

Officials: Lake Pyasino Near Norilsk Is Back to Normal

Norilsk, June 19, 2020 – Water condition at the lake Pyasino is back to normal, said Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations overseeing the cleanup, while the diesel spill remains localized in the river some 5km away from the lake. The massive cleanup effort by Norinickel includes over 30 of water booms to keep the spillage in place, mechanical replacement of soil nearby, and collection of water with fuel from the river, which is stored in special containers for further processing. More than 700 specialists are involved in the work on elimination of consequences, which continues in shifts 24/7. The cleanup protocol established on the ground allowed to advance the operations ahead of the schedule.

“Samples taken in lake Pyasino near Norilsk showed that TLV values returned to normal after being too high right after the accident.” – said deputy head of the Russian Emergencies Ministry, Aleksandr Chupriyan.

Green Patrol, an independent national ecological watchdog, is monitoring the situation very closely: “It is important to realize that the lake itself acts as a natural mechanical barrier: once the river empties into this lake, the flow’s velocity comes to a halt and most of the remaining parts of the diesel spill evaporate off of its surface helped by the warm temperatures.” - said Roman Pukalov, Director of environmental programs at the Russia-wide NGO Green Patrol.

Scientists and ecologists are seeking other efficient avenues to separate the diesel from the bodies of water. During the 2010 oil spill on Deepwater Horizon drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico oil-eating bacteria from Russia was deployed as an effective way to break down the oil.

“There are living micro organisms doing chemical processing as a natural barrier, and I doubt this spill will reach far, definitely won’t reach the Arctic Ocean. Yes, the climate conditions are very different here from what they are in Louisiana, everything goes much slower in the cold, but it still goes. In our country, we have means to reduce all the consequences of the pollution and to prevent its entry into the Arctic Ocean.” – said Vladimir Kirillov, the head of the Water Ecology Lab at the Institute of Water and Environmental Problems, Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Rosprirodnadzor, the federal regulator in charge of protecting natural resources, confirmed that the Norilsk spill occurred because the permafrost under the base of the diesel storage tank has thawed and subsided due to warm spring, causing its wall to tear and let diesel to escape. The fuel was stored as an emergency backup for the thermal power plant to keep the heat and electric supplies uninterrupted for this isolated city in the Russian Far North.

About Green Patrol:



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National public organization Green Patrol, over its 15-year history in Russia, is relentlessly protecting Russia's environmental and strategic interests, and provides expert support in the field of ecology, environmental protection and sustainability during implementation of the country's largest projects. Green Patrol is a national NGO, founded by the local scientists, activists and those who care about saving the environment. While we are open for collaboration with anyone concerned, we continue to rely and appreciate our support from domestic sources.

- Norilisk 29/05 – 16/06: <https://youtu.be/P2njKFMVZ0c>
- Green Patrol about Norilsk: https://youtu.be/jhBkPwGS7_M
- Andrey Nagibin. Reporting from the scene: <https://youtu.be/siPLu3HVLqc>

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