

Communists Demand Checks on Pro-Kremlin Youth Camp

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Putin's face emblazoned on a billboard alongside a radical pro-Kremlin group's logo at the 2011 Seliger camp. **Maxim Stulov**

Communist deputies are appealing to the Prosecutor General's Office and Audit Chamber to run checks on how budget money is being spent on a controversial pro-Kremlin summer camp, a news report said Tuesday.

Camp organizers expect to spend some 280 million rubles (\$8.61 million) of state funds on the month-long event near Lake Seliger, which is already under way and runs till Aug. 2, Izvestia reported.

In a letter to prosecutors, a copy of which was obtained by the newspaper, Vadim Solovyov, head of the Communist Party's legal department, complained that this figure was excessive, given that the camp's main participants were affiliated with the country's ruling party, United Russia.

Sergei Belkonev, recently appointed Federal Youth Agency head, was quick to claim that Seliger's financing was above board when questioned by a reporter from Izvestia.

"Seliger's financing is all within the bounds of Russian legislation," Belkonev said. "The Audit Chamber has already run checks on us, and so far there have been no issues."

Last year, the government paid 200 million rubles to back the event after private sponsors agreed to cover the remaining costs. This year, however, sponsors backed out, offering goods instead of a financial contribution.

But despite Communists' complaints, Left Front leader Sergei Udaltsov said he didn't expect authorities to cut funding for the camp, which sparked outrage in 2010 after radical pro-Kremlin group Stal mounted portraits of government opponents on stakes at the Tver region event.

"It's exactly at events such as these that authorities recruit young supporters into their ranks so that at the necessary moment they can be brought out onto squares, to rallies for United Russia, for instance. To achieve such goals, they aren't going to tighten their purse strings," the opposition leader told Izvestia.

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