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En+ Organizes Baikal Garbage Collection Event

By The Moscow Times

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Volunteers from Irkutsk sought to remove garbage from the shores of Baikal and raise environmental awareness.

Volunteers from the city of Irkutsk have collected over 1,500 130-liter bags of garbage left by tourists and sent it to recycling facilities as part of the 360 Minutes for Baikal environmentalist campaign, Interfax reported.

"Garbage collection took place simultaneously at 22 locations in four areas around Baikal: the Small Sea Strait, Olkhon Island, Buguldeika Bay and the village of Tankhoi," the activists said in a statement. "In total, over 18 trucks filled with garbage were driven from the shores of the lake."

Glass bottles, cellophane, cans and paper account for 20 percent, 10 percent, 5 percent and 3 percent of the garbage collected, respectively. The environmentalists said they also found tires, shoes and a refrigerator. The volunteers added that they had collected metal scrap that

had been in the Buguldeika Bay for years.

"Most of the trash collected on the shores of Baikal was scattered chaotically," the activists said.

The campaign also included removing 14 sites of buried refuse and posting signs urging tourists not to litter.

Energy company En+Group helped organize the campaign. The volunteers included EN+Group staff, students, environmental activists and other people. They arrived on 16 buses provided by EuroSibEnergo, an En+ Group subsidiary.

"Our goal is not just to remove garbage from Baikal's shores but also to raise the environmental awareness and ecological culture of tourists visiting the lake and ensure that there's nothing to be removed in the first place," said Yelena Rollins, head of public relations at energy company En+ Group.

Baikal is the most voluminous freshwater lake in the world, containing about 20 percent of the world's unfrozen surface fresh water.

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