

COLUMBIA RIVER TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

July 22, 2026

Facilitator's Summary

Facilitation Team: Emily Stranz & Colby Mills, DS Consulting

The following Facilitator's Summary is intended to capture basic discussion, decisions, and actions, as well as point out future actions or issues that may need further discussion at upcoming meetings; it is not intended to be the "record" of the meeting. Official minutes can be found on the TMT website: <https://public.crohms.org/tmt/agendas/2026/>. Suggested edits for the summary are welcome and can be sent to Colby at colby@dsconsult.co.

Review Meeting Summaries & Minutes

TMT Members approved the official meeting minutes and facilitator's summary from July 15.

Dworshak Dam Operations

Oscar Espinoza, Corps, reported on operations at Dworshak Dam (DWR). Reservoir elevation this morning was 1,587.41 feet and the project is currently releasing 9.7 kcfs; the reservoir is dropping about 1-foot/day at the current release rate.

Water temperatures at Anatone and Orofino are in the 70s°F, Lewiston in the mid-50s°F; the cold 43°F DWR water is helping keep the Lower Granite (LWG) tailwater this morning around 66.78°F. Oscar expects temperatures to slowly rise over the next couple of days due to current/forecasted 100°F weather, though cloud cover and limited rain should help.

Oscar emphasized that the LWG forebay temperature string over the past couple of days looked like "textbook stratification." Although the region is experiencing a heat wave, forecasts for August look more favorable with mid-90s°F temperatures, which will help manage water temperatures.

Model results from this morning show DWR ramping down to 8,500 cfs starting tomorrow, holding that for about 6 days, and then ramping back up to 9.7 kcfs. Oscar noted the model was "abnormal" and should be taken cautiously as it responds strongly to cloud cover; he thinks the later part of the model is more representative than the sharp low-temperature dip earlier in the forecast. The Corps is running the model daily and will adjust operations as conditions change.

The DWR Flow Augmentation Water Tracker ("DWR Visualizer") shows about 31% of the season complete, with about 25% of water used so far; looking ahead about 42% of the season and 35% of water will be used next week. About 880,008 feet of volume remains in the reservoir, including forecasted inflows. He noted the short-term goal of the relaxation period is to preserve water while staying near the LWG tailwater target of 68°F. Operations might go slightly above 68°F, but not by much and not for long; reducing flows to 8,500 cfs would save about 1,000 cfs/day, which could be used later in August or during any future heat waves.

Oscar noted that over the past 10 years, there has been an average of 9 days above 100°F after July. The current operation gives ~11 days of 13,000 cfs capability; by running at 8,500 cfs for 6 days, DWR will gain ~2 more days (for a total of ~13 days) of 13 kcfs outflow. He also described a longer model scenario (outlined in the Visualizer) with future ramp ups to 13 kcfs in August, but emphasized this scenario is very weather-dependent.

Charles Morrill, WA, noted that WA Ecology understands the model suggests the operation might stay at or below 68°F; he emphasized that the 68°F is the standing WA State temperature criterion. WA understands exceedances might occur under the operation, but the criterion itself does not change. Charles

added that WA supports and appreciates the Corps' continued efforts. Thomas Starkey, WA Ecology, thanked the group and echoed appreciation for balancing fish needs and water-quality standards. Regarding [SOR \(2026-2\)](#), he noted Ecology would prefer more recognition of the state WQS and Clean Water Act implications in the SOR language, stressing that any threshold above criteria should be described as an exceedance of WA's 68°F criterion, not as a relaxation of the criterion. He asked that SORs avoid implying that higher targets are established standards unless they have gone through the proper Clean Water Act process and offered to assist in drafting future SORs. As the SOR author, NOAA, was not present at the meeting, WA Ecology's comments will be captured in the meeting summary and shared with NOAA for follow-up.

In response to queries, Oscar confirmed the model is predicting the LWG tailwater dropping to ~65°F around July 25–26, but he doesn't think it will get that low. He could not fully explain the reason for the model's response to cloud-cover other than the model needs updating; the Corps Walla Walla is short on time and personnel to update it, and they are using it as best possible. He reiterated the post-July 26 period is more representative of what is likely to happen.

Non-Court Ordered Operations Review

Storage Reservoirs – Chris Runyan, Reclamation, reported on Bureau of Reclamation projects:

- **Hungry Horse (HGH):** Inflows were 2 kcfs, with outflows of 3.5 kcfs. Midnight elevation was 3,558.2 feet (1.8 feet from full). HGH expects to hold outflows at 3.5 kcfs through September, with a slight drop possible in the next couple of weeks to meet the end-of-September draft target of 3,544.1 feet.
- **Grand Coulee (GCL):** Inflows were 92.9 kcfs, with outflows of 101.0 kcfs. Midnight elevation was 1,288.2 feet (1.8 feet from full). GCL is expected to draft through August while keeping lower system flows steady/slowly declining to meet the end-of-August draft target for Lake Roosevelt of 1,277 feet.

Alexis Mills, Corps, reported on Corps of Engineers projects:

- **Libby (LIB):** Midnight elevation was 2,448.1 feet, with inflows of 13 kcfs and outflows of 9 kcfs for the bull trout minimum; outflows are expected to hold through the end of August.
- **Albeni Falls (ALF):** Midnight elevation at Hope was 2,062.3 feet, with inflows of 19 kcfs and outflows of 20 kcfs; ALF will hold within the normal summer band through mid-September.
- **DWR:** No additional updates.

Fish – Emi Melton, NOAA, was not in attendance, and provided the following written fish update prior to the meeting. For juveniles, outmigration is mostly sub-yearling Chinook, with the average index at LWG around 2,300 the past 2 weeks.

For Adults, summer Chinook counts are winding down to around 3-400 at Bonneville (BON), YTD at 73% of the 10-year average. Steelhead counts range from 4-500 at BON, with YTD at 66% of the 10-year average. Sockeye are also winding down, with counts around 200 at the beginning of last week, and down to less than 100 towards the end of the one-week period; YTD is 24% of the 10-year average.

Shad is returning between 1,000-2,000/day at BON; YTD is 60% of the 10-year average.

Dave Swank, USFWS, added that adult Pacific lamprey counts are still running well below the 10-year average.

Power System – Tony Norris, BPA, had no updates on the power system.

Set Agenda for Next TMT Meeting

The group requested the following agenda items for July 29; TMT Members may send additional items to Doug Baus or Emily Stranz. A draft agenda will be posted to the TMT website by Monday COB.

1. DWR Operations

Questions or Comments from Non-TMT Members

There were no questions or comments from non-TMT Members.

The next TMT meeting will be on July 29 at 9AM PDT.

**Columbia River Regional Forum
Technical Management Team
OFFICIAL MINUTES
Wednesday, July 22, 2026**

Today's TMT meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and conference call, chaired by Doug Baus, Corps, and facilitated by Emily Stranz, DS Consulting. Minutes were collected by Andrea Ausmus, BPA (contractor, CorSource Technology Group). A list of today's attendees is available at the end of these minutes.

1. Review Meeting Summaries & Minutes – *Emily Stranz, DS Consulting*

- July 15 Approved

2. Dworshak (DWR) Operations – *Oscar Espinoza, Corps*

a) DWR Current Hourly Data

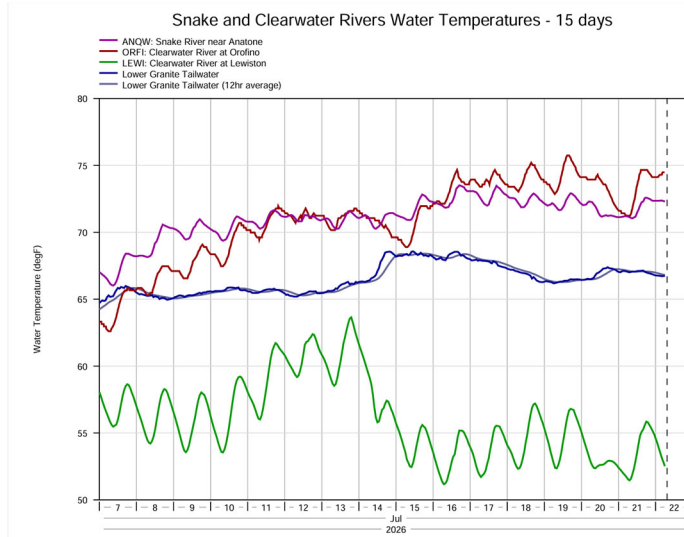
- Forebay Elevation: 1587.41 feet
 - Drafting 1 foot per day

- Current Outflows: 9.7 kcfs

b) Snake and Clearwater Rivers Temperature Data

- Anatone (Snake River):
 - Temperature: ~72°F
- Orofino (Clearwater River Mainstem):
 - Temperature: ~74°F
- Dworshak (DWR) Tailwater:
 - Temperature: ~43°F
- Lewiston
 - Temperature: mid-50s
- Lower Granite (LWG) Tailwater:
 - Temperature: 66.78°F

- Last 15 Days of Temperature



- Expect the temperature to rise over the next couple of days due to the 100°F weather.
- The cloud cover and sparse amount of rain that the region has been getting has been helping.

c) Lower Granite Forebay Temperature String

- Over the past couple of days, LWG has had ‘textbook’ stratification.

d) RFC 10-Day Regional Weather Forecast

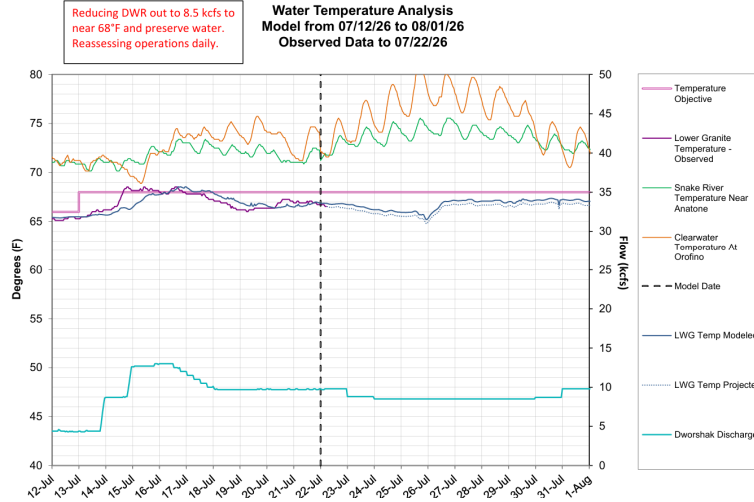
- Temperature:
 - Snow level chart shows a lot of red
- Precipitation:
 - July 22 rain fell in Central Idaho.

e) Weather Forecast for Lewiston, ID

- Lewiston, ID was in a heatwave of >100°F days, forecasted through Friday.
- Going into August it is mid-90s.

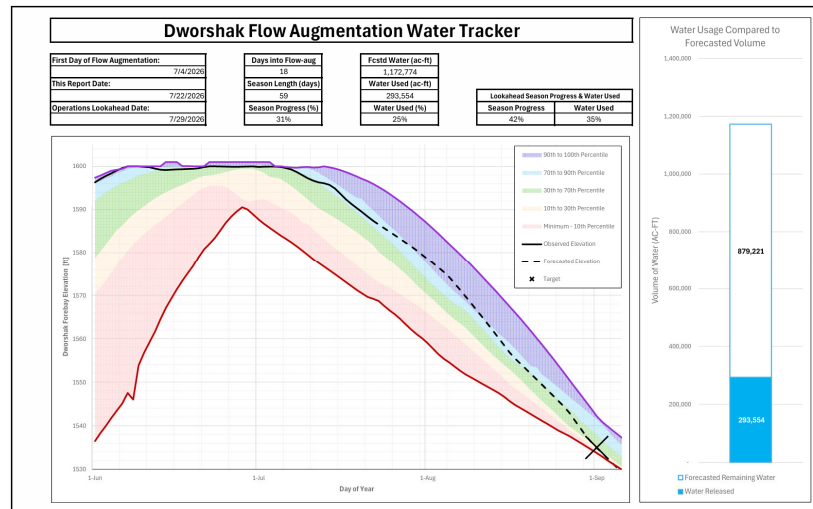
Date	Year	Hour	0.5m	1.5m	3m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	Battery
07/22/2026	00:00	224.18	71.6	71.5	71.1	69.5	67.5	65.2	63.7	63.6	62.9	63.78	
	01:00	224.17	71.2	71.2	71.1	70.1	68.5	65.0	63.7	63.5	62.9	63.78	
	02:00	224.18	71.3	71.2	70.9	70.8	69.5	67.0	65.6	64.0	63.6	62.9	63.78
	03:00	224.19	71.5	71.3	71.2	70.6	70.2	67.1	65.7	63.8	63.6	62.9	63.78
	04:00	224.20	71.5	71.4	71.2	71.0	70.2	67.2	65.1	63.7	63.6	62.9	63.76
	05:00	224.21	71.4	71.4	71.3	71.2	70.4	67.5	65.4	63.8	63.6	62.9	63.78
	06:00	224.21	71.5	71.4	71.3	71.2	70.5	67.5	65.5	63.8	63.6	62.9	63.78
	07:00	224.23	71.4	71.4	71.3	71.2	70.9	67.4	65.2	63.7	63.6	62.8	63.76
	08:00	224.21	71.5	71.4	71.3	71.2	70.8	67.1	64.9	63.7	63.6	62.9	63.62
	09:00	224.21	71.5	71.4	71.3	71.3	70.3	67.1	64.9	63.7	63.6	62.9	63.60
	10:00	224.21	71.5	71.4	71.3	71.3	70.4	66.9	65.0	63.7	63.6	62.9	63.60
	11:00	224.21	71.5	71.4	71.3	71.3	70.4	66.9	65.2	63.6	63.5	62.8	63.60
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	20:00	224.21	71.5	71.4	71.3	71.2	69.8	67.7	65.0	63.6	63.5	62.8	63.78
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	09:00	224.29	74.6	72.8	71.3	70.7	69.6	67.1	64.0	63.5	63.4	62.8	63.60
	10:00	224.29	74.6	72.8	71.3	70.5	69.6	67.2	64.0	63.5	63.4	62.7	63.60
	11:00	224.24	74.6	73.5	71.2	70.5	69.1	67.3	63.7	63.4	63.4	62.7	63.69
	12:00	224.24	74.6	73.5	71.2	70.5	69.1	67.3	63.7	63.4	63.4	62.7	63.69

f) Model Results – posted July 22 at 8am



- Operations:
 - DWR is ramping down to 8.5 kcfs starting July 23.
 - Holding 8.5 kcfs for about six days.
 - At the end of the graph DWR ramps back up to 9.7 kcfs.
- Model Results:
 - Abnormal and should be taken with a grain of salt.
 - Responding heavily to the cloud cover.
 - Espinoza felt that the back end is representative of what will be seen.

g) Dworshak Visualizer Flow Augmentation Water Tracker – posted July 22 at 8am



- Current:
 - Percent through season: 31%

- Water Used: 25%
- Upcoming Operation Lookahead:
 - Percent through season: 42%
 - Water Used: ~35%
- Forecasted Volume in Reservoir: 8800 kaf
 - Includes forecasted inflows
- Operations:
 - Goal during the relaxation period is to preserve water while riding the fine line of 68°F.
 - May go slightly above 68°F but not by much and not for an extended period of time.
 - Dropping down to 8.5 kcfs saves ~1 kcfs/day which can be used in late August or for potential heatwaves.
 - Over the past 10 years there has been an average of 9 days above 100°F after July 21.
 - Currently have ~11 days of 13 kcfs and with the operation going down to 8.5 kcfs for six days we will accumulate another two days for a total of 13 days at 13 kcfs.
 - Visualizer shows the operations of DWR ramping down for 6 days and then back up to full powerhouse (9.7 kcfs) until August 4. On August 5, DWR will ramp up to 13 kcfs and hold until August 16. DWR would then back down to full powerhouse (9.7 kcfs) until August 27 where it will run back up to 13 kcfs through the end of the month with a ramp down.
 - Subject to change dependent on weather.
 - If hotter than anticipated during the 8.5 kcfs period, then DWR will ramp up accordingly.
 - If lucky DWR will extend the 8.5 kcfs period while staying under the 68°F.
 - Run model daily and adjust accordingly.

Charles Morrill, WA, said that he really appreciated the update and the model suggesting that we may not exceed 68°F or stay very close to it. He said that was encouraging news but that could change. He said that the one thing that he wanted to share after talking with Washington Ecology about the operation as it was proposed in the SOR, was that the criteria still remains at 68°F. He said that he wanted to recognize that was still the criteria and Washington understands if it was exceeded in this operation that was not a concern for them, but they wanted to make sure that he speaks to that criteria as a standing criteria and it does not change. It is still set at 68°F regardless of how this plays out. He said that Thomas Starkey was on and could speak to that if he did not do it well. He said that was

what he wanted to share from Washington's perspective with TMT and they support what Espinoza was doing and are grateful and appreciative of his efforts.

Dave Swank, USFWS, thanked Espinoza for the update. He said that he wanted to clarify his understanding of Espinoza's explanation of the model results. He said that he thought that Espinoza was saying that the drop down to almost 65°F at the end of July 25 was that he would not be surprised if we actually did not get that low, that the model is responding to the cloud cover. He asked if that was correct.

Espinoza said that was correct. He said that he personally did not believe that we would get down to sub-65° on around July 25.

Swank said that he was wondering what that might be. He asked if the model was not quite good at incorporating cloud cover as a variable or he was wondering what was causing that.

Espinoza said honestly is an older outdated model that needs to be updated and they are in the process of trying to go about their ways of updating it. Unfortunately, they are cut on time and manpower, so they are using this as best as their ability. It is a bit finicky and the moment he was not sure why it was acting the way it is, which is why he prefaced everything by saying it should all be taken with a grain of salt. He said that he did believe that it would not exceed 68°F and at the back end, after July 26, is more representative of what is going to happen.

Thomas Starkey, Washington Ecology, said that he wanted to follow up about Morrill's comment. He said that he also appreciates this group's expertise in helping to determine how to manage water for the Snake, for migrating fish, while also meeting State water quality criteria to the best of ability. And he especially appreciates the Corps' ability to minimize exceedances over 68°F regardless of SORs and he would continue to defer to Morrill and the other Fish Managers' expertise. However, Ecology was asking for more recognition of the State Water Quality Standards, and therefore the Clean Water Act, in the language of the SORs when managers decide to deliberately exceed those criteria. Any threshold above criteria should not be implied as compliance rather should be described as an exceedance of Washington's criteria of 20°C (68°F). He said that had largely been absent in some of the sources and conversations regarding DWR operations and LWG temperature targets. He said that he thought that any operation that exceeds that criteria should be noted as such and should avoid targeting higher thresholds that have not gone through any sort of Clean Water Act process or should at the very least describe the necessity to avoid the magnitude, duration and frequency of exceedances over the State criteria. He said that he would be happy to make himself available and try to follow up with any of the managers that write and submit SORs. He said that this was a formal request from the Washington state Water Quality agency at this point that the sources do describe a bit more about the Clean Water Act and the implications of targeting higher thresholds that are not established in State criteria.

Stranz thanked Starkey. She said unfortunately the agency that authored this SOR was not at TMT today. She said that TMT would capture what Starkey had said in the meeting summary and make sure to get that to NOAA and then if there was any follow up that was needed offline, we can connect folks to make sure that they hear, and she thought that everyone else heard him as well.

3. Non-Court Ordered Operations Review

a) Fish

Salmon – NOAA representatives provided an update through Stranz

- Juveniles (Index Count)
 - Outmigration is mostly subyearling Chinook
 - Subyearling Chinook
 - Lower Granite ~2300 Average Index
- Adult Salmon Counts
 - Summer Chinook
 - Bonneville:
 - Count: ~300 – 400 fish per day
 - YTD: 73% of ten-year average
 - Steelhead
 - Bonneville:
 - Count: ~400 – 500 fish per day
 - YTD: 66% of ten-year average
 - Sockeye
 - Winding down
 - Bonneville:
 - Count: ~200 fish beginning of last week
 - Count: ~100 fish end of one week period
 - YTD: 24% of ten-year average
 - Shad
 - Bonneville:
 - Count: ~1000 – 2000 fish per day
 - YTD: 66% of ten-year average

Lamprey – Dave Swank, USFWS

- Adult Pacific Lamprey
 - Still looking at a year that is well below the 10-year average.

a) Storage Reservoirs

Reclamation – Chris Runyan

- Hungry Horse Dam
 - Inflows (07/21): 2 kcfs

- Outflows (07/21): 3.5 kcfs
- Midnight Elevation: 3558.2 feet
 - From Full: 1.8 feet
 - Drafting 0.7 feet from last week
- Conditions:
 - A slight drop in outflow possible in next few weeks
- Operations:
 - Locking into the Summer Flow Augmentation
 - Outflows should stay near 3.5 kcfs through September.
 - End of September Draft: 3544.1 feet
 - From Full: 15.9 feet
 - Based on WSF
- Grand Coulee Dam
 - Inflows (07/21): 92.9 kcfs
 - Outflows (07/21): 101.0 kcfs
 - Midnight Elevation: 1288.2 feet
 - From Full: 1.8 feet
 - Operation:
 - Continue to draft through the reservoir through August while keeping flows in the lower system steady or declining.
 - End of August Draft: 1277 feet
 - From Full: 13 feet

Corps – Alexis Mills

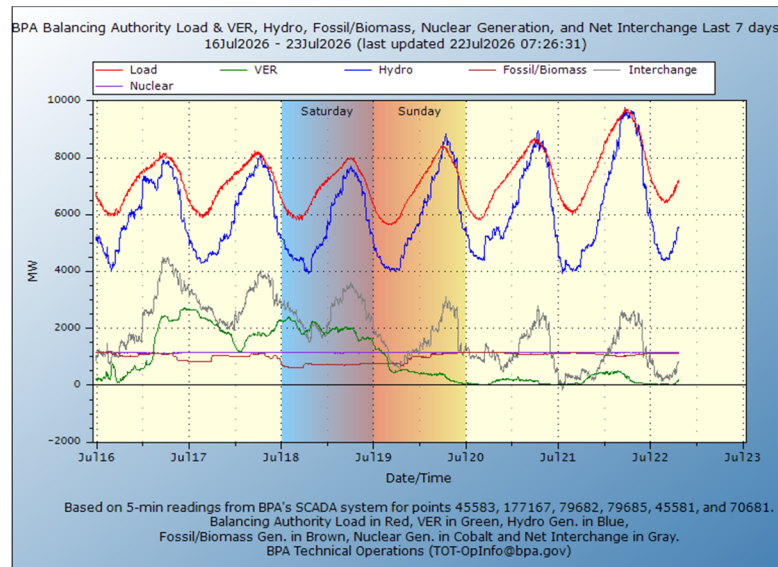
- Libby Dam (Lake Koocanusa)
 - Midnight Elevation: 2448.1 feet
 - Avg. 1-Day Inflows: 13 kcfs
 - Current Outflow: 9 kcfs
 - Operations:
 - Anticipating that LIB will hold the Bull Trout Minimums through the end of August.

Brian Marotz, MT, asked what the predicted refill for LIB this year was. He asked how close we would get.

Mills said that it looked like we would get to 2449' by end of this month.

- Albeni Falls
 - Midnight Elevation (Hope Gauge): 2062.3 feet
 - Avg. 1-Day Inflows: 19 kcfs
 - Current Outflow: 20 kcfs
 - Operations:
 - Holding the summer band through mid-September.

b) Power System – Tony Norris, BPA



- Nothing to report.

4. Agenda Items

Next Meeting Scheduled: Wednesday, July 29, 2026

Meeting Location: Microsoft Teams

Next Week's Agenda Topics

- DWR Update

Future Agenda Topics

- Adult Passage Assessment of LMN and JDA
- DART Presentation

Today's Attendees:

Agency	TMT Representative(s)
NOAA Fisheries (NMFS)	
Oregon	Erick Van Dyke
Washington	Charles Morrill
Kootenai Tribe	
Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation	Dennis Moore
Umatilla Tribe (CTUIR) & CRITFC	Tom Lorz, Pete McHugh
Yakama Nation	Keely Murdoch, Tom Iverson
Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)	Chris Runyan
Army Corps of Engineers (COE)	Doug Baus (Chair), Aaron Marshall, Lisa Wright
US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Dave Swank
Idaho	Jonathan Ebel
Montana	Brian Marotz
Spokane Tribe (STOI)	Brent Nichols
Nez Perce Tribe (NPT)	Jay Hesse
Warm Springs Tribe	
Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)	
Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)	Tony Norris, Ben Hausmann

Other Attendees (non-TMT members):

COE – Alexis Mills, Megan Biljan, Oscar Espinoza, Leah Hamilton, Patricia Madson, Brian Majeran, Kenneth Sears, Tiffany Dixon, Tony Garcia Morales, Christopher Peery, Tom Conning, Sean Tackley

Columbia Basin Bulletin – Mike O'Bryant

Energy EPS – Joshua Rasmussen

BPA – Emily Leake

Washington Ecology – Thomas Starkey, Robbie O'Donnell

DS Consulting – Emily Stranz (Facilitator), Colby Mills

CorSource – Andrea Ausmus (BPA note taker, Contractor)

Clearing Up – K.C. Mehaffey

NPCC – Kate Self, Rudy Salakory

FPC – Erin Cooper, Noah Campbell

PGE – Phil DeVol

AVA – Mike Dillon, Steve Lentini, Patrick Maher