

Field Trip Planner



MOUNT ST. HELENS

FOREST
LEARNING
CENTER

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www.TheForestReturns.com



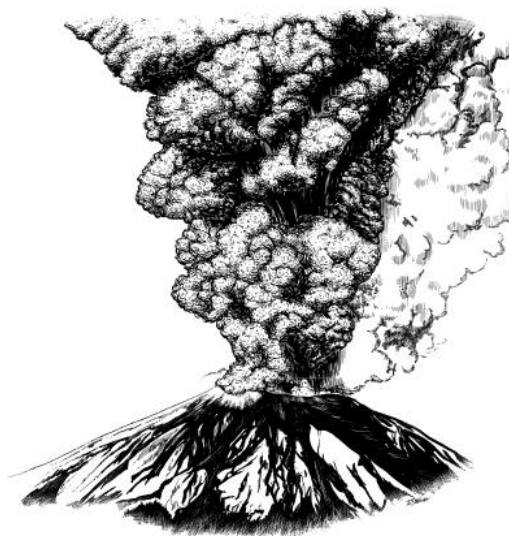
Return of the Forests

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.

Learning Opportunities Explode at Mount St. Helens

Inside the Center – Discover the 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.
- 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.

Let us know you're coming!

To reserve a date and time for your group to visit the Forest Learning Center, please email us at least two weeks in advance.

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Let us know your preferred date and time of arrival along with the number of students you will be bringing.

The Center is open daily from 10am – 4pm, Mid-May through Mid-September.

ADMISSION IS FREE.

Tips for Planning a Great Field Trip

-Assign one adult to every five students. Chaperones are responsible for group behavior and safety.

-Divide large groups into subgroups of 15, or fewer. Once you arrive at the Forest Learning Center, subgroups will rotate between indoor and outdoor activities to avoid congestion.

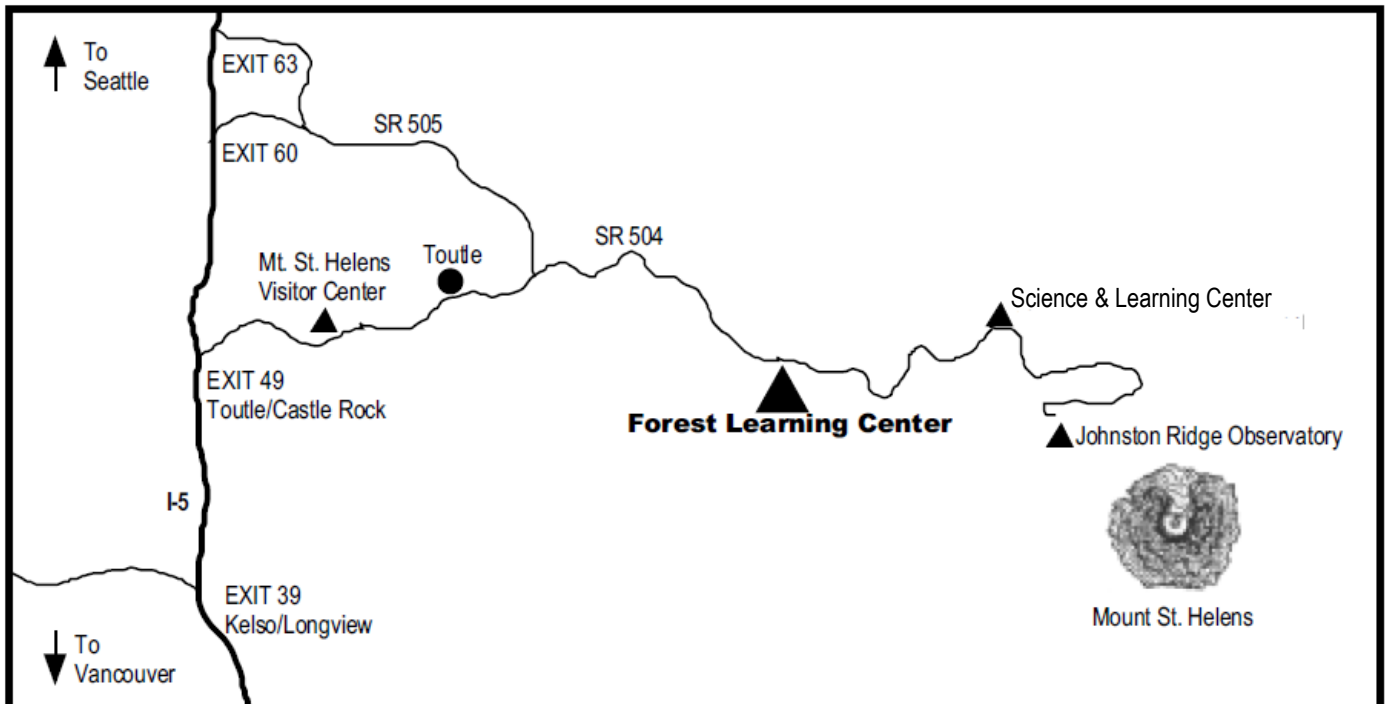
-Allow at least 45 minutes for your visit. There's a lot to see and do both inside and outside of the Center.

-Be prepared for unpredictable weather in the mountains.

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.



Other info:

2025 - State Route 504 is currently closed at milepost 45.

Your group can still access:

The Hummocks Trail - located just 12 miles east of the Forest Learning Center. This trail is popular because it is a relatively flat loop hike among the small hills that were left by the eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980.

Coldwater Lake - The recreation area includes a picnic area and restrooms.