

Far East Ministry Will Get More Power to Improve Region's Fortunes

By [The Moscow Times](#)

February 17, 2014

The  **Moscow Times**

Greater powers are to be handed over to a government department overseeing affairs in Russia's Far East within the coming month, a top official said in an interview published Monday.

The move is in line with government designs to boost the fortunes of a vast expanse of territory between Siberia and the Pacific Ocean that has been hampered by decaying infrastructure, isolation, extreme weather and a falling population. Those factors have compounded the decline of uncompetitive enterprises left over from the era of Soviet central planning.

The presidential envoy to the Far East, Yury Trutnev, told Kommersant that internal government opposition to the transfer of authority to the Far East Development Ministry would be overcome.

"We must concentrate our management resources. We can't run around Moscow, agreeing every project with the Economic Development Ministry, the Transportation Ministry, the Regions Ministry and all the others," Trutnev said.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev proposed increasing the authority of the Far East Development Ministry, which was created in 2012, earlier this month.

The Kremlin has made the development of the Far East a priority in recent years, and Medvedev said last month that he would take personal control of improving the region's business climate.

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