

recommendations. The arctic meadows began to deteriorate rapidly, crops diminished, the bottoms of the dried lakes changed into marshes and became overgrown with moss. The sovkhos Severnyi has already lost more than half of its hayfields, the creation of which cost millions of rubles.

It is now impossible to recognize Lake Aleksandra, once noted for its surprising beauty and the richness of its flora and fauna. Previously, large flocks of geese and ducks had their feeding grounds here, the salmon gained rapidly in weight, the inconnus and the broad white-fishes were in abundance, and its shores were inhabited by all kinds of animals. All that is gone. And so is the hay.

In 1983-84, according to the already well-documented Dalgiprovidkhoz Institute project, teams of workers of the Magadanvodstroi trust set about drying the lakes in the valley of the spawning-ground rivers Kanchalan and Uglovaya in order to create new hayfields for the Severnyi state farm.

The Magadan (land development specialists) proceeded with callous disregard for the recommendations and the project. They "invented" their own method of constructing canals, which permitted them to fulfill the plan in a short time and obtain a bonus: without giving it much thought they dug deep canals. The water from the lakes emptied into the rivers in torrents. The huge bulk of water washed away thousands of tonnes of silt and sand, which were deposited in a thick layer on the river bottom reservoirs, destroying the plankton - the feeding base for chum salmon, pink salmon, broad whitefish, inconnu and other delicacy-type northern fishes.