

# 4 buildings at observatory in Arizona lost in wildfire

June 18 2022

---



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Four non-scientific buildings at the Kitt Peak National Observatory southwest of Tucson were lost in a wildfire, but early indications show other buildings on the property didn't appear to be damaged, authorities said Saturday.

Buell T. Jannuzi, who leads the Department of Astronomy at the University of Arizona, said the fire didn't appear to have damaged the

telescope and science buildings at the observatory, though a closer examination of the site hadn't yet been made due to safety concerns.

"This is the most threatening fire I can remember at Kitt Peak in the last 25 years," Jannuzi said.

The fire reached the observatory early Friday. Crews were planning to assess the damage at the observatory later Saturday if conditions allowed for safe entry into the area.

Kitt Peak National Observatory is operated by NOIRLab, the National Science Foundation's center for ground-based optical-infrared astronomy. The University of Arizona, which has had a telescope at the site since 1962, is a tenant of the observatory.

The lightning-caused fire, which led to an evacuation of the [observatory](#) earlier this week, had grown to 27 [square](#) miles (71 kilometers) by Saturday. There was zero containment of the fire, which started on June 11 on a remote ridge on the Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation.

In northern New Mexico, authorities who are concerned about the threat of post-wildfire floods as the state enters [monsoon season](#) have warned residents of San Miguel and Mora counties to be ready to evacuate due to flooding risks, the Albuquerque Journal reported.

The largest area facing flooding threats is where a fire that began two months ago has so far burned 533 square miles (1,381 square kilometers). The fire is 72% contained.

And in southwest Alaska officials say the immediate threat has passed to communities near St. Mary's from a [fire](#) that by Saturday had reached 248 square miles (643 square kilometers) in size.

© 2022 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: 4 buildings at observatory in Arizona lost in wildfire (2022, June 18) retrieved 22 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2022-06-observatory-arizona-lost-wildfire.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.