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## Iconic Joshua trees burned by massive wildfire in Mojave Desert

A massive fire burning through the desert in California and southern Nevada has scorched tens of thousands of acres in a biodiverse national preserve and torched its [iconic Joshua trees](#).

The [York Fire](#) – already California’s largest fire of the year – has burned more than 82,000 acres as of Wednesday morning, fire officials said. It began Friday in the New York Mountains of California’s Mojave National Preserve and crossed state lines into Nevada on Sunday.

The fire is burning through and threatening groves of Joshua trees – the branching, spiky plants of the Mojave Desert that can live more than 150 years.

Some of the trees have already fallen victim to the flames and burned, Marc Peebles, a spokesperson for California’s incident management team for the fire, confirmed to CNN on Wednesday.

The Mojave National Preserve is a significant hotspot for biodiversity, with one conservationist calling it the “crown jewel” of the deserts of Southern California. Joshua trees only grow [in the Desert Southwest and far northwestern Mexico](#), and one of the densest Joshua tree forests is within the burn area, Cody Hanford, executive director of the Mojave Desert Land Trust, told CNN.

“We’re looking at sad outcomes for potentially millions of Joshua trees,” Hanford said. “The fire is dramatically affecting the vegetation landscape.”



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