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Gravel Miners Unearth Mammoth Tusk in Altai Republic

By The Moscow Times

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The two-meter mammoth tusk found in an Altai republic gravel pit last week.

Miners operating heavy-duty drilling equipment in an Altai republic gravel pit unearthed a mammoth tusk buried 10 meters underground, local officials said.

Workers discovered the tusk, which measured two meters in length and up to 25 centimeters in diameter, last week near the village of Maima, but officials only reported the find in a statement on the republic's official website Friday.

"Unfortunately, the discovered tusk was subject to severe damage due to natural factors," the statement read. It was not immediately clear whether gravel drilling had any impact on the tusk, which appeared fragmented in images posted online.

Officials rushed to say that archeologists had excavated the surrounding area prior to its designation as a gravel pit.

The rare find follows several inadvertent archeological discoveries across Russia in the past 10 days. On Saturday, an archivist came across a mammoth tooth near his dacha in the Arkhangelsk region.

In a separate incident, an elderly man dug up a 1.5-meter, 15-kilogram mammoth bone in the Udmurtia republic on Sept. 15 while digging in his vegetable garden with his granddaughter.

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