

UPF Kultuk, Russia's Lake Baikal Service Project Draws International Teams

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Kultuk, Russia -- Adults and children spent several weeks improving an area near Lake Baikal as part of an annual service project organized by UPF.

Between July 2 and August 24, four different groups came to the largest freshwater lake in the world, located in southern Siberia, to take part in the 2018 Baikal Project.

In the mountainous terrain near the lake they built a half-kilometer bicycle path and equipped two observation platforms. They also rebuilt two pedestrian bridges across a mountain river near the town of Slyudyanka and laid a corridor for a new sightseeing trail at the Sobolinaya Mountain ski resort near the town of Baikalsk.

The total number of participants was 64 adults and 13 children. Ten adults and five children joined additional projects. Along with Russians, the participants included representatives of Vietnam, China, Japan, Kazakhstan, Georgia, France, Belgium and Bulgaria.

In 2018, the Baikal Project established a cooperative relationship with the organization Great Baikal Trail -- Buryatia, which provided some tools and volunteers.

Each of the main shifts included an educational program on volunteerism, family values, and peacebuilding as well as a one-week mountain trip. Although most of the participants were young adults, one of the shifts was designed for families with children as young as 5 years.

At the end of the season, the project organizing committee met with representatives of the administration and the mayor of Slyudyanka to assess the summer's results and to make plans for the future.