

*Geography*

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ECOLOGICAL TOURISM FEATURES AND PERSPECTIVES  
IN THE URAL AND IN THE PERM KRAI

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The article provides the current concepts of ecological, self-regulatory, active and sport tourism in Russia, highlights the present state of ecological tourism, and deals with its rational spatial organization in the Ural territory and Perm Krai.

**Keywords:** ecological, active, sport, self-regulatory tourism, territorial organization, Perm, Ural Mountains.

**Introduction.** The idea that the territories, which are the most interesting in terms of nature, must be used rationally in tourism and be protected from other, especially “non environment-friendly”, activities is quite commonplace in present world and is almost universally accepted. It primarily concerns unique beautiful places with the nature’s masterpieces. Such areas must have a certain system of organization in the form of national parks, nature parks and such like to encourage tourism and combine the functions of nature conservation and tourism. A number of countries have succeeded in this field and have nationwide networks of national parks.

Creating a network of national parks has always lagged behind the needs of people in the organization of tourism and recreation in the natural environment in Russia due to a shift in priorities towards the protection of the natural heritage from all economic activities, including recreational one and tourism. Creation of preserves led to a system of protected natural areas in Russia. Preserves are intended as examples of wildlife on this landscape-geographical basis. Furthermore, according to the classical concepts of the protection of wildlife and natural preserves, formulated in the late ninetieth-early twentieth centuries by V. Dokuchaev, G. Kozhevnikov, I. Borodin, V. Sukachev and other prominent scientists, the principle of non-interference into the protected area has been recognized fundamental.

Specialized territories for organization of nature-oriented tourism have been insufficiently developed, because of focusing on establishing preserves. Lack of such areas, on the one hand, and vast, undeveloped territories, on the other hand, led to a specific for the USSR and the Russian phenomenon, self-regulatory tourism. The vector of development and creation of the network of protected areas

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has changed in modern Russia. New national parks are formed every year, for which organizing the recreation of population is one of the main functions. However, traditions which have been developing over a hundred years of self-regulatory tourism are impossible to overcome. Thousands of tourist routes, regardless of the current environmental status of the territory are laid across the territory of the country and neighboring states.

***Ecological, Active and Sports Nature-Oriented Tourism: the Concepts and Correlation of Types.*** In formulating the stated concepts it is necessary to give a short retrospective reference. Tourism, in terms of organization, used to be divided into planned and self-regulated. Planned tourism implied such travel, which is held by routes, developed by tourist organizations with pre-paid (when purchasing a package holiday) and guaranteed services (accommodation, meals, excursions, etc.). Tourists travel along prepared trails with an experienced instructor by planned routes, using active means of travel. Currently, this type belongs to commercial tourism, which is organized by tour operators. Self-regulating tourism existed in contrast to the planned one.

Self-regulating tourism is travel by routes that tourists develop themselves or are recommended by tourist clubs. In its turn, self-regulating tourism was subdivided into mass self-regulating tourism and sports self-regulating tourism.

In Russia there is its own understanding of sports tourism, different from the rest of the world. The point is that sports tourism in Russia is a type of sport and competitions have been held at various levels, as well as sports categories and titles have been conferred in this field since 1949. Two directions are distinguished in sports tourism: classical (trekking) and all-around sport tourism competitions. The latter is a competition in a certain type of tourism. An athletes' team must run a certain distance with the obstacle course the most typical for the given type of tourism. It is required to cover the distance as fast as possible, observing safety rules, not making any mistakes without losing any equipment. Typically for the majority types of sports tourism, this distance is covered in one hour. Distances have different levels of complexity. According to the results of the competition sports categories and titles are conferred.

Sport treks can be of six categories by complexity. The meaning of trekking is passing a route in the wilderness, overcoming obstacles with maximum safety. Ten types of sports tourism are distinguished: hiking, mountaineering, skiing, water activities, caving, cycling, car, motorcycle (here athletes on quadricycles and on snowmobiles can participate too), sailing and horseback riding. The minimum duration of the route of the first category is 6 days, for the sixth category of complexity it is 20 days. These are the minimum standards of duration, no upper limits are established.

Sport tourism is organized, but not commercial tourism. To have a sports trip it is necessary to obtain the relevant documents in the route-qualification board and after the trip to fill in a special report form to be submitted to the same board. Only then it is possible for a certain route to be eligible for any competition and for categories/titles to be conferred. Besides, this report captures the experiences of the participants of the journey, which is necessary to do a more difficult route next time. In Russia there is a large main organization, Federation of Sport Tourism of Russia (FSTR), and every region of the country has its regional federations, which, in their turn, include various clubs of tourists, associations and other organizations.

Modern active tourism goes back to the mass self-regulating tourism of the last century. Active tourism is commonly understood to be traveling in less changed environment by active means of travel. A wide range of types can also be distinguished in it: water, hiking, caving, cycling, sailing, etc.

Sports and active tourism have common roots, but differ in their goals and content. Tourist sport trekking has a specific sport goal towards, which the team put all their efforts. It particularly, concerns the routes of the highest complexity category. For sports tourism routes of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, etc. categories of complexity are the stepping stones to more complex ones. With the increase in sports mastership, tourists are mastering more and more challenging routes and areas, which are topped by the routes of the highest category of complexity and path finding [1]. Sports tourism is not mass scale. In total, several hundred thousand people are now engaged in sports tourism in Russia and in Perm Krai, which ranks third in the country in terms of development of sports tourism, up to 10000 ppl.

In active tourism preferences are given to the routes, which are unclassified, have no or low (I, II, III) categories of complexity. In terms of organization, they can be organized by tourists themselves or by tour operators. Active travel programs are developed on the basis of catalogs and classifiers for self-regulating travel guides, published at the height of self-regulating tourism movement. This type is a more large scale. Although it is extremely difficult to determine the tourist flow of active travelers, and the official statistics does not keep record of this. Thus, wildlife is the main resource for organizing both sports and active tourism, so, both types are nature-oriented. Each of these types of tourism has its own nature and spatial organization.

***Ural as a Tourist Destination.*** In terms of nature, the notion of “Ural” covers the territory spreading more than 2000 *km* in the North-South direction from the coast of the Kara Sea to steppes and semi-deserts of Central Asia. The Ural are isolated well enough as a mountainous territory, being surrounded by Russian plain in the West and Western Siberian Plain in the East. The Ural Mountains are a clearly defined tourist belt of Russia and one of the most convenient tourist zones of the world in the future, despite the fact that they are located inland and far from the seashore areas, they are not too high, do not have such sights as volcanoes and geysers and are far from the capital and the borders of the states. Ural in the broad sense, i.e. as the Ural Mountains with adjacent territories, is filled with natural attractions. In this regard, over several decades there has been developed a belt of active tourism areas with a great number of various tourist routes, primarily associated with nature-oriented types of tourism [2]. Standard routes of different complexity for many types of sports tourism have been developed and practiced for a long time in the Ural [3].

The Ural Mountains and the adjacent zones of the Cis-Ural region and Trans-Ural could be considered as a “tourist country” during the development of mass self-regulating tourism in the USSR. Many tourists try to go along it to the greatest possible distance and even entirely from the North to the South or vice versa. Quite a few people have done it in one long route during one expedition. Most often tourists visit one region of the Ural Mountains after another. Having gone trekking in the Central Ural, then they go to the South, North, and then Polar and Nether-Polar Ural. Especially enthusiastic people tend to visit the continuation of

the Ural to the North (the Pai-Khoi range) and to the South (the Mugodzhhar hills in Kazakhstan). There even was a club in Yekaterinburg, uniting those who have passed along all of the Ural Mountains.

As the Ural Mountains are not wide there are many popular routes across them. Populated areas are situated on both sides of the mountains in the southern half of the zone and cross mountain routes often have inter-regional character. In terms of opportunities and the role in tourist systems in major countries, the Ural Mountains can be compared to the Sierra Nevada and the Rocky Mountains (in the northern part of the USA). In the USA the system of protected areas, used for tourism here forms a continuous belt. The nature reserves Vishera and Basegi in the Perm Krai, Denezhkin Kamen in the Sverdlovsk Region, Bashkiria in the Republic of Bashkortostan are founded in the last century and have become obstacles for the development of tourism.

The Ural Mountains occupy about a quarter of the area of the Perm Krai, its North-East, and with the foothill belt of the Cis-Ural region about half of the territory. The Ural Mountains and the Cis-Ural region are the most attractive natural areas in terms of tourism in Perm Krai.

**Active Tourism Distribution Area in the Perm Krai.** The most important tourist attractions of Perm Krai nature are connected with the abundance of rivers, mountain and forest landscapes.

The eastern part of the region is the main area for water travel by rivers, spring and summer tourism tradition of rafting are very strong there. Vishera, Berezovaya, Yaiva with Chanva River, Chusovaia, Usva and Sylva Rivers are the most popular ones for organizing water tourism. A huge amount of commercial trips are taken along the mentioned rivers, mostly in summer. This is due to good transport accessibility at the beginning and at the end of the route, as well as the high landscape diversity of Perm Rivers. Also in Perm Krai May rafting during high water is very popular. Most of the rivers in the Central and Northern Ural are passable during high water only, which increases their complexity level to the second, and in some rivers, the second with elements of the third. The most popular for such May sports rafting are rivers: Usva, Vilva, Vijay and Koiva. It's not difficult to get to the start of the route on these rivers, nor is it hard to leave them. Rafting itself is carried out during some days, and the starting place for the route is a few hours drive away from the regional centre. Mainly independent unorganized tourists and a small number of organized groups travel down these rivers in spring, totaling up to several thousand people per river during the first ten days of May.

The Ural Mountains part of the Perm Krai is the area for hiking, which was mass scale in recent past. The main advantages of the natural areas of the Northern and Central Ural in the Perm Krai are mountains with different forms of terrain: conspicuous and expressive ones (peaks, cliffs, rock outcrops) as well as level and smooth. The latter is typical for the Northern Ural. This is useful for organizing hiking trips in the mountains. The trail along the Hoza-Tump ridge is a classic tourist path along the Northern Ural. The most accessible and visited areas to organize walking tours are the tract "Stone Town" located on the Rudyany Spoi ridge Gremyachinsk Region and Yermak rock in Kungur. Longer hiking trails run through the Kvar Kush plateau-like ridge (maximum height of 1066 m a.s.l.), where it is possible to meet wild reindeer. An amazing natural attraction of Kvar Kush is

Zhigalansky waterfall located on the namesake river. Another popular route is to the Chuvalsky stone ridge, located on border of the Vishera reserve, Oslyanka ridge (1119 m) is the highest point of the Central Ural.

The most interesting and difficult to access tourist attractions of Perm Krai are located in the “Vishera” reserve, which is a real mountain country. Here one can find the Tulymsky Kamen ridge, the highest in Perm Krai (1469 m), the Isher ridge, Muraveini Kamen, Munintump, Saklaim-sori-chakhl and others. Due to the high conservation status of the territory visiting is strictly regulated. As for caving tourism in Perm Krai, on the one hand, it is less mass scale than water tourism. There are over 700 caves in Perm Krai, and four main caves can serve as a landmark of Krai. It is the longest watery cave in Eurasia (Orda, 5200 m), the most difficult is the cave Temnii (Dark), the longest cave in Perm Krai (Divya, over 10 km long), and the most visited one in the world as well as the only cave in plaster, where excursions are held (Kungur Ledyanaya (Kungur Ice cave), attended by 120000 ppl annually). In addition to these, there are a number of very popular large caves with good transport accessibility. All of them are mainly passed in one day and are used on a mass scale to organize weekend hikes. The most favorable season for visiting the caves is from November to March, when the amount of ground water is minimal and caves are drier. There are no organized, commercial routes in the most of these caves, except Kungurskaya and Orda, where cave diving is developed, although all these caves are visited by thousands of unorganized tourists each year.

***Active Tourism and Nature Conservation Organization. Prioritizing.*** A system of active tourist routes has been created within the Ural over a seventy year period. The highest concentration is found within the Ural Mountain country in the outskirts of such regions as Perm Krai, Sverdlovsk Region, Chelyabinsk region and the Republic of Bashkortostan. Also a system of protected areas of varying status began to develop there since the 1930s. Spatially, the two systems coincide closely, which inevitably leads to conflicts between nature conservation and organizing recreation. They are particularly acute in such protected areas where conservation status has been assigned, but its execution is controlled poorly. These areas include natural monuments, protected landscapes, landscape sanctuaries, etc. The simplest solution is seen to be the change in the tourist route network, reducing recreational pressure on the most valuable natural complexes. In practice, this seems infeasible for several reasons. For example, the tourist network in the area had been formed long before securing the conservation status. Consequently, tourist specialization has had a longer period. Another reason for the close existence of the two networks is that the requirements to the natural environment are very similar. So special protected natural areas (SPNA), especially large area ones (e.g., sanctuaries) were created on the landscape-geographical principle in the least disturbed territories. Right from the very start organizing reserves repeatedly faced difficulties with allocating large areas derivation for them. As a rule, they were allocated in low populated areas.

The tourist routes network is located in less populated and economically developed areas. Tourist routes are laid in the most diverse landscapes. Thus, the most valuable natural areas are under pressure of mass scale tourists. Problems primarily relate to littering the riverbanks with household waste, trampling vegetation in the parking places, unauthorized cutting down trees etc. The problem

is especially burning in the most transport accessible territories, which leads to the degradation of natural systems and, consequently, to a decrease in their value and recreational appeal.

**Modern Approaches to Organizing Active Tourism Areas in the Perm Krai.** As practice shows, tourist and recreational needs of population can be met with the least damage to natural systems in specialized areas, such as national reserves and natural parks. These areas are prepared to meet with the mass scale tourists, functional zoning has been carried out, recreational and no-disturbance areas have been allocated, infrastructure necessary for visitors has been created, namely routes have been designed, parking and camping equipped, logistics and navigation established etc. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century national and natural parks became in most countries of the world such a form that combines environmental protection objectives and organization of tourism.

	Region	National Parks
1	The Republic of Komi	“Yugyd-Va”, 1994
2	Sverdlovsk Region	“Pripyshminskie groves (Bory)”, 1993
3	Perm Krai	none
4	Cheliabinsk Region	“Taganay”, 1991; “Zyuratkul”, 1993; “Zigalga”, 2014
5	The Republic of Bashkortostan	“Bashkiria”, 1986

Currently, more than 40 national parks operate in Russia. In modern conditions it seems necessary to expand their network, especially in regions with a strong tradition of nature-orientated types of tourism. According to the concept of development in of SPNA of federal importance another 20 national parks are planned to be created in Russia by 2020 [4]. Only one park on this list is created within the Ural (NP “Zigalga” in Chelyabinsk Region). Thus, SPNA of this category have been created in all the regions of the Ural, except Perm Krai (see Table).

The need to create a national park in Perm Krai has been expressed by many scholars and practitioners. The territories it is proposed to be organized in are the Sylva downstream valley, Kungur City [5], Kvar Kush Ridge [6].

At present, the issue is not resolved positively, but the creation of such areas is necessary due to the high level of recreational load on the unique and typical natural complexes, which leads to degradation of the latter. There is a real threat to lose the Perm Krai natural heritage. If the creation of a national park as an area under federal jurisdiction is impossible at the moment, an alternative solution is organizing a regional SPNA, which combines the functions of nature conservation and tourism development [7].

Selecting the location for establishment of new protected areas is a complex task. Experts believe that the organization should take into account the park’s natural potential and characteristics of modern areas wildlife management, as well as modern factors of anthropogenic impact on natural systems. The latest research shows that among the latter, recreational load is essential. Recreational degradation has been noticed in many protected areas, located in different parts of Perm Krai. One reason for the wide spread recreation in SPNA is the lack of such a category of protected areas in the Kama River region, which would combine preservation of the natural environment with recreation, namely, a natural park. Establishment of protected areas of this category on the basis of modern SPNA will streamline and

optimize the recreational impact, protect typical, unique and highly valuable objects. Creating a natural park with the necessary environmental arrangement and qualified personnel (security, guide and maintenance service, medical services and environmental education service) will prevent the degradation of ecosystems, reduce the risks of public health, and will lead to increased environmental culture.

As the territory for the organization of a natural park, mid-stream of the Usva River valley (from the village Shumikhinsky to the village Mis) and the surrounding area are proposed. This is due to several factors. According to experts in the tourism field [8], this area has a high tourist and recreational potential for the development of nature orientated (active) forms of tourism such as water (rafting on rowboats and inflatable boats), hiking (hiking and excursions), rock climbing, ice climbing, caving, mountain skiing tourism, etc.

The area in question has good transport accessibility. The nearest Cities Gremyachinsk and Chusovoi are situated 15 and 60 *km* away from the Usva village, the distance to the City of Perm, where the main tourist flow is formed is 190 *km*, to the City of Berezniki 125 *km*. The village, which is located on the highway Kungur–Solikamsk, can serve the “gateway” function to the projected park. Also Chusovoi–Solikamsk railway goes along this territory. Some of the important sights are accessible via the highways, maintained by local government (the roads from highway Kungur–Solikamsk to v. Yubileini and Yubileini–Bezgodova in Gremyachinsk Region, the road villages Kalino–Mis in Chusovoy Region).

Tourist development of this area has a long history, stipulated by a number of factors. The River Usva is well known in the region and beyond as a sample for family rafting. Low difficulty, good transport accessibility, the landscapes beauty of the mountain taiga on the border of Europe and Asia, and “Usvinske Pillars” cliffs make it one of the most attractive rafting rivers. Tourist routes along the Usva River are described in guidebooks published in the second half of the XX century. At present, the water route along the River Usva (from v. Usva to v. Mis) is one of the most visited destinations for weekends in summer. The unique landscape of the Central Ural is rocky mazes that adorn many of the tops of the wooded mountains. These are the so-called stone cities or “devil settlements”. One of the most spectacular stone cities is located on the Rudyansky Spoi ridge near the Usva village. Stone outcrops along Usva, as well as “devil settlements”, are favorite places for hikers, mountaineers, climbers and campers, to rest and exercise. Besides, there are more than 10 caves on the territory of the planned nature park, which are actively visited by cavers. In these caves (Pervomaiskaya, Usvinskaya Ledenaya, Vysotskogo, Usva Ugolnaya, Usvinskaya Medvejaya etc.) the most characteristic geological sections of Permian period can be found also.

The Usva village itself is located within Gornozavodsk-Prikamye, one of the regions of Gornozavodsky Ural, the belt of towns and villages that have grown due to the mining of various mineral. This is the Perm analog of Bazhovskie places with stories similar to Mistress of Copper Mountain and Malachite box.

Modern non-productive specialization of mining and metallurgical areas of Perm Krai is connected with the organization of mountain ski recreation. Significant variations in surface height (up to 200–300 *m*), good infrastructure, big snow depth, and high demand contribute to the development of this activity in the

Central Ural Mountains. On the territory under consideration there are natural and socio-economic conditions for the development of this activity.

Here, compactly, on the area of 26500 *ha* several monuments of nature are located: Pillars, Big Beam, Ponoramnaya Rock, Swivel Log, Omutnaya Stone, Dry Log, Stone Town. All of them are subjected to the enhanced recreational exposure.

Thus, all the sights of the territory have different degrees of tourist attraction. The most visited are the following objects: Stone Town, Usvinskies pillars, water route along the r. Usva, and Dry Log tract. According to expert estimates, attendance is 8000 ppl a season. The load is distributed unevenly. The peak load falls on weekends in July–September. More than 200 ppl can gather at the same time over a September weekend in Stone Town. For more accurate data on the tourist flow and its distribution throughout the season it is necessary to conduct special surveys.

Visiting of caves is not so mass scale. However, they are also among important recreational objects. The most visited caves are those in the Dry Log area (Geologists 1, 2, 3, Ribbed).

Today visits are uncontrolled and spontaneous, which leads to the degradation of natural system. In this regard, one of the important directions of work on the creation of a new nature park is to determine the maximum allowable recreational load on ecosystem of the territory. This work remains to be done. An effective method of nature protection areas, in our opinion, is creating a large protected natural area of regional significance. Giving the territory a new status will enable to do necessary work for its improvement and creating conditions for regulation and management of tourist flows. As a recommendation for the maintenance of ecological balance it is necessary to develop proposals for the arrangement of the natural park and its preparation for visiting.

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Հոդվածում տրվում է Ռուսաստանում գոյություն ունեցող էկոտուրիզմ, ինքնակազմակերպվող, ակտիվ և սպորտային տուրիզմ հասկացությունները, ներկայացված է ակտիվ տուրիզմի ներկայիս բնութագիրը, ուսումնասիրվում են մի շարք հարցեր կապված դրա, Ուրալի և Պերմի երկրամասի տարածքում ռացիոնալ, տարածքային կազմակերպման վերաբերյալ:

А. И. ЗЫРЯНОВ, А. Ю. КОРОЛЕВ, С. Э. МЫШЛЯВЦЕВА, А. А. САФАРЯН

ОСОБЕННОСТИ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКОГО ТУРИЗМА  
НА УРАЛЕ И В ПЕРМСКОМ КРАЕ

Резюме

В статье даются определения для существующих в России понятий экологический, самодетельный, активный и спортивный туризм, представлена характеристика современного состояния активного туризма, рассматриваются вопросы его рациональной пространственной организации на территории Урала и Пермского края.