

# U.S. Journalist Fined for Interviewing Russian Environmental Asylum Seekers

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Alina Simone **Screenshot Youtube**

An American freelance journalist has been fined for interviewing Siberian residents who had asked for Canadian asylum this summer over the deteriorating environment in their region.

Alina Simone was sued by the mayor of the coal-mining town of Kiselyovsk after she was spotted filming residents who made headlines in June for [asking](#) Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for asylum. She was alleged to have interviewed the environmental asylum seekers while on a tourist visa.

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The Kiselyovsk City Court [found](#) Simone guilty of violating rules of entry into Russia, a misdemeanor, on Wednesday.

Simone was fined 2,000 rubles (\$30), the U.S.-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty news

website reported. She is due to leave Russia on Monday, her original date of departure, the outlet added.

Simone was originally born in Soviet Kharkiv and moved to the U.S. with her parents after being blacklisted by the KGB.

She traveled to Siberia on a whim after seeing the Kemerovo region residents' video appeal to Trudeau, she [said](#) in an interview with RFE/RL's Siberian affiliate Wednesday. She was not on assignment for any news outlet while she was filming the residents, she said.

"I just wanted to see it with my own eyes, I wanted to understand what was happening," Simone said.

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