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UM RESEARCHERS DEVELOP ACCURATE TREE HEAT TOLERANCE TEST

MISSOULA---

Two University of Montana forest fire science researchers have developed a technique for measuring the temperature of the cambium layer in trees subject to intense heat.

Robert W. Steele, UM associate professor of forest fire science, and Robert C. Henderson, forestry graduate student, reported their cambium temperature sensor method in the Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station research note No. 5. The sensor was developed in connection with Henderson's graduate work dealing with fire thinning.

Instead of inserting the thermocouple through the bark to the cambium and applying heat on the same side of the tree as is done in conventional procedure, the scientists positioned the thermocouple through the center of the tree to the cambium opposite the entry side.

When heat is applied to the unpenetrated bark opposite the thermocouple a more accurate heat reading can be obtained because the heat source is on the opposite side of the tree from the sensing equipment.

The accuracy of such scrutiny is needed to determine the amount of heat a tree can tolerate in a burning procedure. For example, in a process of burning underbrush in a forest, fire intensity must be kept below the heat tolerance of the trees or they will be killed.

Further information concerning their method may be obtained by requesting research note five from the Forest and Conservation Research Library at the University of Montana School of Forestry, Missoula.