

## **TIMBER HARVEST AND WILDFIRE EFFECTS ON STREAM TEMPRATURE IN THE GOLD CREEK WATERSHED, MONTANA**

Brian Sugden and Ron Steiner, Plum Creek Timber Co., P.O. Box 1990,  
Columbia Falls, MT 59912, [Brian.Sugden@plumcreek.com](mailto:Brian.Sugden@plumcreek.com)

In mid-August 2003, the Mineral-Primm wildfire swept across the Gold Creek watershed. This 18,000- acre fire was initiated by a lightning strike in the Rattle Snake Wilderness and quickly moved eastward burning virtually the entire watershed and streamside corridor of West Fork Gold Creek. At the time of the fire, stream temperature was being monitored by Plum Creek Timber Company on both tributaries as part of a larger study to evaluate the effect of streamside timber harvest (consistent with the Company's Native Fish Habitat Conservation Plan) on maximum summer stream temperatures. This poster reports on the reach-scale effects of timber harvest on stream temperatures in the West and North Forks of Gold Creek prior to the fire, and the subsequent effect of the wildfire on West Fork stream temperatures.