

## Winds Whip Woods Fires

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Tenacious woods fires in the dry, windy conditions Saturday lead to long firefighting efforts for many area fire departments and the NC Forest Service. Largest of the fires were in the Sparta area, a fire that flared up just after noon, and one on Longbottom Road in the Traphill and McGrady districts, and they were the first departments called. But command units on the scene were soon calling out almost every department in Wilkes County with brush trucks and hand crews, as far away as Wilbar, near the Ashe County line. Sparta called in departments from adjoining counties, including Laurel Springs, and in most cases, the activated departments had to put their neighbors on stand-by while they responded out of district. Several departments were called in to protect specific structures, but in the end, the fires were corralled as the afternoon winds died down.