REGIONAL TECHNICAL TEAM MEETING
FINAL JULY MEETING SUMMARY

Date: Wednesday, 8 July 2026
Time: 9:00 AM to 12:02 PM
Location: Webinar

Members Present: John Crandall, Ryan Klett, Steve Fortney, Tom Kahler, Hans Smith, Tracy Bowerman (Vice Chair), and Tracy Hillman (Chair)

Others Present: Ariel Edwards (UCSRB), Jeff Jorgensen (NOAA), Mike Kane (CCNRD), Zack Deluca (Cramer Fish Sciences), Meghan Camp (UCSRB), Ryan Niemeyer (UCSRB), Scott Bailey (CCNRD), Mike Kaputa (CCNRD), Tyler Rockhill (Cramer Fish Sciences), Steve Kolk (Bureau of Reclamation), Stephen Lesky (CCNRD), and Mark Ingman (Cascadia CD).

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the draft agenda. RTT members present approved the agenda.

RTT & UCSRB Updates

Ariel Edwards walked through the final CACs SRFB 2026 project ranking. She shared that the top four projects were (in order from highest to lowest) MacPherson Flats, Entiat Roaring Creek, Little Siberia Floodplain, and Lower Chiwawa Area D. Ariel shared that the only deviation from the RTT scoring ranked list was that the Nason Creek SR 207 project was moved down to rank #5. The cost-benefit of the project and the available funding this year caused the project to drop to #5 on the CACs list. Ariel shared that the PCSRF could arrive in the fall. If so, the project would receive funding. Ariel shared that there is some uncertainty with the PCSRF. The SRFB may decide to allocate these funds to targeted investments or to the next (2027) SRFB grant round.

Ryan shared updates from the Barrier Prioritization Subgroup meeting. The group needed to schedule a second meeting to review and approve the updated barrier prioritization results. The next meeting is on Monday, and the goal is to approve updated barrier prioritization tiers. Ryan indicated that 30 barriers have been corrected in the Upper Columbia since 2023. There were some questions about expanding Tiers (to include roughly 20 or 30 barriers in each Tier 1). The group also reviewed the Wenatchee-Beaver Creek HUC10 and will review the corrected barriers during the meeting on Monday.

Ryan provided updates from the MaDMC meeting that occurred last week. This was the second MaDMC meeting this year, the first included a meeting in June on monitoring coordination. The meeting last week focused on the SRFB monitoring grant round. Ryan shared that the MaDMC also discussed developing a map-based remote-sensing habitat status and trend tool. The next MaDMC meeting will be in September. The MaDMC is considering holding quarterly meetings.

Decisions:

- **None**

Action Items:

- **None**

Colockum Reach Assessment

Mike Kane reported that they are finalizing the Colockum Reach Assessment. The assessment looks at habitat conditions within a geomorphic context. Zack Deluca presented the habitat aspects of the reach assessment. The first reach (RM 0-0.8) is influenced by the Columbia River and includes massive boulders with cascading waterfalls. This reach has pools with residual pool depths around 2 feet deep. The second reach reviewed was from RM 0.8-7.2, which includes alternating incised channels and sections with lateral connectivity including multi-thread floodplains. There is evidence of a substantial sediment supply in this reach. In addition, an avulsion took out the road. There is also evidence of irrigation withdrawal. Colockum Creek tributaries are full of dense brush and wood. They are steep at 6 – 7% grade. There are not many pools, but where there are pools, salmonids were in those pools. Ivy Walker Canyon and Kinsbury Canyon Creek combined contribute roughly 0.2 cfs to summer flow to Colockum Creek.

Mike Kane discussed salmonid use in the Colockum watershed. A PIT-tag array was present for 3 years in Colockum Creek. An adult steelhead was detected in the stream in 2015. There were no detections of PIT-tagged fish during 2016 or 2017. There is anecdotal evidence that steelhead accessed upper reaches in the Colockum watershed.

Zack discussed the eDNA sampling conducted during 2025. Samples were taken in every reach and tributary. *O. mykiss* were detected at every sampling location. They detected no Brook Trout in the system. A barrier assessment was completed in 2006. CCNRD is going to update the barrier assessment this summer. Work in 2006 identified 15 barriers, including 6 surface-water diversions. There is no provision for minimum instream flows in Colockum Creek. Zack noted that the 2006 WDFW assessment is outdated. For example, barrier T21R21E-3 has been replaced with a bridge. Not every barrier was able to be evaluated due to a lack of landowner willingness. Zack mentioned that they did not see any sign of beaver in the system; although, landowners mentioned the presence of large beaver ponds in the past.

Zack discussed the diversion at barrier 960391. The diversion has a fish screen, but for the diversion to function, a pushup dam is needed to divert water to the intake. Unfortunately, the pushup dam creates a fish barrier. Zack shared he observed the pump going on and off, and it diverts a substantial amount of water. Monitoring by Matt Holland indicated roughly half the flow, or 1 to 2 cfs, is taken from the stream. These diversions have been in place for a long time. Photos taken in 1957 indicate diversions and irrigated land already in place. Zack also shared a history of wildfires in the watershed. In 2013, a large wildfire was started during a thunderstorm. The flow during that event was modeled by WSE at the Tarpiscan Road Bridge to be 1,500 to 2,000 cfs. Zack shared that there are many alluvial fans that are often active. The pockets of laterally connected areas are driven by the alluvial fans that flatten the stream. However, subsequent sections of the creek are incised.

Zack reviewed the substrate grain size distribution and noted that there are areas with good spawning gravels. Zack made the point that if there were more complexity or habitat structures in the stream, more of those gravels could be captured to create better spawning habitat.

Zack then described reach-scale conditions. The stream consists of riffles, glides, and pools. Most pools were scour pools. Mean residual pool depth is close to 1 foot. Few pools were 3 feet deep or deeper. This could partly be due to the steepness of the stream (slope of 4-6%). Most of the wood is small wood, due to the wood source being mostly brush and small trees. There is more wood in the upper watershed where the watershed is forested. Cooler temperatures are also found in the upper watershed.

The restoration strategy for Colockum Creek focuses on: (1) sustaining or enhancing in-stream flow, (2) protecting existing habitat and longitudinal connectivity, and (3) improving instream and floodplain habitat conditions. Actions were broadly prioritized into Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 restoration. Tier 1 actions focused on flow restoration and fish passage barriers. Flow restoration focused on areas with diversions, and fish barrier corrections focused on areas with barriers. Most of these are along the mainstem. Some of the diversions and barriers could not be assessed in areas where landowners did not allow access.

Tracy Hillman asked whether restoration work should focus on the uplands and restoring watershed processes before focusing on the stream. Zack responded that the upland hillslope processes are mostly natural.

Mike Kaputa asked about potential new diversions. Zack shared that DNR installed screens in 2014 or 2015. Mike Kane shared that this was part of Public Works when they were working on the bridge. Mike shared that WDFW is aware of this site. Mike Kaputa asked about the primary use of the diverted water. Zack said it is transitioning from orchard to cattle.

Steve Fortney asked about hydraulic modeling. Zack shared that the Colockum watershed may not be the best place to spend money on hydraulic modeling.

Ryan Niemeyer asked about precipitation and flooding frequency. Tyler Rockhill responded that they are variable but likely occur every 10 to 25 years. Mike Kane commented that this recent event was exacerbated by the large wildfire in the system.

Decisions:

- **None**

Action Items:

- **RTT members will provide their comments on the Colockum Reach Assessment to Tracy Hillman by Friday, 17 July.**

RTT Discussion on Public Maps (Redd Data and Cold Water)

Ryan Niemeyer asked whether maps of redd data and cold-water patches should be added to the public website. He heard some concern that adding the data to a public website could increase the incidence of poaching. That is, poachers could use the information to identify areas for poaching ESA-listed fish. Tracy Hillman noted that poachers likely already know where to go to poach fish. Hans agreed with

Tracy Hillman. John Crandall shared that spring Chinook Salmon and Bull Trout are most vulnerable to poaching when they are spawning. Given the small sizes of the populations or spawning aggregates, it may be best to include a login and password to access the redd data and maps. The group agreed to not post the webmaps publicly, but rather to (1) share the shapefile publicly and (2) provide a link to the webmaps within the practitioner community.

Decisions:

- **None**

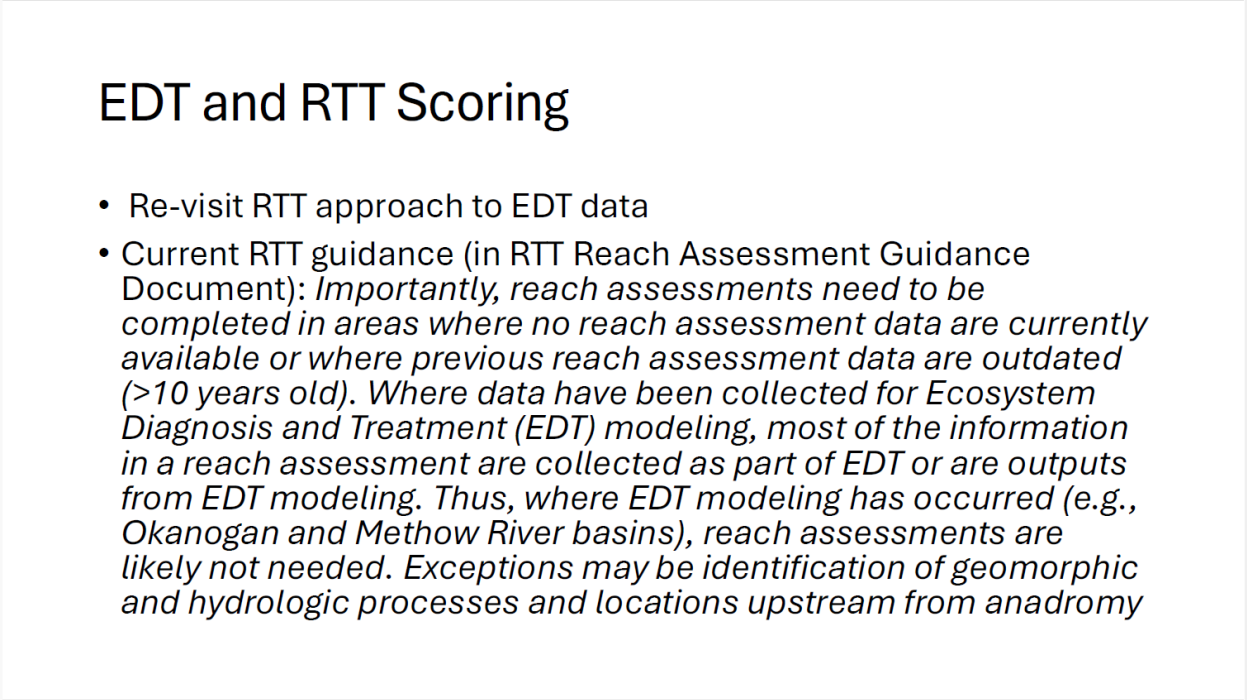
Action Items:

- **Ryan Niemeyer will remove public links to Upper Columbia redd maps and cold-water patches maps.**
- **Ryan Niemeyer will share links to webmaps (redds and cold-water patches) with practitioners.**

RTT Scoring Criteria Discussion

EDT and RTT Scoring

Ryan Niemeyer shared the following slide and asked whether there is a need to modify the RTT Reach Assessment Guidance Document regarding EDT modeling.

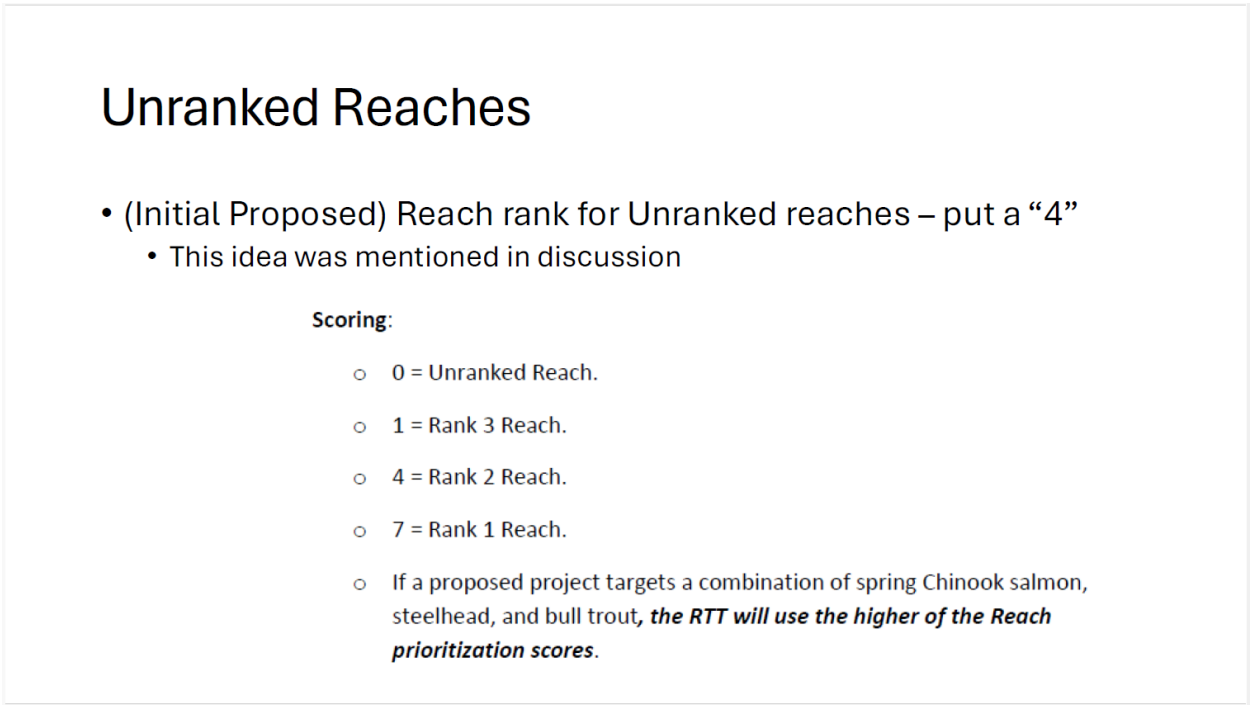


- John Crandall does not think EDT is a full replacement for reach assessments. Reach assessments provide additional information that is not available from EDT.
- Steve Fortney stated that EDT is important for prioritization and assessing habitat conditions, but it does not get at geomorphic processes and hydro analyses that are included in reach assessments. They can complement each other but not replace one another.
- Ryan Niemeyer noted that EDT is useful but does not replace reach assessments.

- Ryan Klett added that the "settled law" was that one was never meant to replace the other. EDT and reach assessments serve different purposes. Both have their needs.
- Tracy Hillman agreed with Ryan Klett and clarified that when it comes to prioritization, the EDT model can be used to prioritize project areas. This is stated clearly in the Prioritization Strategy. He hopes there is no confusion with that. However, when we are talking about reach assessments and EDT, they complement one another. It is not one over the other. As Ryan pointed out, they can have different purposes.

Update Reach Scoring Criteria

Ryan Niemeyer shared the following slides and asked for RTT feedback on reach scoring criteria.



Update Reach Scoring Criteria

- Apply score based on additional information – EDT, reach assessment prioritization/info, HARP analyses, or othe regionally accepted planning tools
  - For example, in 2026 SRFB grant round, the MacPherson Flats Acquisition was a rank 3, so received a score of "1" for that criteria, but same reach received a restoration tier 2 in LCRA.

Lower Chewuch RA (2025)

Table 5.6.2. Prioritization reach-based rankings for restoration and protection projects, LCRA area. The rankings do not incorporate LCRA results and may shift once additional *Prioritization* analyses are update

Reach	Restoration Tier	Protection Tier	Project Areas	Project RM
Pearrygin 1	3	1	Yes	1-2.5
Pearrygin 2	3	3	Yes	1-2.5
Pearrygin 3	2	1	Yes	2.5-4
Pearrygin 4	2	2	Yes	4-5.5
Pearrygin 5	1	3	No	n/a
Pearrygin 6	1	2	No	n/a
Pearrygin 7	1	1	Yes	7.5-8.5
Pearrygin 8	2	3	Yes	8.5-9.5
Pearrygin 9	3	3	Yes	9.5-10
Pearrygin 10	1	2	No	n/a
Pearrygin 11	1	1	No	n/a
Doe 1	2	n/a	No	n/a

Update Reach Scoring Criteria

- Potential wording: Where other analysis (e.g., EDT, reach assessment prioritization, HARP analyses, or other regionally accepted planning tools) indicate that the priority of a reach differs from its current RTT ranking and the sponsor provides documentation in their proposal, the RTT may adjust the score. Any adjustments should be documented to ensure transparency and consistency.
- Apply to BOTH ranked and unranked reaches

Update Reach Scoring Criteria

- Potential reach scoring breakdown based on additional information:

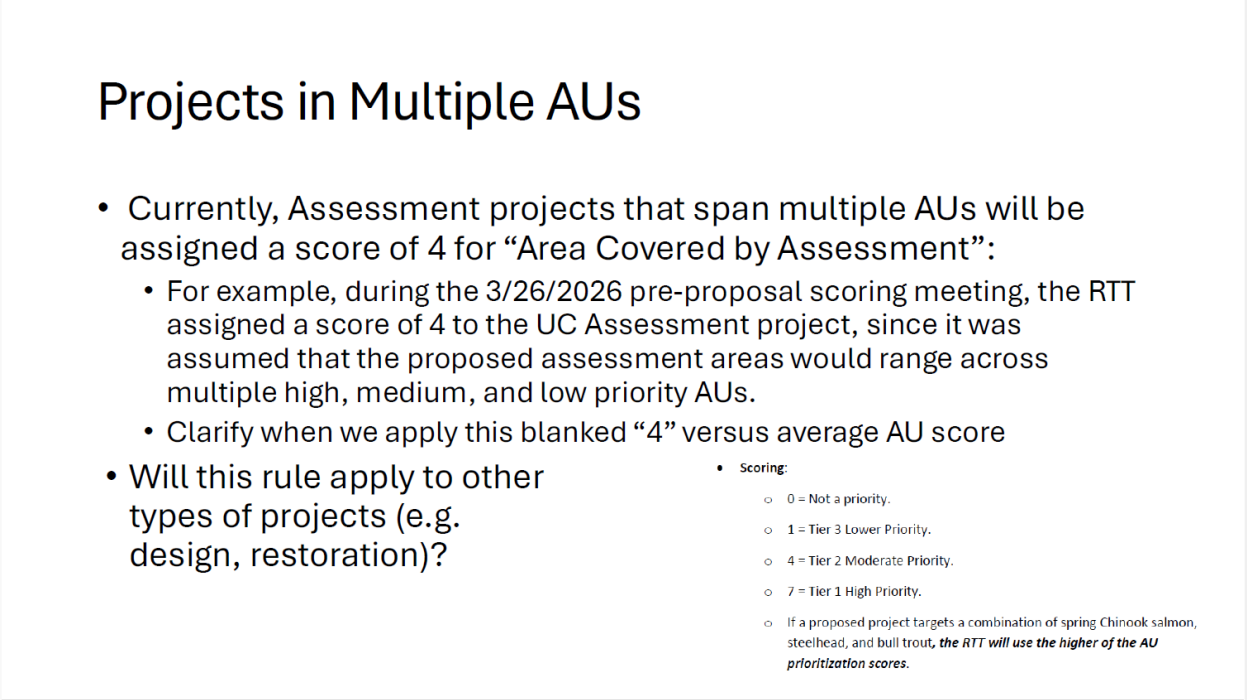
Score Range	Guidance
7	Assigned to **high priority** reaches based on the reach rank from the Prioritization Tool, EDT, reach assessment prioritization, and/or other regionally accepted planning tools or documents.
4	Assigned to **moderate priority** reaches based on the level of support from the Prioritization Tool, EDT, reach assessment prioritization, and/or other regionally accepted planning tools or documents.
1	Assigned to **lower priority** reaches based on the reach rank from the Prioritization Tool, EDT, reach assessment prioritization, and/or other regionally accepted planning tools or documents.
0	Assigned to reaches that are **not identified as priority reaches** by the Prioritization Tool (no rank) *and* are not supported by other regionally accepted planning tools or documents.

- Hans Smith agreed with the potential wording in the third slide.
- John Crandall agrees this is a way to use the best available science.
- Meghan Camp suggested changing the score ranges for these to not be flat scores but ranges of scores (0, 1-3, 3-5, 5-7, etc.).
- Tracy Hillman noted that we have done that for some of the other criteria (added ranges).
- Hans said he is okay with the ranges too.
- Steve Fortney indicated that he is fine with introducing results from other prioritization efforts (EDT, etc.) but wonders whether there are multiple frameworks. If so, how would we decide which one to use? The UC prioritization framework is across the entire region, while reach assessments cover a small area. How do we reconcile the priorities coming out of finer scale assessments versus region-wide tools?
- Hans suggested we should leave it up to the sponsor to tell us which prioritization they are relying on for their proposed project. The RTT can consider what the sponsor brings versus our results from the regional tool.
- Tracy Bowerman appreciated the suggestion but wonders whether this will result in messy comparisons between different data types. This may be a place where it would be helpful to work through some examples. She noted that the current reach ranking system is relative within an assessment unit – so if you start implementing other ranking systems, how do we account for that issue.
- Hans agreed with Tracy B but noted that he at least has some doubts with the blanket scores generated from the prioritization tool. He thinks that other data would be helpful to refine the prioritization tool.
- John C does not want to bail on prioritization and wants to keep it. He believes we can allow for some special cases and thinks it would only apply to a few select cases. This allows for flexibility without reworking the entire prioritization framework.

- Tracy H noted that some of the confusion may come from how the prioritization tool evaluates different spatial scales. It first ranks among assessments units, which are based on HUC12. This ranking occurs relative to the assessment units within a population, not among populations. Within each assessment unit, the strategy identifies reaches following OBMEP criteria (based on locations of tributaries and a reach could not be longer than some defined distance) and then ranks the reaches. Here, reaches are ranked among all reaches within the assessment unit, not among assessment units. The WATs then rank project sites within reaches. In some cases, reach assessments may identify different reaches and they rank project sites within the reaches. This latter step deviates from the prioritization strategy. It is important to remember that the prioritization tool ranks reaches, not project sites, and the RTT uses the reach ranks to evaluate projects at the reach scale, not at the project scale.
- Ryan N said most of the newer reach assessments do include our reach network but agrees that in some places it is an issue, particularly with USFS surveys. He said rankings and model parsimony will be on the docket for the next prioritization meeting.
- Hans noted that Yakama Nation reach assessments often base rankings on project areas and not necessarily on reaches.
- John C said it has taken a long time to get alignment on reaches and AUs and would be loath to shift that and risk confusing people more. Also, when it comes to looking at confinement, he would also be wary of throwing out all unconfined areas because there could be very important limiting factors in those areas.
- Mark Ingman brought up the issue with Roaring Creek and the valley confinement algorithm. He voiced concern with overprioritizing based on confinement when there can be good cold-water spots to restore. He added that a better data layer may help with this issue but also cautioned the RTT not to place too much emphasis on confinement.
- Tracy H said he is not in favor of throwing out the prioritization tool but is open to updating it as necessary. He noted that the RTT has never done a sensitivity analysis on the tool, which could be useful to help simplify the tool. No matter what we develop, there will be some who like the tool and others who do not. He believes it is important to link a life cycle model to the prioritization tool.
- Tracy B does not think that it's the spatial structure that is the primary issue. The relativity of the reach rankings may be the issue, and Ryan could run a sensitivity analysis by removing the relativity criteria and see what happens. For example, in Nason Creek, there is a whole section of the stream that is high priority, but the framework forces you to choose some as higher priorities than others. If you rerun the tool without that "relativity" criteria, how would the ranks be spit out?
- Steve F said it sounds like there is motivation to reevaluate prioritization and is willing to participate in this process and in the working group. He added that the reach network that we have currently uses a cut off based on distance, which can lead to conflation issues in some cases.
- Ryan Klett noted that he was not directly involved in developing the prioritization tool but indicated that for EDT, length cut-offs for reaches were used to reduce "size bias." He is not sure whether the prioritization model has this bias as well (would be good to know).
- Ryan N. said he will conduct sensitivity analysis, convene the prioritization work group, and look at reach breaks. This work will be used to determine whether the RTT needs to update the scoring criteria.

Projects in Multiple AUs

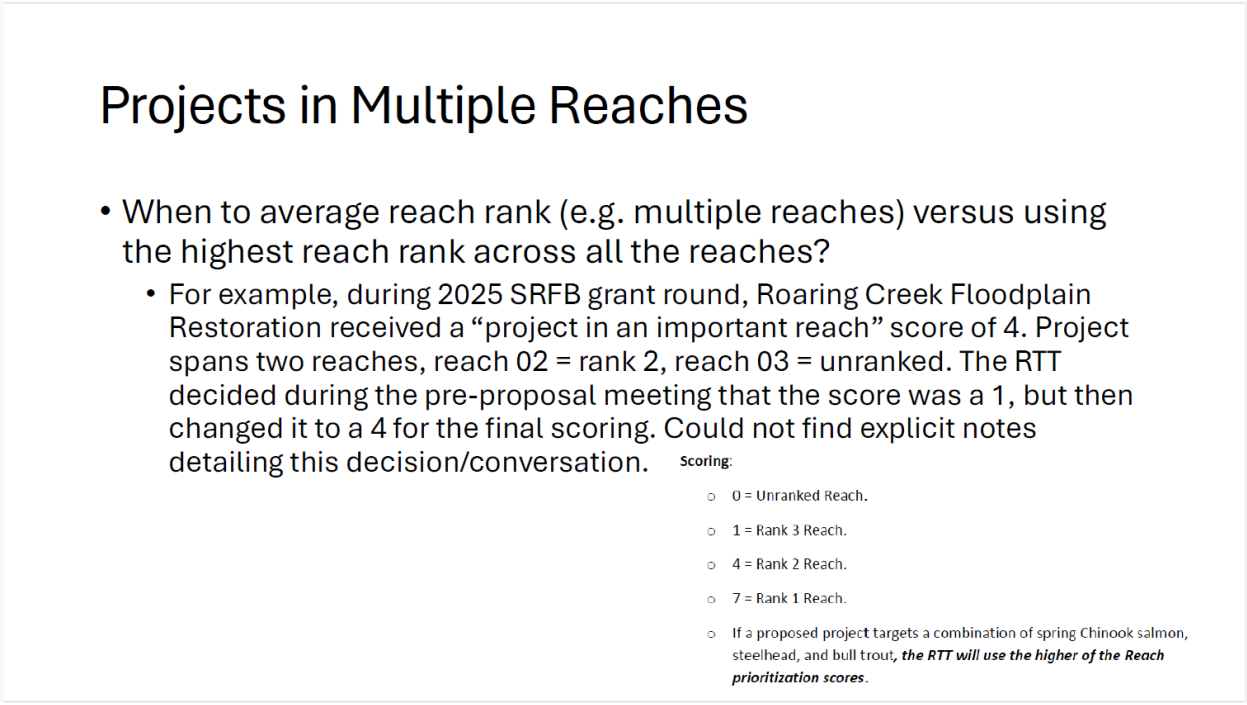
Ryan Niemeyer shared the following slide and asked the RTT for confirmation on how to score projects that span across two or more assessment units.



- Tracy H noted that the 2026 example was a special case because there were so many AUs included in the proposed project that it was difficult to identify all the AUs and then average their scores. As such, the RTT gave the assessment project a "4" for AU with the understanding that some AUs would rank high and others would rank low. It would be useful for the sponsors to identify all the AUs that their proposed project covers. This will make it easier for the RTT to calculate an average score.
- Hans said for design and restoration projects, it does not make sense for some of the tributary connections/alluvial fan zones to be cut out from the AU. He does not believe the overall project score should be diminished because some of the project area is located in a lower priority AU. He suggested that for assessment projects, the RTT should use the average, but for restoration, protection, and design projects, the RTT could use the highest AU score.
- Ryan N noted that there are some restoration projects that have been scattered across multiple AUs.
- Tracy H indicated that maybe the AUs have to be contiguous to use the higher of the two scores, and if there are 3 or more AUs, or if the 2 are not contiguous, you take the average. This would be applied across all project types.
- Ryan N will add this as a discussion item during the prioritization work group meeting.

Projects in Multiple Reaches

Ryan Niemeyer shared the following slide and asked the RTT for confirmation on how to score projects that span across multiple reaches.



- Ryan N suggested using the same approach for scoring multiple reaches that Tracy H just described for scoring multiple AUs.
- Members agreed.

Decisions:

- **None**

Action Items:

- **Ryan Niemeyer will work on the sensitivity analysis and present the results to the Prioritization Work Group.**
- **Ryan Niemeyer will draft language to address scoring for multiple AUs and multiple reaches for RTT review and approval.**
- **Ryan Niemeyer will send out a poll to schedule the prioritization work group meeting.**
- **Ryan Niemeyer will discuss protection project scoring criteria at the next RTT meeting.**

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm