



What do the riparian health scores tell me?

You've worked it out on your own, or you have the results in front of you. You can see the scores for each measurement on the field sheet. At the bottom is a percentage based on your actual score and the total possible score. What does it all mean?

Functions Performed



A health score of 80% or greater means the reach has scored in the top category called **“healthy”**. This tells you that all riparian functions are being performed and the reach exhibits a high level of riparian condition. Healthy, functioning riparian areas are resilient, stable and provide a long list of benefits and values.



- Trap sediment ✓
- Build and maintain banks ✓
- Store flood water and energy ✓
- Recharge the aquifer ✓
- Filter and buffer water ✓
- Reduce and dissipate energy ✓
- Maintain biodiversity ✓
- Create primary productivity ✓



A health score from 60 to 79% puts the reach in the **“healthy, with problems”** category. Many riparian functions are still being performed, but some signs of stress are apparent. The reach may not be as capable of rebounding from floods and use, it may be vulnerable to erosion and some of the potential of the riparian area has been lost. This is like an amber warning light indicating there could be problems ahead and management changes should be considered. At the same time, with effective management changes, a return to a healthier condition is within your grasp.



- Trap sediment ?
- Build and maintain banks ?
- Store flood water and energy ✓
- Recharge the aquifer ✓
- Filter and buffer water ?
- Reduce and dissipate energy ✗
- Maintain biodiversity ?
- Create primary productivity ✓



A health score of less than 60% means the reach is in the **“unhealthy”** category. Most riparian functions are severely impaired or have been lost. The reach has lost most of its resiliency, stability is compromised and much of the potential of the riparian area has been sacrificed. At this point, red lights are flashing and we need to stop and reflect on current management. Immediate changes are necessary to keep the reach from declining further and to begin the process of healing and restoration.



- Trap sediment ✗
- Build and maintain banks ✗
- Store flood water and energy ✗
- Recharge the aquifer ?
- Filter and buffer water ✗
- Reduce and dissipate energy ✗
- Maintain biodiversity ✗
- Create primary productivity ✗