

Field Trip Planner



MOUNT ST. HELENS

FOREST
LEARNING
CENTER

PO Box 638 ▲ Longview, WA 98632 ▲ (360) 414-3439

www.TheForestReturns.com



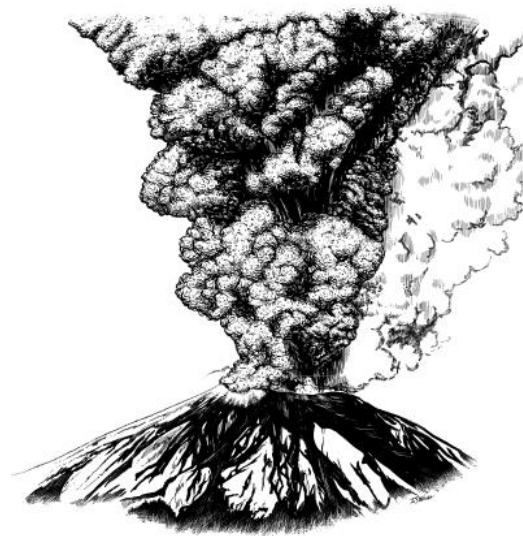
Return of the Forests

On the fifteenth anniversary of the May 18, 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens the Forest Learning Center opened its doors to the public. Located on Washington State Route 504 leading to the volcano, the Center focuses on the return of the forests to Mount St. Helens. People of all ages and abilities enjoy unique learning opportunities at the Forest Learning Center through informative, interactive exhibits and theater presentations. The Center is a public/private partnership between Weyerhaeuser, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Learning Opportunities Explode at Mount St. Helens

Inside the Center – Discover Mount St. Helens' story as you follow a path through the Exhibit Hall, featuring exciting, hands-on learning opportunities for all visitors:

- Step into **The Forest That Was**, a sensory-filled re-creation of a forest before the blast.
- Enter **The Eruption Chamber** to see a dynamic multi-media presentation about the devastating effects of the 1980 eruption
- Visit the **Salvage, Recovery and Reforestation** exhibit which offers an encouraging look at the resiliency of nature and how humans, plants and animals recover from natural disaster.
- Visit **The Discovery Room** where you can explore hands-on exhibits about forests and wildlife.
- Take the **Forest Tour** and imagine yourself flying a helicopter over Mount St. Helens and the surrounding area.
- Visit the **Forest Returns** to learn forest management & sustainability practices.
- Browse through the **Gift Shop** which offers a variety of unique products.



Outside the Center – Experience the sights, smells and sounds of nature coming back to life at Mount St. Helens:

- Walk along the **Forest Trail**, guided by interpretive signs, and see the variety of plants and animals now thriving in the young forest.
- Get a close-up view of the elk herds living in the Toutle Valley through telescopes available at the **Elk Viewpoint**. You'll also see avalanche debris in the valley, vast acres of replanted forests, and the spectacular mountain itself.
- Enjoy the **Volcano-Theme Playground**, or take in the scenic views from the **Picnic Tables**.

Let us know you're
coming!

To reserve a date and time for your group to visit the Forest Learning Center, please call (360) 414-3439 at least a week in advance.

The Center is open seven days a week from 10am – 4pm, mid-May through mid-September. School groups may book through October.

ADMISSION IS FREE

Tips for a Great Field Trip:

- Make a reservation (360) 414-3439
- **Assign one ADULT to every five students.** Chaperones are responsible for group behavior and safety.
- **Divide large groups into subgroups of 20, or so.** Once you arrive at the Forest Learning Center, subgroups will rotate between indoor and outdoor activities to avoid congestion.
- **Allow at least 60 minutes for your visit.** There's a lot to see and do both inside and outside of the Center.
- **Be prepared for unpredictable weather in the mountains.** Dress appropriately.
- **Complete a pre-visit activity.** Enhance your group's visit by introducing concepts and vocabulary before you arrive.

Expand Your Horizons

When planning a visit to Mount St. Helens, consider coordinating your field trip to the Forest Learning Center with stops at one or more of our neighboring Centers. Each one offers a different perspective on the Mount St. Helens story.

Mount St. Helens Visitor Center - Introduces the May 18, 1980 eruption as well as the history of volcanic activity in the Cascades. Located at milepost 5 on State Route 504. Call (360) 274-0962 for more information.

Science and Learning Center (old Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center) - Run by Mount St. Helens Institute. Located at milepost 43 on State Route 504. Not currently open to the public. You need to call ahead to find out what is available - (360) 449-7883.

Johnston Ridge Observatory - Provides the best view of the volcano and showcases the spectacular 1980 eruption. Located at milepost 52 on State Route 504. For more information call (360) 449-7800.



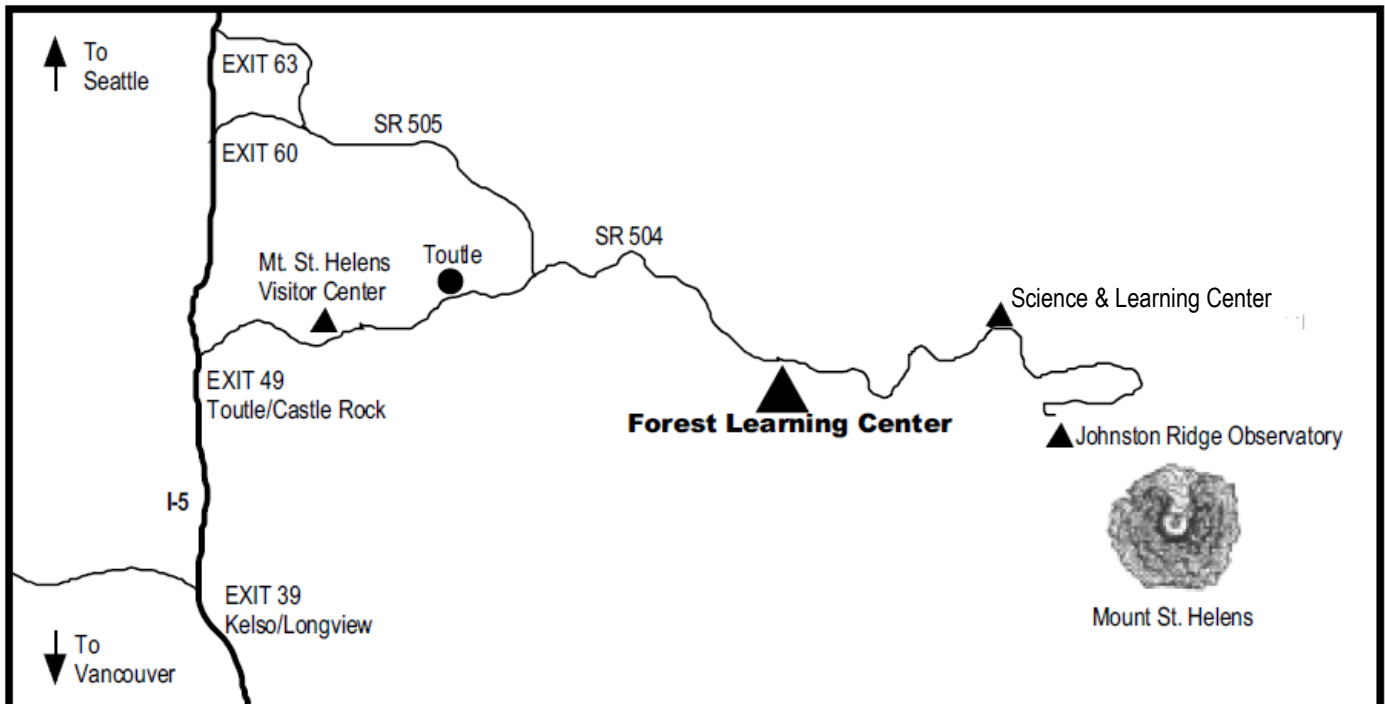
Visit our website

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Directions to the Forest Learning Center

If you are traveling from the **south**, take Interstate 5 to Exit 49 (Toutle/Castle Rock). Turn right onto State Route 504 and drive east for 33 miles. Watch for the Forest Learning Center on your right.

If you are traveling from the **north**, take Exit 60 or Exit 63 and follow State Route 505 until you intersect with State Route 504. Turn left onto SR 504 and head east. Watch for the Forest Learning Center on your right at milepost 33.



When you arrive at the Center...

... be prepared to have a terrific time! To provide a great learning experience for your group, please follow these steps:

-If you arrive by bus, ask your driver to pull up in front of the Forest Learning Center's main doors. Students should remain on the bus. If you arrive in private cars, inform the chaperones to gather with the students *outside* of the building near the front doors.

-Have a group leader come inside to notify our staff of your arrival. **Large groups should already be organized into subgroups of around 20 people.**

-A Forest Learning Center staff member will greet your group outside the doors to provide instructions.

-Once the group has left the bus, the driver may park in an appropriate space.