

Living Well in a Low Carbon World

Like the Green New Deal, Extinction Rebellion, Sunrise Movement, and many other climate actions and movements, the Council of Canadians is committed to a just transition away from those factors driving climate breakdown. North of 60, we are warming three times faster than the global average. <https://cabinradio.ca/14681/news/environment/north-warming-three-times-faster-than-much-of-world/?fbclid=IwAR1DDV1MpQ-xIkY5XYRi7-VIV8wM9tGS7dRVK26GlgGifHJEeU2y5Prnp8w> Warmer temperatures mean that our fragile ecosystem is becoming unglued as permafrost melts, rivers and lake dry and slump, boreal and taiga landscapes burn, and Arctic sea ice disappears. In our sparsely populated region, our history of sustainable communities where interdependent socio-economic and environmental measures involve and benefit everyone equally, is the future we envision as the path to living well in a low carbon world.

On April 23rd, the NWT Chapter hosted a community discussion to inspire actions to avert catastrophic climate breakdown. The discussion led a calendar of Earth Week events sponsored by Ecology North, a Yellowknife-based NGO. Four speakers set the stage for the discussion.



- **Craig Scott**, Executive Director, Ecology North encouraged community members to step outside the box, look to and support youth-led climate actions, and honour environmental rights.
- **Kimberly Fairman**, Executive Director, Institute of Circumpolar Health Research, pointed to community identified climate change impacts and the power of youth involvement in planning community-specific adaptive strategies and solutions. Communities know best how to respond to the current and growing climate crisis.
- **David Bob**, President, Northern Territories Federation of Labour, cited movements and significant actions around the world to decrease carbon emissions. Canada needs to do more. Building sustainable communities through enhancing Canada Post infrastructure as is proposed in the Delivering Community Power campaign, is a viable way for the north to adapt to climate breakdown <http://www.deliveringcommunitypower.ca/>.
- **Ella Kokelj**, Student at Sir John Franklin High School, explained that climate breakdown is threatening connections to the land and the safety of generations. She urged people to show they care for the land and environment, and that they care for future generations. Northerners need to show up on May 3rd to support school climate strikes in their communities.

The some 40 community members in attendance shared many good ideas for moving the NWT to a low carbon world. They recognize the role we all have in changing the current climate narrative, being



positive and hopeful, and inspiring efforts to decarbonize our communities. We can look to car sharing co-ops and electric vehicles, use renewable energy sources, support local food production, and advocate for energy efficient buildings and equipment. We can champion on-the-land education and stewardship programs so more people care about the natural world. We can make connections between climate change and the economy using visuals and clear messages about adaptations. We can unite around some core questions and messages to bring to politicians seeking election to the 19th NWT Legislative Assembly and to the House of Commons. We can demand that political leaders produce and account for a plan to avert a climate crisis. We can call our bank managers to demand they divest from fossil fuels. We can demand our retailers reduce or eliminate plastic packaging. Labour can mobilize regional councils and public servants can join student climate strikes and/or take to the streets themselves. We can all step outside the box, be bold, take risks, and be leaders. The climate crisis demands that we all take action. We are stronger when we work together and stay hopeful and positive in our messages and actions.

