

Sakha Republic Hopes to Encourage Gulag Tourism

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Remains of a Gulag near Magadan **Oxonhutch**

The republic of Sakha's numerous Gulag camps, built in the Soviet period and now abandoned, could in the future become "a postcard for attracting tourists," Sakha republic tourism minister Yekaterina Kormilitsyna said, Colta.ru reported.

A meeting of the Sakha republic's tourism ministry last week recommended that the republic take steps to construct tourist camps at the sites of the Dalstroi, Yanstroi, and Senduchensky Gulags.

Gulag, an acronym referring the government body that administered the Soviet system of prison camps, describes a type of forced labor camp used to hold criminals and political prisoners from 1934-1960. Typically located in remote regions, Gulags put prisoners to work at tasks like mining, logging, and basic manufacturing.

According to maps available from Memorial, the republic of Sakha was home to 13 Gulags, while the neighboring Magadan Oblast was home to considerably more. Of the Sakha camps, the Dalstroi Gulag was among the largest: Between 1932 and 1954, 859,911 prisoners entered the camp, 121,256 of whom died during their time there.

While some former Gulags have been adapted for use as prisons, many of them now stand empty. Kormylitsyna noted that the remote location of the republic of Sakha's Gulags put them in the midst of pristine wilderness and offered the possibility for developing ecotourism.

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426