 - b. Email updates
 - c. Phone calls
 - d. Facebook
 - e. Instagram
 - f. Twitter
 - g. Linked In
 - h. Written correspondence
 - i. All of the above
7. What are your top 3 environmental concerns:
 - a. Climate change
 - b. Clean water
 - c. Clean air
 - d. Open spaces to walk and spend time
 - e. Preservation of wildlife habitats
 - f. The effect the environment has on health issues
 - g. Protecting endangered species
 - h. Clean energy
 - i. Protecting the shoreline
 - j. The footprint I am leaving on the planet
 - k. Bike/Pedestrian/Transit
 - l. Farms and Food
 - m. Other (please list):
9. Would you be interested in any of the following in the future?
 - a. Volunteer cleanups
 - b. Volunteer Plantings
 - c. Volunteer invasive removal
 - d. Walks
 - e. Paddles
 - f. Letter-writing to legislators
 - g. Personal meeting with legislator
 - h. Fundraising events
 - i. Social activities with others who have the same interest in the environment
 - j. Educational programs about the environment
10. Do we have the correct contact information for you?

Email:

Name:

Address:

City, Zip:

Phone:

What else do you want us to know?
Thank you!

MONTHLY GIVING

Protecting the natural resources that sustain your family is as affordable as a Netflix account. A monthly gift of \$10, \$20, or more is a small addition to your household budget and a big contribution to the environmental work you care about most! As a monthly contributor, you'll become a member of a growing network of passionate and powerful environmental advocates with a proven track record for big impact in Connecticut and New York, especially in this uncertain environmental climate. Contact Michelle at mlemere@ctenvironment.org for more information.

LEAVE A LEGACY

A planned gift from your estate to CFE and its bi-state program Save the Sound can help protect public health and the endangered places you care about far into the future. Please consider a lasting gift to the environmental heritage of Connecticut and Long Island Sound. For more information, contact Heidi Green at 203-787-0646, ext. 109.

Plunging into the Sound

March 13, 2017. 22 degrees. 5 degrees wind chill. Old Saybrook, Connecticut. A beach on the edge of Long Island Sound.

That's the scene for CFE/Save the Sound's Plum Island Plunge – where nearly 30 brave souls plunged, dove, and hesitantly waded into Long Island Sound to raise awareness and funds for the campaign to permanently preserve Plum Island from development.

Plum Island is a gem located off the northern tip of Long Island and home to countless precious species, including seals, rare birds like piping plovers, bats, and even rare plants including orchids. But the island, currently owned by the federal government, will be up for auction to the highest bidder if advocates like you can't stop it. The creatures that call it home and the stunning habitats across the island will be decimated in favor of luxury condos and sprawling golf courses. But with your continued support – catalyzed by the Plunge event! – the island will be protected.

Rosie Rothman, co-president of Old Saybrook High School's Interact Club, explained that the plunge was a perfect fit for the Interact Club's mission of community service and the Ecology Club's mission of environmental protection. "Afterwards, we couldn't feel our toes for a while, but we still had fun," she said. "With a windchill in the single digits, it was definitely a challenge, but our members still showed up. I think that speaks to our dedication to the cause. It is our hope that our legislators take

decisive federal action to protect Plum Island from development that would be detrimental to the wildlife that depends on it, including 111 species of conservation concern."

Huge thanks go to First Selectman Carl Fortuna and Representative Devin Carney for joining in on the fun, and especially to Rosie and the other students from Old Saybrook High School who spent hours raising money, raising awareness, and pushing forward to get participants in the plunge. Thank you!



Laura McMillan



Laura McMillan

Photo top: CFE's Chris Cryder rallies the crowd before taking the plunge.

Photo above: Can you spell Preserve Plum Island?

Envisioning Plum Island

Another exciting development in the Plum Island campaign is the recent release of the Plum Island documentary, a 12-minute short film produced by Visionaries and shown on PBS stations across the country. You can find the documentary on the web at www.saveplumislandny.org.

Producer Bill Mosher says, "This may be one of the most important shows Visionaries has produced in its 23 years on public television. It is the ultimate test of the power citizens have to move government in the direction that the people want, not what government wants. This story, in its dissemination over the internet and on public television, can demonstrate to all non-profits what can happen when socially conscious media intersects with a really important environmental cause."

Along with the release of the documentary comes an additional fantastic online resource, a website with in-depth interviews, bonus footage, updates on Plum Island, and action items you can take to help the cause. Visit www.saveplumislandny.org to dig in deeper. You can even make your own video from the clips and share it with us!

Upcoming Events

Spend time with CFE/Save the Sound! As a member, you enjoy exclusive opportunities to explore the natural spaces of Connecticut and New York, to learn more about the environmental issues you support, and network with like-minded environmentalists in your neighborhood and around the region. Take a look at upcoming event opportunities below and be sure to bookmark www.ctenvironment.org/calendar-of-events on your web browser for additional events!

Annual Meeting

Each fall, CFE/Save the Sound members, friends, and staff come together at the Annual Meeting to celebrate last year's accomplishments and plan for the future. Details will be announced soon about 2017's topic and location – keep an eye on your mailbox for your personal invitation to save the date! The Annual Meeting will be held on October 1st.

Paddle Across the Sound

On August 20, join Save the Sound and paddlers around Long Island Sound to Paddle Across the Sound! You'll enjoy sunrise over western Long Island Sound from a stand-up paddle board or kayak as you celebrate the beauty of the Sound with old and new friends.

Environmental Book Tour Series

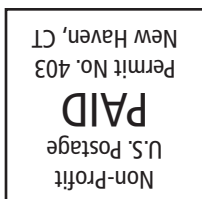
One of the best ways to celebrate nature is through art and the written word. Join CFE/Save the Sound and environmental authors from around the country at a series of book readings and book launches around the area over the next few months. Details forthcoming!

Hikes, presentations, and summer festivals

You're always welcome to join CFE/Save the Sound staff for hikes of eastern Connecticut's Osewagatchie Hills, presentations in Westchester County about the health of your beaches, and summer festivals on Long Island where we'll be sharing information about the campaign to preserve Plum Island – and so much more.

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