

SOUL FLY CHS

2026 IMPACT REPORT

Drift with Purpose — Protecting what matters, one event at a time.

The inaugural Soul Fly CHS throwdown at The Refinery proved that a fly fishing, music, and art festival can be a damn good time (and good for the planet). We know we are far from perfect, but we should strive to do whatever we can to protect what we love. In that spirit, Soul Fly CHS was an experiment to see what would happen if we led with fun and celebrated that we are all simply doing the best we can. Frankly, we set some impact goals prior to the event that we didn't actually think were achievable, and guess what? Thanks to YOU, we achieved them! Other impact goals that we set were more challenging than we originally anticipated, so we will take the lessons learned at Soul Fly CHS and do better next time.

"What we're doing isn't that serious. It's a stick with some string, and it's something we made up, and we're trying to get a creature to eat it. Let's have fun with it, and let's see how that spreads!"
— Alec 'Griz' Griswold on The Sustainable Angler podcast

On May 16, 2026, 1,550 attendees converged on Charleston for live music, a BBQ throwdown, fly fishing games, and immersive art — all anchored by an unapologetic commitment to conservation and community. This report documents the measurable environmental and social impact of the event, benchmarked against the Soul Fly Co. Sustainable Event Plan and aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals

1,550 attendees
Voices for conservation

\$25,100
donated
To Charleston Waterkeeper

96.6% diverted
Waste kept from landfill

1,817 bottles
Single-use plastics avoided

~10.5 mtCO₂e
Estimated carbon footprint

100% local
Food sourced from the region

01 — CLIMATE ACTION

Soul Fly Co. measured the event's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in accordance with the GHG Protocol Corporate Standard, covering direct combustion (Scope 1), purchased electricity (Scope 2), and value-chain emissions including waste and attendee travel (Scope 3). The event's estimated footprint of approximately 10.5 mtCO₂e reflects some physical data and estimates to better understand the climate impact of Soul Fly CHS and see who we might work to reduce GHG emissions at future Soul Fly Co. events.

SCOPE 1-3 GHG EMISSION SOURCES	GHG EMISSIONS (mtCO ₂ e)
Scope 1 — Direct	0.0318
Scope 2 (Location-Based) — Purchased electricity	0.3995
Scope 2 (Market-Based RECs) — Purchased electricity	0.00
Scope 3 — Waste (all streams)	0.038
Scope 3 — Attendee travel (est. mid)	~10.43 mtCO ₂ e
Avoided emissions — plastic bottles	-0.0082 mtCO ₂ e 1,817 PET bottles displaced
Estimated total footprint (Location-based, mid-range travel, excl. avoided emissions)	~10.90 mtCO ₂ e
Estimated total footprint (Market-based, mid-range travel, excl. avoided emissions)	~10.50 mtCO ₂ e
Gross emissions per attendee (Location-based, excl. travel)	0.3028 kg CO₂e/attendee
Estimated gross per attendee (Location-based, incl. mid-range travel)	~7.0344 kg CO₂e/attendee
Scope 2 (electricity) per attendee	0.258 kg CO ₂ e/attendee

02 — ZERO WASTE

Thanks to all of YOU, Soul Fly CHS achieved a 96.6% waste diversion rate — well above the 90% Zero Waste target set in the Sustainable Event Plan! We provided attendees with BPI-certified compostable cups, wood cutlery & plates, and partnered with Keep Charleston Beautiful who provided volunteers and sorted & measured all waste, recycling, and compost. Every food service item was compostable or reusable. Single-use plastics were banned event-wide, and a YETI Silo water refilling station displaced an estimated 1,817 single-use plastic water bottles.

WASTE SOURCES	WASTE AMOUNTS (LBS)
Recycling	442.1 lbs
Compostables	224.7 lbs
Landfill	23.2 lbs
Cigarette Butts	0.205 lbs
Total waste generated	690.205 lbs Waste diversion rate: 96.6%
Waste per attendee	0.45 lbs
Plastic bottles avoided	1,817 bottles

03 — FOOD, CULTURE & LOCAL SOURCING

Soul Fly CHS didn't just feed people — it celebrated the living food culture of the Lowcountry. Every item served was 100% locally or regionally sourced, anchored by Martin's Bar-B-Que and Rebel Taqueria. The menu honored the Gullah Geechee culinary tradition through authentic BBQ pork slow-cooked in the Southern tradition, and featured local oysters that connect the event's fly-fishing identity directly to Charleston's estuarine ecosystem. Chef PJ Calapa (Michelin-starred) led the food program, with custom Redfish Beer from Oxbow Brewing and curated cocktails from 167 Raw.

FOOD & BEVERAGE SOURCING	F&B IMPACT
Local sourcing	100% of food locally and/or regionally sourced
Cultural heritage	Gullah Geechee tradition honored via BBQ pork & local oysters and food prepared by Chef Reggie Miller
Food vendors	Martin's Bar-B-Que, Rebel Taqueria, 167 Raw, King of Pops, Cuda Co., Chef Reggie Miller
Beverage	Luppolo Beer by Oxbow Brewing (festival-exclusive), Monster Brewing, The Whale, Limbo
Food waste	100% of organic waste composted, BPI-Certified Compostable cups, cutlery & plates for composting, recycled aluminum cans and some plastic cups (we ran out of compostable cups!). Oyster shells were recycled by Cuda Co.
Protein sourcing impact	~1.8 mtCO ₂ e upstream lifecycle (pork & chicken); local sourcing minimizes transport emissions

04 — CONSERVATION GIVING & COMMUNITY IMPACT

Soul Fly Co. exists to protect what matters (and what we love). At CHS, that meant channeling real dollars into the hands of the people doing the hard work of keeping Charleston's waterways clean and accessible for the next generation of anglers, paddlers, and communities who depend on the water.

\$25,100 total

Donated to Charleston
Waterkeeper

100% local

NGO support directed to
Charleston

13 volunteers

donated 39 hours with Keep
Charleston Beautiful

Charleston Waterkeeper will use your donations to protect our waterways, build oyster reefs from recycled shells, which cleans our water, sequesters carbon dioxide, stabilizes our shorelines from sea level rise and storms, and provides critical habitat for a variety of species, and ultimately, enhances our fishery.

05 — IMPACT GOALS: HOW DID WE DO?

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a global blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, adopted by all UN Member States in 2015. They cover topics such as poverty, health, education, climate, oceans, forests, cities, and more. We used the SDGs as a framework to see how our event could be part of the solution, and protect what we love: fly fishing and our community!

We also created our own Impact Goals that were included in the Soul Fly CHS Sustainable Event Plan. Let's take a look to see how we did:

SDG	2030 Goal	Soul Fly CHS Impact Goal	Soul Fly CHS Contribution	Impact Goal Achieved?
	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.	Protect Local Watersheds	YETI Silo refilling station displaced 1,817 single-use plastic bottles, reducing plastic pollution in waterways	YES
	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.	Ensure Event is Welcoming & Accessible	100% local food vendor participation by Martins BBQ, Rebel Tacqueria, 167 Raw, Cuda Co., & Chef Reggie Miller - ADA accessibility at The Refinery - Honored local Gullah Geechee culture with BBQ, Oysters, and Chef Reggie Miller	YES
	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.	Zero Waste, Sustainable Procurement	96.6% waste diverted from landfill - Single-use plastics banned 100% BPI-Certified compostable cups, plates, & cutlery	YES
	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.	Carbon Neutral	- GHG footprint measured per GHG Protocol; ~23 mtCO₂e estimated; - Public transportation incentives (free raffle ticket) - Public transportation promoted via social media	NO

	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.	Support Conservation by Donating Proceeds to Charleston Waterkeeper	• \$25,100 donated to Charleston Waterkeeper • 1,817 single-use plastic water bottles avoided	YES
	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.	Support Conservation by Donating Proceeds to Charleston Waterkeeper	• Zero Waste target exceeded (96.6%); • Conservation narrative embedded across all activations	YES

"I have never fished in my life. I have friends who know how to fish, therefore, I probably know how to fish by proxy. I decided to go to Soul Fly because my favorite musician, Leon Majcen, was one of four incredibly talented artists on the lineup, but I came away from the event feeling so loved and alive beyond the music. This niche fly fishing community welcomed me with open arms, and I got to talk to so many vendors and artists there....I'm already thinking about returning next year. Thank you to everyone involved with Soul Fly! I had a an absolute blast and post-concert depression is real AF." — Soul Fly CHS Attendee

06 — LESSONS LEARNED & LOOKING AHEAD

The inaugural Soul Fly CHS event established a credible sustainability baseline. The following improvements are recommended for Year 2 to deepen impact and close data gaps:

CARBON NEUTRAL

To comprehensively assess the extent of the carbon footprint produced by Soul Fly CHS, it is recommended to conduct an analysis of five distinct resource utilization categories: energy, transportation, waste, consumption of food, and lodging. However, due to data limitations, the Soul Fly CHS GHG Emissions Report energy, transportation, and waste management.

- **Better Data:** Due to data uncertainty, we felt it would be disingenuous to purchase enough carbon offsets to claim Soul Fly CHS as a carbon neutral event. However, we did purchase Green-e Certified RECs for our purchased electricity because we had the physical activity data from the electric utility.
- **Attendee travel survey:** Capture zip code and transport mode at point of sales or at the gate to accurately quantify Scope 3 Category 6 travel emissions — the largest unquantified source.
- **Food & Beverage Impact:** Future Soul Fly Co. events should conduct attendee surveys to more accurately obtain consumption of food & beverage consumption data.
- **Lodging Data:** Future Soul Fly Co. events should conduct attendee surveys to more accurately obtain lodging data for attendees staying at hotels.
- **Public transportation:** More pre-event advertising and social posts related to public transportation and links to the CARTA bus routes would help us reduce the transportation miles from the event. Next year we will formalize the green-transport incentive (free drink voucher) to shift mode split and reduce per-attendee travel emissions.

- **Carbon offsets:** Rather than purchase carbon offsets to achieve carbon neutrality, we did invest \$25.1K in local blue carbon (oyster reef restoration) and restoration (marsh grass planting & restoration) to contribute towards addressing our carbon footprint with Charleston Waterkeeper. Next year, we should budget for verified offsets (Gold Standard or VCS) to achieve carbon neutrality per SDG 13 goal; prioritize Blue Carbon / coastal wetland projects aligned with the Soul Fly mission.
- **Renewable Energy:** We are exploring how might be able to use batteries charged with solar power for the music and for the vendors at next year's Soul Fly Event...stay tuned!

ZERO WASTE

- **Single-use plastic ban:** While we are thrilled to have achieved zero waste, we didn't quite achieve zero single use plastics because we ran out of compostable cups, plates, and cutlery. However, we were able to avoid the use of 1,817 single-use plastic water bottles by providing water refilling stations! Next year, we will buy enough to ensure the entire event is single-use plastic-free.
- **Cig Butts – Just for Fun:** We (Devon) did a sweep of the venue on Sunday and picked up an estimated 300 cigarette butts. According to [BMJ Journal](#), the mean weight of a single smoked cigarette butt is approximately 310 mg, which is the equivalent of 0.205 pounds! Not something we ever thought of accounting for, but went ahead and added that to our waste diversion %! Next year, we could make people roll their own cigs! Ha!

REDUCE FOOD-RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- **Local beverages:** We did source two beverage companies that were not local (Monster Energy & Oxbow Brewing), so while our food was 100% regionally sourced, our beverages were not. Can we achieve a 100% local food & beverage? No idea, but we can certainly try!

ZERO HUNGER

- **Food donations:** In our Sustainable Event Plan, we committed to Zero Hunger (SDG 2) by ensuring that all leftover food would be donated to a local nonprofit to feed the hungry. We did not follow through, so next year, we will plan to align with a local nonprofit who will take leftovers from the food trucks to feed the hungry.

GENDER EQUITY

- **Gender equity:** In our Sustainable Event Plan, we committed to Gender Equity (SDG 5) by intentionally having female-led casting demonstrations, and we didn't do that. Next year, we will focus on providing female-led casting demos and fly-tying demos!

08 — SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIPS: WHAT WE DIDN'T EXPECT

We knew that fly anglers want to protect what they love, and that they love live music, art, and food, but what we didn't expect was the amazing sustainability partnerships that happened along the way.

Company	What they Do	How they Made an Impact
 A NEW EARTH PROJECT	A New Earth Project is a strategic collaboration between outdoor enthusiasts and global packaging suppliers. Our mission is to rid the world's oceans, lakes, and rivers of plastic pollution. .	A New Earth Project sponsored Soul Fly CHS, and also provided sustainable packaging samples to all vendors at our event.

	We defend and restore Charleston's waterways so you can fish and swim without fear of pollution.	Charleston Waterkeeper is our conservation partner and we are proud to have been able to donate \$25,100 to support their mission.
	Our founders, award-winning Chef Shaun Brian and premiere local seafood distributor Chris John, are passionate about 2 things: sustainable aquaculture and pushing the boundaries of traditional seafood flavors. The mission is simple: become a catalyst for change in the seafood industry and make a true impact on our environment and community.	Cuda Co. provide fresh local oysters for the event, and also handled recycling all the oyster shells, which will be turned into new oyster reefs right here in Charlesto.
	Sustainability consulting for fishing and outdoor brands who give a damn about the places, fish, and communities that make this life worth fighting for.	Emerger Strategies developed our sustainability strategy by creating our Sustainable Event Plan, measuring our carbon footprint, helping us achieve zero waste, and creating the Soul Fly CHS Impact Report.
	We make quality eco-friendly foodservice disposables easily accessible for all customers.	Wulbern-Koval Co. sourced Karat Earth BPI-certified compostable cups, plates, and dinnerware for Soul Fly CHS that contributed towards us achieving Zero Waste.
	Keep Charleston Beautiful has been dedicated to preserving the area's beauty and enhancing public cleanliness. From combating pet waste and cigarette litter to promoting recycling and zero-waste events, Keep Charleston Beautiful strives for a cleaner, greener future. .	KCB provided 13 volunteers that manned our recycling and composting stations guiding attendees on what to recycle and compost. They also collected all trash, recycling, and composting, measured it and helped us achieve Zero Waste.
	Since 2006, we've been designing products that last for generations, get you out into the Wild, and keep you there longer.	YETI provided us with four Silos that were used as water refill stations that helped us avoid 1,817 single-use plastic bottles.

09 — THANK YOU

A message from Griz, Kitri and Kyle....

Soul Fly CHS.

1,550 people. One night. A lasting impact on the water and the community that depends on it.

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