

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



PLANET  
BLUEGRASS

## INTRODUCTION

Since its formation in 1988, Telluride Bluegrass Festival, PBC (d/b/a "Planet Bluegrass") has been redefining the musical festival by creating exceptional experiences that strengthen community while striving to reduce its environmental impact.

As a Public Benefit Corporation (PBC)—a legal entity recognized by the state of Colorado as a framework for responsible business—we have formally committed to operate our business in a manner that allows us to make decisions not just based purely on profit, but also considers the societal and environmental impacts of our Festivals. We are excited to share this 2023 Annual Impact Report that highlights our continued commitment to our stated public benefits in the areas of Music, Community and Environment.

Finally we would like to thank you, our beloved Festivarian community for sharing in this journey with us—without you we could not be where we are today.

Love,  
The Folks on Planet Bluegrass

# PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION (PBC)

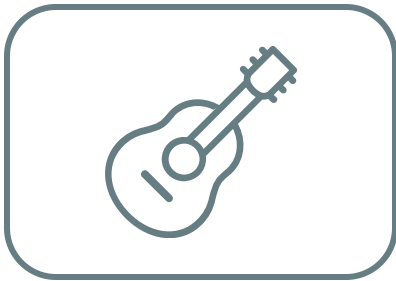
Telluride Bluegrass Festival, PBC (d/b/a "Planet Bluegrass")

## WHAT IS A PBC?

A Public Benefit Corporation (PBC) is a legal designation of a for profit corporation that considers the social and environmental outcomes in the decision making processes alongside generating profit. Specific areas of public benefit must be identified in the articles of incorporation.

Section 7 - 101 - 503 (2), C.R.S.  
"...a public benefit corporation shall be managed in a manner that balances the shareholders' pecuniary interests, the best interest of those materially affected by the corporation's conduct, and the public benefit identified in its articles of incorporation."

## OUR PUBLIC BENEFITS



### MUSIC

Host exceptional music festivals that both perpetuate the traditional roots of bluegrass and folk music while inspiring its evolution for future generations.



### COMMUNITY

Create events that draw people together and foster community engagement through shared experiences and the exchange of goods, skills, and ideas.



### ENVIRONMENT

Pioneer and propagate sustainable practices for music festivals.

## ASSESSMENT

The Colorado Business Corporation Act requires that public benefit corporations use a third party to assess and measure their practices. Historically Planet Bluegrass has met this requirement by being a Certified B Corporation. Over the years we have consistently reached out to additional third party groups such as Renewable Choice Energy (2003 - 2012), MENV CU students (2019), "Waste Free Earth" (2018), and B Lab (2015 - 2023) to help evaluate our practices. We have also tracked and benchmark our carbon foot-print for the Telluride Bluegrass Festival (since 2007) and waste generation (since 2003).

In 2023 Planet Bluegrass decided to not seek B-Corp recertification and is excited to move forward with a music festival specific certification conducted by A Greener Future (AGF). An AGF will be attending and evaluating our practices during the 2024 Festival Season.





# MUSIC

Host exceptional music festivals that both perpetuate the traditional roots of bluegrass and folk music while inspiring its evolution for future generations.



## 2023 MUSIC AT A GLANCE

### FESTIVAL

### SCHOOLS/WORKSHOPS

### CONTESTS

50th

**TELLURIDE**  
*Bluegrass*

4-Day festival in Telluride, CO that began as a traditional bluegrass festival and now embraces a diverse group of artists. 12,000 daily attendance

- Planet Bluegrass Sustainability Tent
- Elks Park Workshops

- Bluegrass Band Contest
- Troubadour Contest

51st

**ROCKY**  
**Grass**

3-Day festival in Lyons, CO embraces traditional bluegrass as well as its evolution. Campground pickin' is the heartbeat of the Festival  
4,500 daily attendance

- RockyGrass Academy
- RockyGrass Kids Camp
- Wildflower Workshops

- Bluegrass Band Contest
- Instrument Contests: Guitar, Banjo, Fiddle, Dobro

34th

**FOLK**  
*Festival*

3-Day festival in Lyons, CO rooted in Folk Music and the songwriting tradition.  
4,500 daily attendance

- Song School
- Wildflower Workshops

- Songwriters Showcase songwriting competition

**Wildflower**  
**FallGrass**

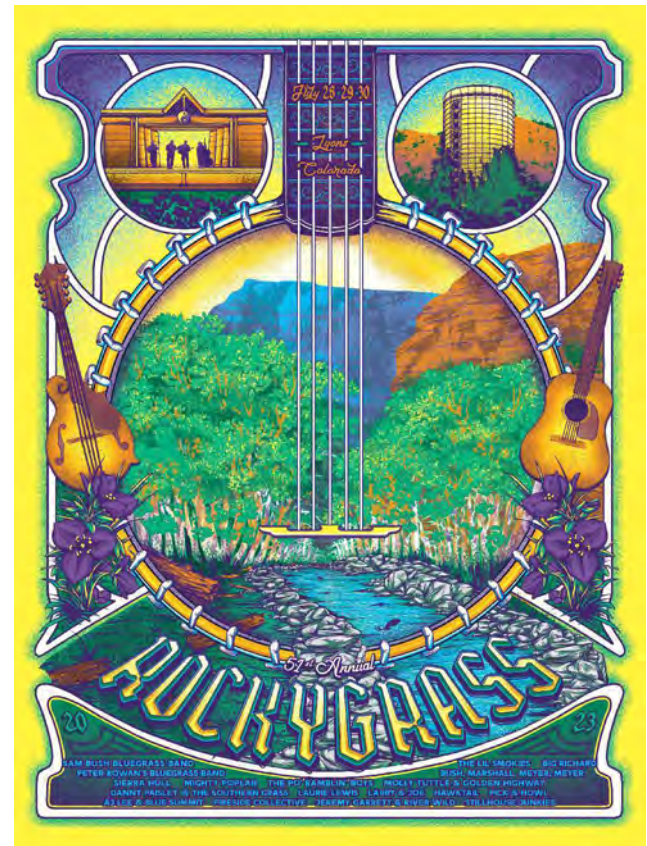
First Annual Fall Fest in Lyons, CO! Small bluegrass festival with camping to encourage campground picking.

**Elephant Revival**

Single-Night Concert with deep community roots  
3,000 Tickets Sold



# MUSIC IN 2023





# Cheers – to – 50 years



## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Telluride Bluegrass Festival! Planet Bluegrass has been honored to host TBF for the last 36 years!
- 2 Hosted the First Annual FallGrass on the Planet Bluegrass Ranch in Lyons, CO in September. This new intimate festival of around 300 people is to encourage community participation and campground picking.
- 3 Hosted the 32nd Annual Telluride Troubadour Contest after a 3-year hiatus. The Troubadour contest had over 350 song submissions.

- 4 Revived the Wildflower Concert series at the Planet Bluegrass Ranch in Lyons, CO drawing out the local community and letting music ring out into the fall.



# MUSIC CONTESTS

Our nationally-recognized contests (2 Songwriting, 2 Band, 5 instrumental) give ambitious musicians an opportunity to springboard to the spotlight.



Songwriter Showcase - Cindy Kalmenson (Ojai, CA)



Telluride Band Competition - The Fretliners (Lyons, CO)



Telluride Troubadour - Jackson Emmer (Carbondale, CO)



RockyGrass Band Competition - The Fretliners (Lyons, CO)



RockyGrass Instrumental Competitions:

Banjo - Luciya Sullivan

Guitar - Michael Furry

Mando - Ethan Batan

Fiddle - Celeste Johnson

Dobro - Summers Baker



## ROCKYGRASS ACADEMY

Bluegrass and Folk music is rooted in playing and learning music in community. RockyGrass Academy's small classes with world-class professional musicians set within a supportive music community like no other offers a full bluegrass immersive experience for both Kids and Adults.

## THE SONG SCHOOL

The School School fosters songwriters at every level with an array courses taught by industry professionals as well as seasoned musicians.

The nurturing community holds space for creative expression in all forms and pushes songwriters to the next level in their artistic journey.







## COMMUNITY

**Create events that draw people together and foster community engagement through shared experiences and the exchange of goods, skills, and ideas.**



**FESTIVARIAN (N):**  
A LOVING NAME  
FOR OUR DEVOUT  
FESTIVAL-GOERS.  
ALL ARE  
WELCOME!

Campers  
Food Vendors  
Sponsors  
Staff  
Craft Vendors  
Locals Families  
Non-Profit Partners Artists  
Volunteers



## VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS



54K Followers  
51K Likes



65.6k Email  
Subscribers



34K Followers



BLUEGRASS.COM (2023)  
2,595,429 Page views  
735k Users



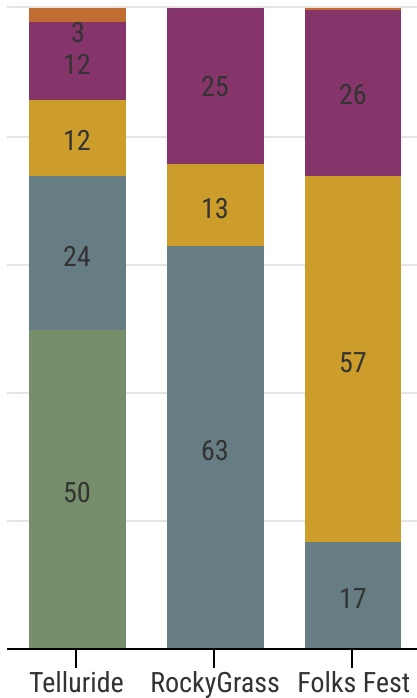
FESTIVARIAN.COM  
Active forum connecting Festivarians to  
share and exchange information on all  
aspects of the Festivals!



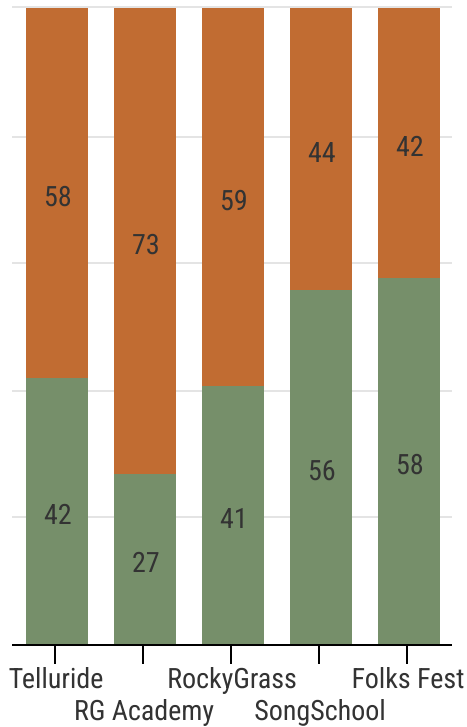
# 2023 FESTIVARIAN DEMOGRAPHICS

BASED ON TICKET PURCHASES

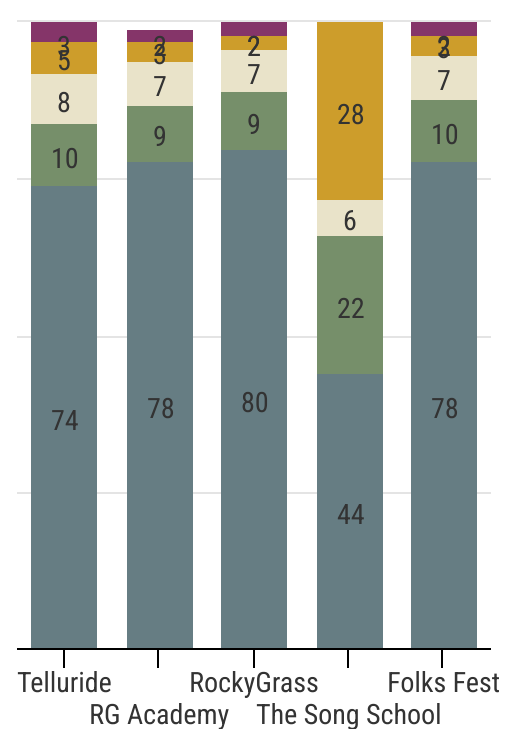
## AGE



## GENDER



## ETHNICITY



25 - 34 35 - 44 45 - 54 55 to 64 65+

Female Male

Caucasian Hispanic African American Asian Other

## ESTRO-JAM AT ROCKYGRASS ACADEMY



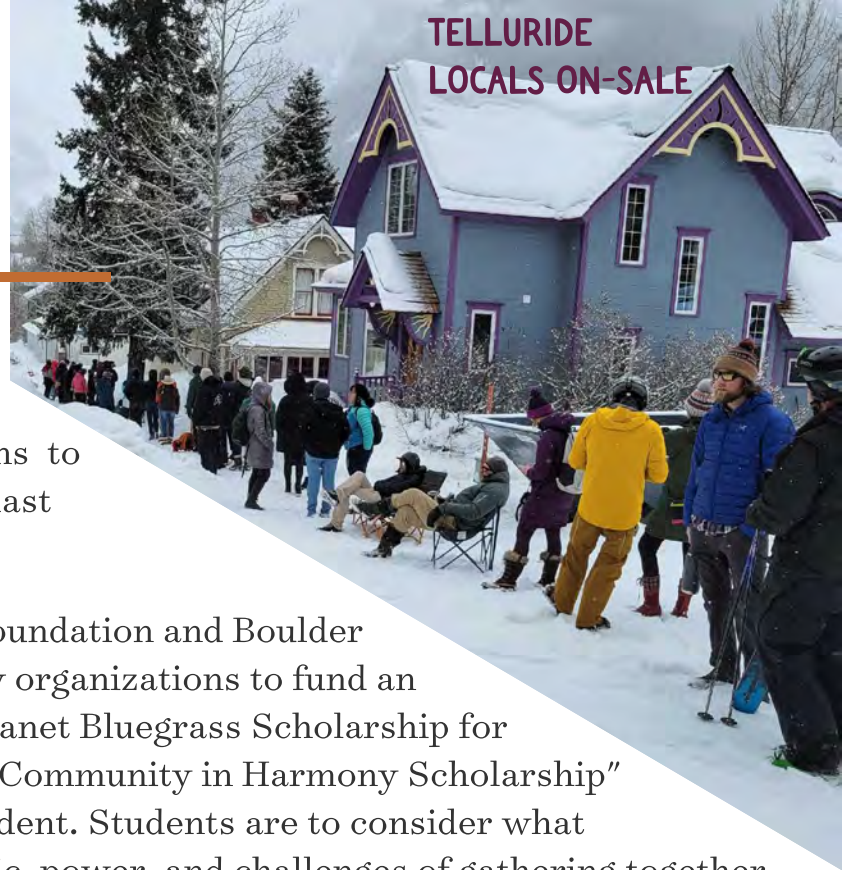


# COMMUNITY

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

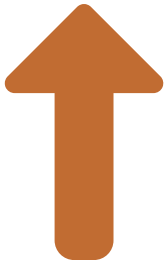
- 1 Increased the total community donations to the Telluride and Lyons from \$86,498 last year to \$115,240 in 2023.
- 2 Collaborated with Lyons Community Foundation and Boulder Community Foundation Boulder County organizations to fund an endowment for a reoccurring \$5,000 Planet Bluegrass Scholarship for a local Lyons Senior High School. The "Community in Harmony Scholarship" will be offered to a 2025 graduating student. Students are to consider what community means to them and the magic, power, and challenges of gathering together.
- 3 Donated a customized Telluride Bluegrass Martin Guitar to KOTO (Telluride's non-profit community radio station). KOTO raffled the guitar during the Telluride Bluegrass Festival to raise over \$6,600 to support the radio's programming.
- 4 Donated a total of 1471.4 pounds and 38.5 gallons of food from Telluride Vendors and Catering to the Telluride Angel Baskets Food Bank.

- 5 Reserved tickets for locals and hosted local ticket sales events in Telluride and Lyons to give priority access to the local community members.
- 6 Supported local non-profit organizations in the Town of Lyons with free mainstage MC promotions and free booth spaces.
- 7 Opened up the Lyons festival grounds to the Town of Lyons to host a community Easter Egg Hunt and Christmas Eve services.
- 8 The Lyons Wildflower Pavilion venue was used for community events such as High School Band Performances and the local Lyons community theater group.





# GIVING BACK TO OUR COMMUNITIES



The tips collected at our beer booth are donated to local nonprofit organizations whose missions further causes our Festivarian community believes in. In 2023 we Increased the total donations by 33% from last year. Additionally 6 more local Telluride organizations were able to receive funding by using our online Telluride Beer Booth Donation Application.



## \$110,240

### 2023 TELLURIDE BEER BOOTH RECIPIENTS

ECOACTION PARTNERS

SAN MIGUEL RESOURCE CENTER

SEAS OF TREES

KOTO RADIO

TELLURIDE ELKS

TELLURIDE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

MOUNTAIN FILM

SAN MIGUEL MENTORING

TELLURIDE ACADEMY

TELLURIDE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

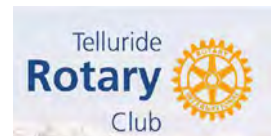
TELLURIDE ROTARY CLUB



ECOACTION PARTNERS



THE SOUND  
OF TELLURIDE  
SINCE 1975



## \$5,000

### LYONS HIGH SCHOOL BOOSTER CLUB

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Zach Tucker (Vice President) is a Board Member of the Lyons Community Foundation

Grace Barrett (Director of Communication and Partnerships) is the Co-Chair the Town of Lyons Economic Vitality Commission & Co-Chair of the Lyons Creative District

Allison Grimes (Volunteer & Vendors)  
Volunteer Lucky Lyons 5k





# ENVIRONMENT

**Pioneer and propagate sustainable practices for music festivals.**

**SUSTAINABLE  
FESTIVATION (n):**  
The act of creating a  
conscious community  
centered around a love  
of music and respect  
for the planet.

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- 1** Engaged in a partnership with Aclymate to improve our carbon tracking methodologies and assumptions through actual data. Aclymate helps smaller businesses to easily measure, reduce, report, and offset their climate footprint. Aclymate developed a carbon event tracking survey that allowed Festivarians to share information about their travel and lodging to get a custom calculated carbon impact and purchase their own carbon offsets.
- 2** Researched event specific certification and verification entities to assess our practices. In 2024 A Greener Festival (AGF) will send a representative to our Festivals to provide an independent assessment of our current festival practices.
- 3** Participated and engaged with other leaders in the event industry at the 2023 Folk Alliance International (FAI) Conference. The conference's theme was "Facing the Future: Sustainability in Folk Music" as it relates to both the environment and the folk music industry.
- 4** Overcame the challenge of losing access to the major composter near Lyons, CO. See "Compost Conundrum" on page 12.
- 5** Diagnosed a broken PV panel on the Wildflower PV System that was causing the system to shut down periodically. After this was fixed the PV system had its highest energy producing year since its installation.



# SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES



## Waste Diversion

Waste station monitors are superstars! (See page 13)



## Carbon Tracking & Offsets

New Festivarian Footprint Survey! (See page 14)



## Reusable Plate Program

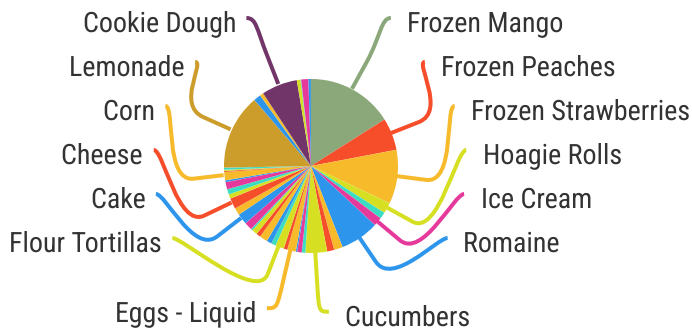
RockyGrass & Folks Festival Only



## Telluride Food Bank Donations

Food Vendors & Catering

**1,471.4 lbs**      **38.5 gallons**



## Plastic Film Recycling

Telluride Only



## Microtrash Cleanup



## Clean Campground Challenge

Hosted by Leave No Trace

**2023 TBF CLEAN CAMPSITE CHALLENGE WINNERS**



## RENEWABLE ENERGY

**15,544 kWhrs**

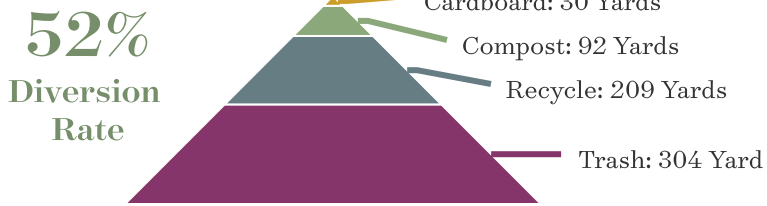


Our 13.2kW DC Photovoltaic system located on the roof of the Wildflower Pavilion produced 15,544 kWhrs in 2023 to offset the energy needs of the Lyons Festival grounds.

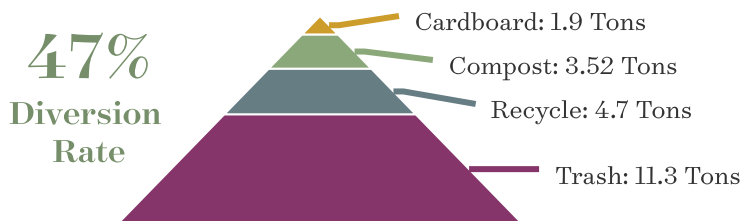


# WASTE MANAGEMENT

## TELLURIDE



## ROCKYGRASS & FOLKS FEST



## PLASTIC FILM RECYCLING

Local Telluridian  
Tyler Simmons  
spearheaded plastic  
bag/film recycling  
at the Telluride  
Festival!



## PLANET OVER PLASTIC TOWN OF TELLURIDE

In November 2022, the Town of Telluride adopted the Prohibition and Ban on the Use and Sale of Certain Plastic Materials to go into effect July 1, 2024.

Section 7-8-100 "Customers Must Request Condiments and Cutlery" went into effect November 2022 and TBF Vendors adhered to this ordinance.

## COMPOST CONUNDRUM BOULDER COUNTY

In the Spring of 2023 the primary composter serving the Denver-Boulder area was forced to temporarily suspend the acceptance of all compostable serving products, citing issues with contamination. This would have a HUGE impact because all our non-reusable serving items are certified compostable. Therefore we worked with our long-time partner, Eco-Products, to find a site in Colorado Springs that would accept our compost based on YOUR excellent track record of creating a clean waste stream. It wasn't an ideal solution because of the extra miles to haul it and the extra money and time that it took however after our analysis it was by far still the least carbon intensive a solution.

There is a lot to learn here for all of us. Access to composting can be taken away if we don't educate ourselves and do everything we can to keep non-compostable materials out of compost bins. Capital (Income - Expenses)



# CALCULATING OUR CO2 IMPACT



## FESTIVARIAN FOOTPRINT SURVEY

### TRAVEL

How and where are you traveling to the Festival?

### LODGING

Where are you staying? Are you camping?

### AVOIDED

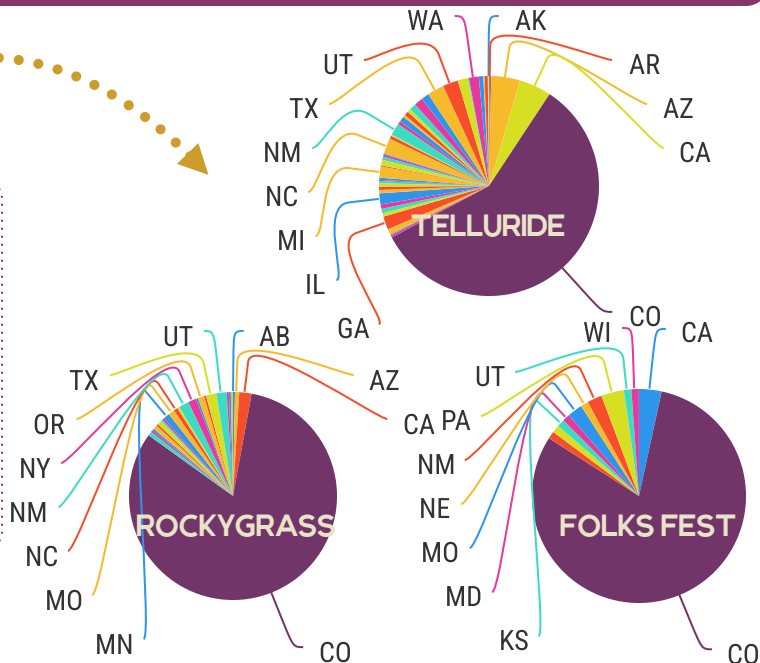
Emissions reductions from thermostat and commuting changes while Festivating

We’ve known that Festivarian travel emissions make up the majority of our Carbon Footprint, we saw a need to move past estimating attendee behavior into insights grounded in actual data. In conjunction with Aclymate, we rolled out a survey asking Festivarians us calculate their individual impact.

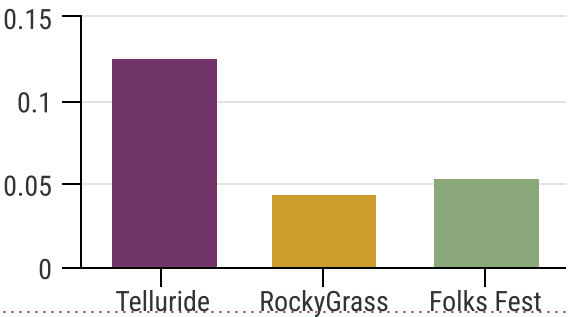


### SURVEY PARTICIPATION

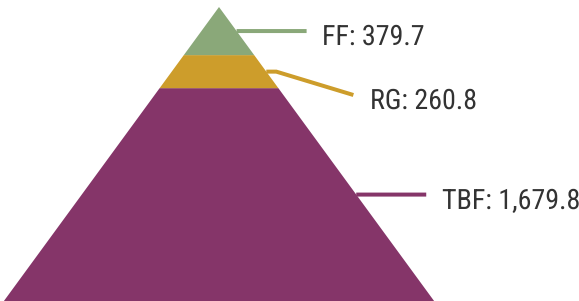
TELLURIDE – 9.17%  
ROCKYGRASS – 7.79%  
FOLKS FEST – 1.43%\*  
\*SURVEY NOT SENT AHEAD OF TIME, TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES



### AVERAGE FESTIVARIAN FOOTPRINT (MTC02E/PERSON)

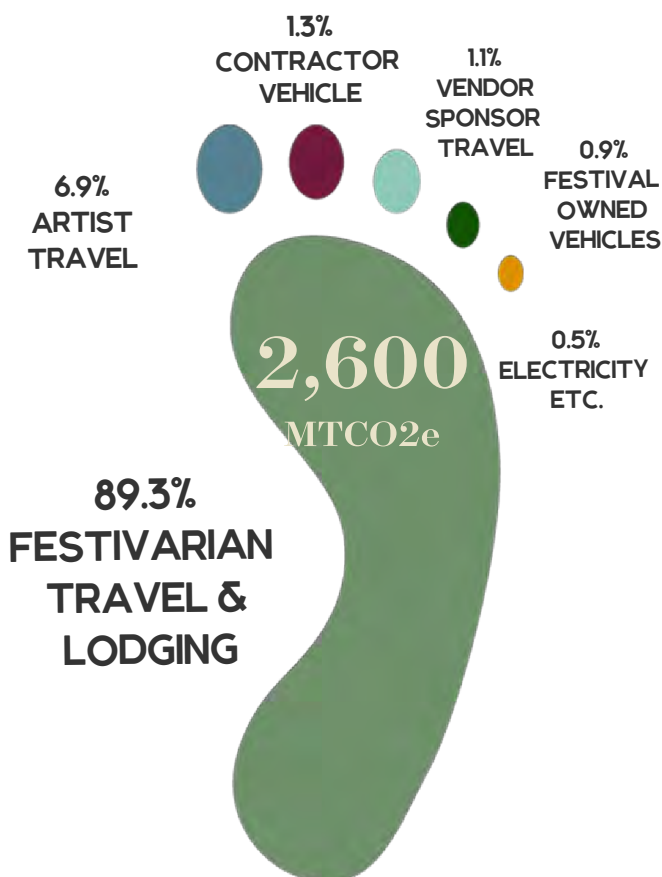


### TOTAL FESTIVARIAN FOOTPRINT (MTC02E)





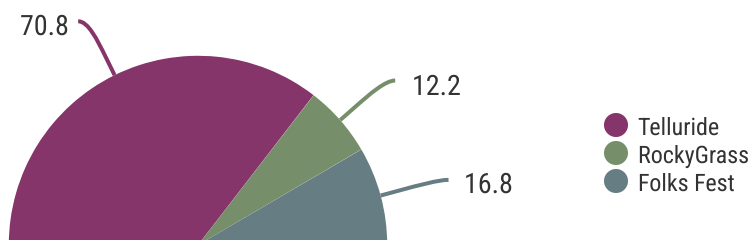
# 2023 FESTIVAL FOOTPRINT



## FESTIVARIAN SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

- Refined previous assumptions including: average carpool values, avoided emissions & lodging impact.
- Survey sample was representative of the larger population and can be used in future carbon calculations.
- Montrose is the primary airport instead of DIA for Telluride Bluegrass indicating potential high reductions available from shuttles from Montrose.
- Last year's carbon values were low based on assumptions, but years 2007 - 2021 were closer to survey values
- Individual impact is an important topic for Festivarians given the relatively high survey participation.

## CONTRIBUTION % BY FESTIVAL



**128**  
MTCO<sub>2</sub>e  
CARBON OFFSETS  
PURCHASED BY  
FESTIVARIANS!

## 2023 PLANET BLUEGRASS CARBON OFFSET PURCHASES

**2,600 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e**

### INDIA MADHYA PRADESH BIO-DIGESTORS

1,100 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e

### KATINGANN REDD + FOREST PROTECTION

1,099 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e

### RAS GHAREB WIND FARM

321 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e

### MALAWI HIGH-EFFICIENCY COOKSTOVES

80 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e



# EVOLUTION

**1988**

Planet Bluegrass Founded

**1992**

RockyGrass Held at the Planet Bluegrass Ranch (Lyons, CO)

**2001**

1st Mabon Festival

**2003**

Purchases first Carbon Offsets

**2007**

1st concerts held in Wildflower Pavilion

**2008**

PB offers free filtered water

**2013**

Lyons flood on festival grounds

**2015**

PB becomes B corp

**2018**

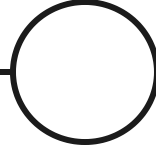
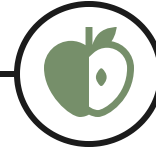
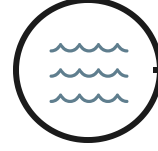
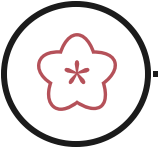
PB becomes a PBC

**2021**

Reduced capacity festivals & holds Spring Grass. Awarded Colorado Arts Relief Grant

**2023**

PB celebrates the 50th Telluride Bluegrass Festival



**1991**

1st Rocky Mountain Folks Festival in Estes Park

**1994**

Rocky Mountain Folks Fest moves to Planet Bluegrass Ranch (Lyons, CO), 1st Song School

**2003**

PB introduce composting in Telluride

**2004**

PB introduce compostable water bottle

**2007**

PB neutralizes 100% of emissions from Telluride Bluegrass Festival

**2011**

PB experiments with removing all landfill trash containers

**2014**

PB revives from the flood, the show must go on!

**2016**

PB introduces the reusable plate system in Lyons

**2020**

Pandemic strikes! No Festivals or Schools

**2022**

PB celebrates the 50th RockyGrass Anniversary