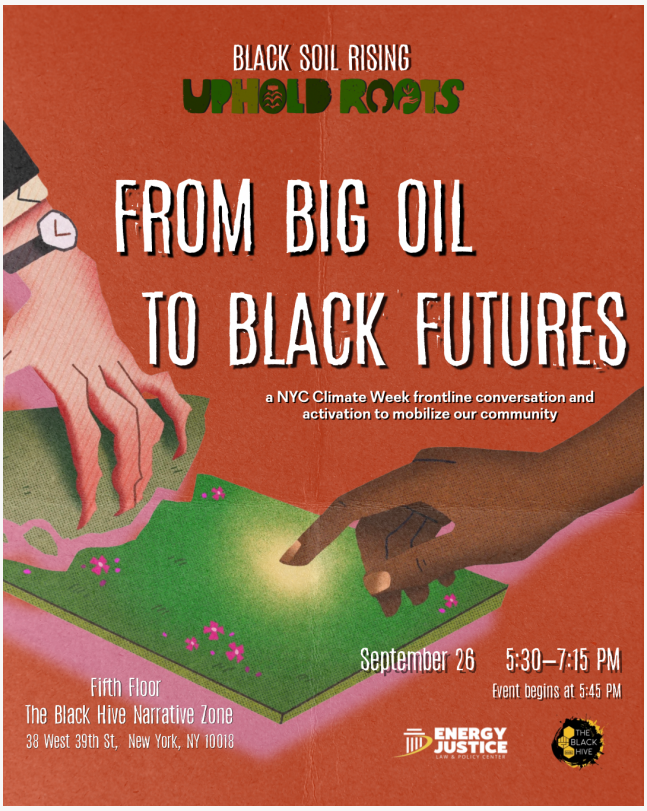
# Black Soil Rising Brings Alabama Family's Fight Against Big Oil to NYC Climate Week

*EJLPC and Movement for Black Lives' Black Hive host "From Big Oil to Black Futures," featuring film, frontline leaders, food and performances*



Join Us

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, September 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A Black family's fight to protect ancestral land in Alabama from oil and gas extraction is coming to New York City during Climate Week.

On Saturday, September 26, the Energy Justice Law & Policy Center (EJLPC) and the Movement for Black Lives' Black Hive will present "From Big Oil to Black Futures," an evening of film, conversation, food, performances and community at 38 W. 39th Street in Manhattan.

The event builds on the short documentary Black Soil Rising, which tells the story of the Johnson family and land in Conecuh County, Alabama, held by the family for roughly 150 years and now located within Alabama's largest producing oil field.

Since its release, the family's work has grown into Black Soil Rising: Uphold Roots, a family-led campaign investigating what has happened to the family's land and wealth, examining community health concerns, and building the research, organizing and legal support needed to move the fight forward.

FROM THE FILM TO THE FIGHT

Black Soil Rising follows members of the Johnson family diaspora as they reconnect with their family, history and ancestral land in Conecuh County—and confront the continuing presence of oil extraction there.

The September 26 event will premiere an update to that story, showing what has happened since the original film and introducing some of the people now working alongside the family. The campaign is led by Raya Salter, an environmental justice attorney, filmmaker, founder and executive director of the Energy Justice Law & Policy Center, and a member of the Johnson family. Salter directed Black Soil Rising and will moderate the Climate Week conversation.

The work includes research examining the systems and records surrounding oil extraction, ownership, consent and compensation; a developing community environmental health study; legal and regulatory work; and continued family and community organizing in Alabama.

The evening will be moderated by Salter and feature:



Panelists

-Dr. Sacoby Wilson, Founder and Executive Director of the Center for Engagement, Environmental Justice and Health INpowering Communities (CEEJH INC), an environmental health scientist working with the family on community-based health research;

> We are bringing together family, scientists, lawyers, researchers and organizers to build the evidence and power we need to protect our land, our health and our climate future."
>
> *Raya Salter, Exec. Dir., EJLPC*

-Diamond Spratling, award-winning environmental health and justice activist and Founder of Girl Plus Environment;
-Willie Neal Johnson, a Johnson family member who lives and farms on the family's land in Alabama; and
-Jermaine Williams, Johnson family member and Black Soil Rising filmmaker.

Together, the panel will explore what the Johnson family's experience reveals about land, health, wealth and extraction—and what it means to build Black futures rooted in community power and land sovereignty.

Participants will be invited into an immersive experience, where visitors are invited into the home and the Alabama farm.

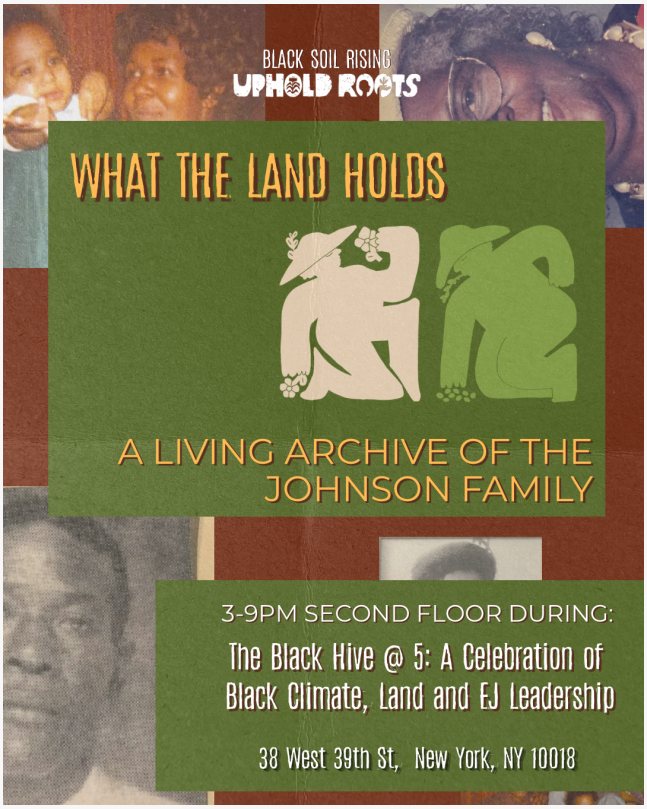
BRINGING A FRONTLINE FIGHT TO CLIMATE WEEK

The event is designed to bring a fight unfolding in rural Alabama directly into one of the world's largest gatherings focused on climate change.

Rather than discussing “Black futures” only as an idea, From Big Oil to Black Futures will ground the conversation in a family and community confronting the consequences of fossil-fuel extraction now—and in the work underway to change what comes next.

“This is a fossil-fuel fight, but it is also a fight about who gets to control land, who benefits from what is taken from it, whose health bears the consequences, and what gets passed to the next generation,” Salter said. “Climate Week is exactly where that conversation belongs.”

The program will be part of a full day of free activities hosted by the Movement for Black Lives, with food, performances and celebration alongside the panel and film program. Attendees are invited to stay for the festivities, meet the people doing the work and find ways to become part of the community supporting the fight.



Immersive Experience

EVENT DETAILS

From Big Oil to Black Futures
Saturday, September 26, 2026
5:30–7:15 PM
38 W. 39th St., New York, NY
Free: MUST RSVP: https://luma.com/4o351fmd

About Black Soil Rising: Uphold Roots

Black Soil Rising: Uphold Roots is the family-led campaign growing from the Johnson family’s fight in Conecuh County, Alabama. The campaign brings together family organizing, environmental health research, investigation, legal support and storytelling to protect the community from the harms of oil and gas extraction and pursue accountability for impacts to land, health and wealth. www.BlackSoilDoc.com

About the Energy Justice Law & Policy Center

The Energy Justice Law & Policy Center works at the intersection of energy, climate, environmental justice and community power. EJLPC is led by environmental attorney and

filmmaker Raya Salter. www.EJLPC.org

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