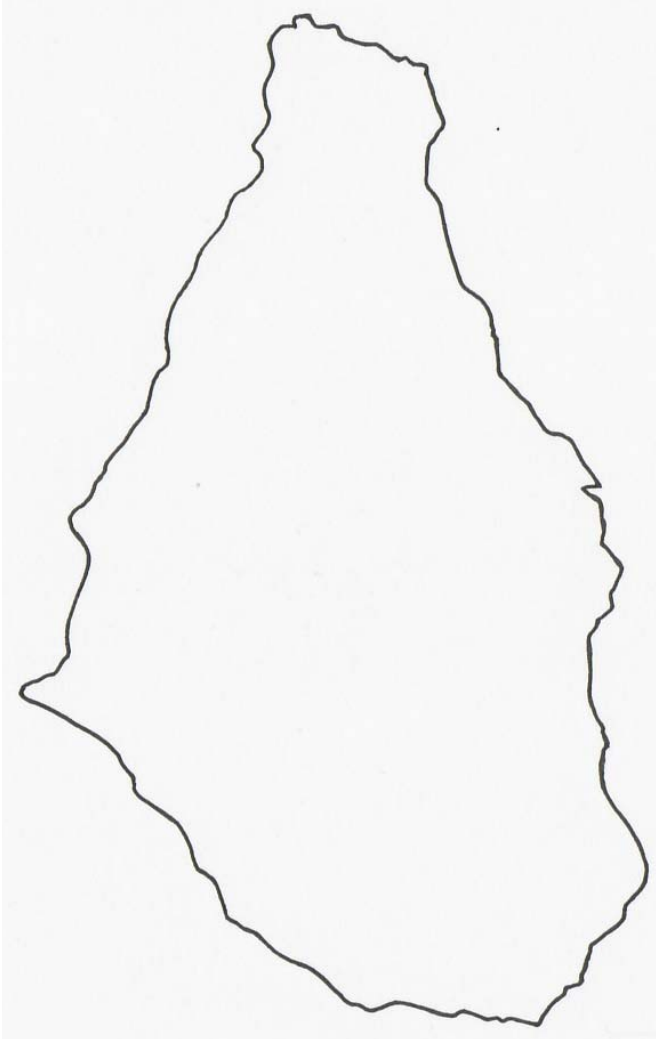


Montserrat Hazard Map: The Chances Peak volcano in the Soufrière Hills



Key:

Montserrat timeline: Summarise the information onto your timeline, adding images from the photo sheet.

1493: Christopher Columbus first sights the island which he names after a Spanish abbey.

1632: Becomes a British colony for its trade potential.

1989: Hurricane Hugo damages 90% of buildings.

1995, July 18: Soufrière Hills volcano erupts for first time in 350 years. Montserrat Volcano Observatory established. Many move to 'safe' areas in the north while others flee to neighbouring Caribbean islands, New York and Britain.

1995, August: Government declares a state of emergency.

1995, December: Britain grants millions of pounds in development aid.

1996, April: Major eruption. The capital Plymouth evacuated. British government announces Montserradians will be granted residency and the right to work in the UK for up to two years.

1997, June 25: Volcano erupts again. Two-thirds of island uninhabitable. 19 killed. Plymouth and airport abandoned.

1998: British Government says all citizens can apply for permanent residency.

2001, July: Smaller eruption causes widespread disruption.

2002, May: The British Overseas Territories Act grants British citizenship to the people of Montserrat.

2003, July 12: Largest volcanic eruption since 1995 destroys many buildings on the edge of the safe zone.

2004, August: USA says the 292 Montserradians granted "temporary protected status" in 1995 must leave by Feb 2005.

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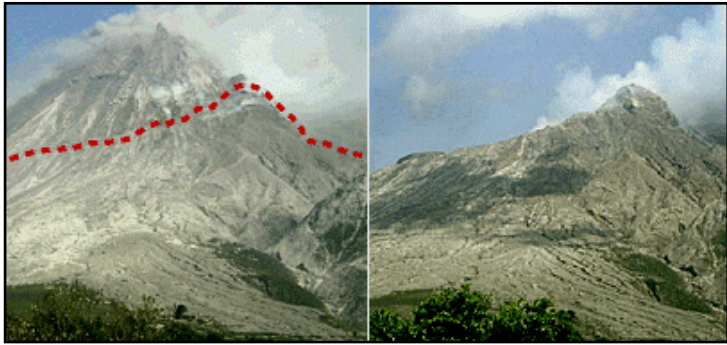
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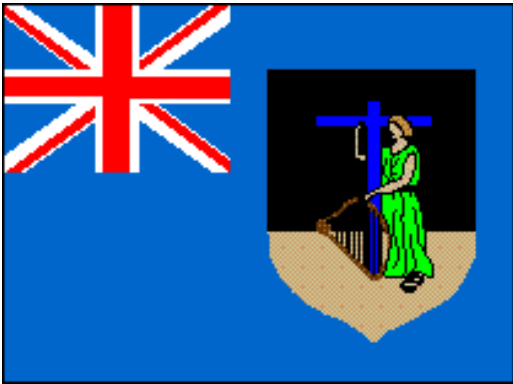
Above, the volcano before and after the eruptions.



Above, the 1996 eruption



Above, Montserrat as it used to be



Left, the Montserrat flag



Above, the capital Plymouth in August 1997



Above, the Montserrat Volcano Observatory logo



Above, the June 1997 eruption



Left, New York mechanic Everson Farrel, one of 292 Montserradians who have started a new life in the USA, now told to leave by the end of February 2005.

Montserrat refugees told to leave US

By David Adams

THE United States has ordered almost 300 refugees from Montserrat to leave within six months or be deported.

They have been told either to go back to the Caribbean island, which is struggling to rebuild itself after it was devastated by a volcanic eruption, or move to Britain.

Some 7,000 Montserratians, about two thirds of the population, fled the island after the Soufrière Hills volcano erupted in 1997, killing 19. Most were allowed to stay temporarily in Britain, even though residents of Montserrat, a British Dependent Territory, do not have an automatic right to citizenship.

Some have since returned to Montserrat, which is 7 miles wide and 11 long, even though its capital, Plymouth, is engulfed in ash and two thirds of the island remains uninhabitable.

Those families who chose to stay with relatives in New York were granted "temporary protected status" in America after their visitors' visas expired. But US officials now say that that status no longer

applies, arguing that the volcano is not a temporary problem.

"The volcanic activity causing the environmental disaster in Montserrat is not likely to cease in the foreseeable future," according to the government notice issued on June 25.

It said that the volcano "no longer constitutes a temporary disruption of living conditions that temporarily prevents Montserrat from adequately handling the return of its nationals".

US officials apparently neglected to inform London or the local Government in Montserrat of its decision.

An official in Montserrat spotted the notice online. "I couldn't believe my eyes when I read it," Richard Aspin, the British government spokesman in Montserrat, said. "What do they want us to do, send these people into shelters?"

Plans to rebuild the island include a new capital at Little Bay, in the undamaged north-west. Britain has agreed to a three-year, £70 million aid programme, including a new airport. The island's present population is about 4,500.

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Montserrat is a small island, about 102km square, in the Caribbean. It has been affected by a number of natural hazards, including Hurricane Hugo in 1989 before a series of volcanic eruptions in the mid-late 1990s.

