The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Wildfires Engulf Siberia, Sparking Online Pleas for Help

July 26, 2019



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Huge swathes of Russia have been engulfed in wildfires over the past month, prompting hundreds of social media users to issue a plea to the authorities to step up measures to put out the flames.

Embed:

European scientists have rung the alarm about the 100 and counting "unprecedented" wildfires that have hit Russia's Arctic and Siberia since June. An estimated 2 million hectares of land are currently burning, according to Russia's Aerial Forest Protection Service, roughly compareable in size to the territory of Israel.

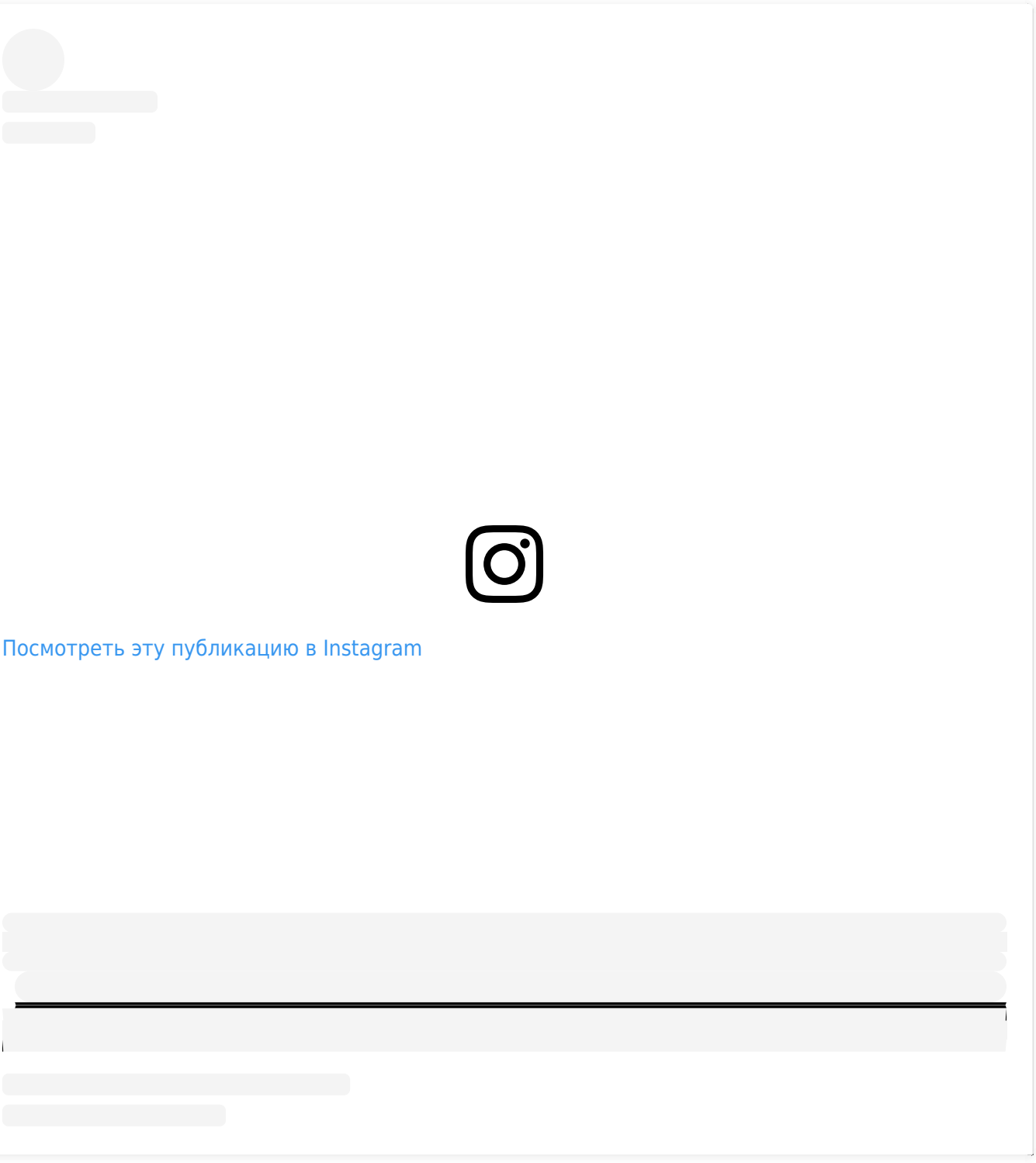
The largest fires — thought to be triggered by a combination of lightning and human activity — have hit the Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk and Buryatia regions.

Smog has reached major cities including Novosibirsk and Tomsk, The Siberian Times reported Monday, leading to a rise in complaints about air pollution. President Vladimir Putin's envoy in Siberia said Thursday that there was no need to declare an emergency unless carbon monoxide concentration exceeds allowable limits.

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Meanwhile, a change.org petition calling on the authorities to declare a state of emergency and step up firefighting efforts has generated almost 120,000 signatures in less than a week.

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Публикация от ПРЕЦЕДЕНТ ТВ (@precedent.tv) 25 Июл 2019 в 8:43 PDT

The hashtag #потушитепожарывсибири (#putoutsiberianwildfires) has been trending on Russian Twitter for days, landing in top spot by early Friday.

“I’m tired of not seeing the sun anymore and not being able to breathe,” a user with the account name @yuxwashere tweeted.

Embed:

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Публикация от Мобильный репортёр (@mreporter_official) 27 Фев 2019 в 10:59 PST

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