

# Forest fire consumes 125 acres

■ High winds fan 'worst fire in 20 years' across Lower Coverdale; 100 homes evacuated

By CRAIG BABSTOCK  
TIMES & TRANSCRIPT STAFF

Yesterday's unrelenting winds stoked one of the worst fires southeast New Brunswick has seen in the past two decades.

"We've had a number of fires in the last 20 years in this area but this is the



worst by far," said River-view Fire Chief Doug Hamer, as smoke and dust swirled around him. Hamer spoke from the

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VIKTOR PIVOVAROV/TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

Hillsborough RCMP Cst. Bruno Daelman keeps an eye on the water bombers as he blocks traffic in Birch Grove trailer park.



GREG AGNEW/TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

Flames shoot hundreds of feet in the air yesterday at an airstrip on the end of Justin Street off Route 114 in Lower Coverdale.

## Evacuated residents wait out blaze

■ 'When the smoke's so thick it's burning your eyes, it's time to go': homeowner

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As an inferno tore through the forests of Lower Coverdale, bearing down on his house, David Delaney knew he had to act quickly.

He had to get his classic black GTO to safety.

Don't get him wrong, he loves his home. But that car's his baby.

"He was more worried about the GTO than the house," said his wife Susan, the car parked safely behind her, in a driveway far

from the flames.

David, Susan and their daughter Lisa live in the White Birch Estates subdivision that was threatened by the worst forest fire southeast New Brunswick has seen in nearly 20 years.

Lisa was the first to detect all was not right, as she sat in her back yard, drinking in the sun's rays.

"All of a sudden ashes started to fall and I thought, that can't be right," she said, as she waited yesterday to see if the flames would engulf her home.

She and a friend decided a house must be on fire somewhere and went to investigate. They soon realized this was no small blaze.

"We came back and packed up the pets and got out," she said.



VIKTOR PIVOVAROV/TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

Lynda and Ted Strong load up their car yesterday with their belongings, including their two dogs, after being told to evacuate their home in White Birch Estates.

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# Lower Coverdale forest fire



GREG ASHNETIMES &amp; TRANSCRIPT

Winds whip fire at ground level into roaring infernos near the end of Justin Street off Route 114.



GREG ASHNETIMES &amp; TRANSCRIPT

Flames shoot hundreds of feet in the air at an airstrip on the end of Justin Street off Route 114 in Lower Coverdale.



GREG ASHNETIMES &amp; TRANSCRIPT

Barely visible through the dense smoke yesterday, a water bomber heads for another load in an attempt to battle the blaze.



GREG ASHNETIMES &amp; TRANSCRIPT

Firefighters decide they had better leave the road off Route 114 during their battle yesterday against the forest fire.



GREG ASHNETIMES &amp; TRANSCRIPT

Flames shoot high into the sky yesterday (above) at this firefighter base location on Justin Street in Lower Coverdale.