



**Climate Strike Event September 20: Poetry for the Climate Crisis + Fridays for Future Global Climate Strike on UNB Campus + Extinction Rebellion march to downtown Fredericton**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 18, 2019**

**FREDERICTON** — To mark the first day of the global week of action on the climate crisis, September 20, Fridays for Future Fredericton is joining forces with other student and local activist and academic projects. Our rally at the University of New Brunswick (UNB) will include the re-launch of the fossil fuel divestment campaigns at UNB and Saint Thomas University (STU), Poetry for the Climate Crisis, and members of Extinction Rebellion - New Brunswick, a local arm of the international organization, will hold a peaceful march from the UNB Campus following the rally. The downtown end-point is an as-yet unnamed fossil fuel entity whose operations are worsening the climate crisis. This non-violent protest is one of several planned for centers in New Brunswick during and after the week of September 20-27.

The rally will include speeches from UNB and STU profs and all the federal nominees for the Fredericton riding have been invited. The rally will also launch the student-led Orange Square campaign at both UNB and STU, building on the foundation of previous divestment campaigns. Students, faculty, staff, alumni and retired people from both universities will be invited to add their names to a public petition urging the universities to end their investment in fossil fuels. The student fossil fuel divestment campaign is supported by the UNB activist research project RAVEN (Rural Action and Voices for the Environment).

RAVEN is also hosting Poetry for the Climate Crisis to kick-off the September 20 event. Halifax spoken word poet El Jones will be joined by Fredericton-based poets Sue Sinclair, Rebecca Salazar, Lauren R. Korn, and Emily Skov-Neilson, all sharing their visions of the planetary crisis. The poetry event is the first of RAVEN's Voices for the Environment Week of activities to mark the global week of climate action.

Fridays for Future is a movement started by 16-year-old Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, who refused to attend school and did a strike by herself in front of Sweden's legislature, demanding meaningful climate action. She has since been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize and spoke at the COP24 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Katowice, Poland. Following Greta's example, students all over the world began using the hashtag #fridaysforfuture and conducting their own school walkouts and protests to try and inspire change. Most notably on March 15<sup>th</sup>, an estimated 1.4 million people protested worldwide, including over 160,000 in Canada alone. There have been subsequent events on Fridays since then, including the National Canadian School Strikes on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## Why Strike?

The signs of climate breakdown are all around us, in the form of extreme weather, forest fires, sea-level rise and polar ice disappearance. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on 1.5°C, released in October 2018, illustrated that if humans continue to emit greenhouse gases and consume at our current rate, there will be irreversible damage to the planet as soon as 2030. Yet despite this warning and clear calls to action from the scientific community, large-scale government action is still lacking. New Brunswick's government has also taken actions which slow down climate action such as entering the lawsuit with the governments of Saskatchewan and Ontario to determine if the Carbon tax is constitutional.

Event Details:

**What:** Poetry performances for the climate crisis + Climate Protest + March led by Extinction Rebellion NB

**When:** 12:00 PM- 3:30 PM September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

**Where:** Poet's Corner and Quad, UNB Campus, plus downtown Fredericton

**Who:** El Jones and other poets, politicians, activists from all ages from the Fredericton area, professors and students.

**Agenda:** Noon, Poetry for the Climate Crisis; 1pm Climate Strike; 2pm XR march downtown. The Climate Strike rally has speeches by UNB and STU students and professors, federal election candidates, other major supporters of the cause and then testimonials from youth in attendance.

**Media Availability:** Following the end of the rally, likely around 2pm and at the end of the march (likely around 3:30).

**For more information visit the Facebook page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/events/399570750697094/>

**Or contact Daniel Nunes, Fridays for Future Fredericton at (506) 261-8753 or dnunes@unb.ca.**