

Volcano Outdoor School



Chaperone Letter

Dear Chaperone,

Thank you so much for participating in your group's Volcano Outdoor School program as a chaperone! We are excited that your group is joining us to explore Mount St. Helens through hands-on, inquiry-based learning that supports Next Generation Science Standards. Your support, positive attitude, and active involvement are crucial for a successful, safe, and fun learning experience for all.

Please note that you must complete an online Participant Registration Form NO LATER THAN 2 weeks before the program, which will include information about yourself such as allergies and dietary restrictions. Contact your Group Coordinator/lead teacher if you are unable to complete the online form.

Please carefully review all the materials in this letter.

WHO'S WHO: ADULT ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS	2
SCHEDULE	3
EMERGENCY CONTACT & PHONE SERVICE.....	4
PROCEDURES.....	4
CODE OF CONDUCT	5
PARTICIPANT PACKING LIST	6
DRIVING & GATE DIRECTIONS.....	7

We look forward to meeting you and having a wonderful learning adventure at Mount St. Helens!

The Mount St. Helens Institute Education Staff



WHO'S WHO: ADULT ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS

Group Coordinator

The Group Coordinator is the adult who is in charge of organizing their group's trip to Mount St. Helens. They will work with parents to arrange payment, arrange transportation, arrange chaperone support, gather and administer participant medications for the trip, distributing registration information and waivers to participants, and confirming the participant roster. They also are responsible for answering questions parents may have. They will be the person who is in direct contact with the Mount St. Helens Institute staff to work out the details of the program. While the Group Coordinator does not have to accompany the group on the trip, they need to ensure that the chaperones are prepared for the program.

Adult Chaperones

Chaperones will be actively involved in the Volcano Outdoor School experience. Volcano Outdoor School requires a 1:5 chaperone-to-student ratio. Contact us about alternative ratios. Chaperones are responsible for supervising the youth at all times and ensuring that participants are following the [Code of Conduct](#). Chaperones need to reinforce Volcano Outdoor School educator's instructions to students about proper behavior and packing. Duties chaperones may be asked to take on or supervise include hike/activity support, activity setup and cleanup. Chaperones are required to sleep in the SLC (or at field camp) with the youth.

- Review the [Code of Conduct](#). Encourage and enforce this Code of Conduct in Volcano Outdoor School participants.
- Please be on time for activities, but remember to be flexible.
- We'll be depending on you for group management.
- Know who's on call in the evening.
- Be prepared to get the kids to help clean.
- After "Lights Out", chaperones are responsible for keeping students in their sleeping bags and honoring quiet hours.
- Fill out teacher/chaperone evaluation form at the end of your visit.
- If you see someone in the facility that is NOT in a United States Forest Service or Discover Your Northwest uniform, please notify a MSHI staff person.
- Enjoy your time at Mount St. Helens!
- Chaperone assistance during kitchen cleanup after meals is greatly appreciated but not required. Let a MSHI staff member know if you would like to help but please do not enter the kitchen on your own so that we can ensure we are abiding by health & safety standards in our kitchen.
- Please stay out of "Staff Only" rooms. MSHI staff will inform you which rooms are off-limits at the start of your program.
- Encourage students to participate and think on their own. We encourage you to participate and ask questions!

MSHI Staff

MSHI staff are professional and caring individuals who are passionate about Mount St. Helens and youth education. All staff undergo a criminal background check and extensive training. All MSHI staff at your program will be certified in First Aid & CPR. You can expect the following from MSHI staff:

- Most Volcano Outdoor School programs will be staffed by 2-3 people.
- MSHI will facilitate fun and educational activities!
- MSHI staff will prepare and serve your meals.

- At least 1 MSHI staff member will stay overnight in the SLC with your group, on call in case of emergency.

SCHEDULE

What to expect upon arrival

- MSHI staff will welcome your group at the entrance to the Science & Learning Center. It is the responsibility of the Group Coordinator to communicate driving and gate directions to all drivers. Groups arriving at the Science & Learning Center will need to open the gate, drive through, and close the gate behind them.
- After you arrive and set up your sleeping area, a MSHI staff member will meet with youth to review expectations. Another MSHI staff member will meet with adults to review adult expectations, orient them to the building, and inform them of emergency procedures. This is a great time to ask questions!

Program Schedule and Activities

Activities selected for each Volcano Outdoor School program are selected based on the group's learning objectives and needs. *Please note that this is general schedule and that our staff may alter the schedule at any time* programs based on variables such as safety, weather, fitness level, ability level, behavior and energy and resources.

Typical Schedule for a 1-Night Volcano Outdoor School

Arrival Day

Activities on Arrival Day are typically located in or within short walking distance of the Science & Learning Center.

2:00pm Arrival and Orientation
2:30pm Activities
4:30pm Hands-on Activities
6:00pm Dinner
6:30pm Hands-on Activities
7:30pm Reflection
8:00pm Night activities or group-led quiet time
9:15pm Bedtime

Departure Day

Field Adventure locations are typically not within walking distance of the Science & Learning Center. These locations will require a short (<10 min) drive to the Hummocks Trail or Coldwater Lake. If you are not able to provide transportation for your group to these locations on the morning of Departure Day, coordinate with MSHI staff to arrange an alternate Field Adventure nearby.

7:30am Breakfast
8:30am Clean Up, Pack Up and Make Lunches



9:00am Field Adventure – hike, field study sites or Coldwater Lake
12:00pm Depart

EMERGENCY CONTACT & PHONE SERVICE

- In the case of an emergency, parent/guardians may reach the group in the evening at the Science & Learning Center's landline at (360) 274-2114. If no one answers, please leave a message; voicemail will be checked.
- All participants should plan on having limited or no cell phone coverage during Volcano Outdoor School. Approaching the SLC on SR 504, most people lose cell phone coverage at Elk Rock (mile marker 37).

PROCEDURES

Dining Procedures

- Meals are served buffet-style. Serving begins after announcements are made by MSHI staff.
- Adults are expected to encourage and enforce good mealtime etiquette. Expected mealtime behavior includes:
 - Wash your hands with soap and warm water before meals.
 - Be polite and use good manners.
 - Be seated at a table while eating.
 - Wait until MSHI staff have announced seconds before approaching the serving area for another helping.
 - Pick up after yourself. If you dropped food on the floor, pick it up and dispose of it properly.
 - Dispose of garbage and stack dishes neatly as instructed by MSHI staff.
 - Wait until everyone has finished eating and MSHI staff have announced the end of meal time before leaving the dining area.

Quiet Hours

- Quiet hours are from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.
- Chaperones are expected to enforce quiet hours so everyone is well-rested for the next day.

Cleaning

- Participants will be asked to help clean the building before leaving. Chores include:
 - Pick up and dispose of trash/debris from floors in bunkrooms and shared areas. Spot-vacuum as needed.
 - Wipe down tables and countertops in dining area.
 - Clean bathroom mirrors and countertops.
 - Spot-clean any other areas as needed.
- Chaperones are expected to encourage youth participation during clean-up. When everyone pitches in, cleaning is finished quickly!

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Mount St. Helens Institute wants you to have a great time at Mount St. Helens! To make sure everyone's visit is a safe and enjoyable one, we expect all participants to honor the following:

1. Let's keep this a safe place where no one gets injured.

- Turn in all medications to your teachers.
- Wear proper footwear (tennis shoes or hiking boots) while outside.
- Abide by all safety instructions given by MSHI staff.
- Wear shoes at all times in the dining area.
- Do not run indoors or on the Science & Learning Center deck.
- Do not climb onto structures or lean over the railing on the Science & Learning Center deck.
- Please wash your hands before all meals. Use hot water and soap.

2. Let's treat this amazing place with respect and practice the principles of Leave No Trace.

- Stay on the established trails unless your instructor indicates otherwise.
- Pick up your trash and put it in the proper container.
- Leave sticks, stones, and plants in nature where they belong.
- Return all animals we are studying to their proper homes.
- Respect all living things.

3. Let's treat one another with care and respect.

- Encourage your peers and do not use "put downs" or inappropriate words, or tease others.
- Respect other people's belongings, materials, and personal space.
- Respect each other's privacy. Do not enter the bunkroom of the opposite gender.

4. Let's make this a fun and exciting learning experience.

- Follow all program schedules and do your best to be on time.
- If you brought something you should not have, give it to your teacher right away.
- Do not use electronics at Volcano Outdoor School except to take photos.
- Be curious! Mount St. Helens rocks!

5. Let's treat the Science & Learning Center with care and respect.

- Food is not allowed in the SLC bunkrooms. If your group or individuals brings snacks, they may store them in the kitchen area. Ask a MSHI staff member for assistance.
- Help us to keep the place neat and clean by picking up after yourself.
- Treat exhibits at the Science & Learning Center gently and with respect.
- MSHI staff will let you know which parts of the building are off-limits. Stay out of these areas to respect others that use and share space at the Science & Learning Center.

PARTICIPANT PACKING LIST

Give to your Teacher/Group Coordinator:

- ☐ Personal prescription or over-the-counter medications
- ☐ Electronics and food

Pack and Bring With You:

Clothing

- ☐ Sturdy shoes or tennis shoes (No open-toed shoes, no Keds/Converse) (bring an extra pair if able)
- ☐ Long pants (2 pairs)*
- ☐ Shirts (2 pairs)*
- ☐ Sweater/sweatshirt (2)*
- ☐ Undergarments; during spring and fall we recommend long underwear
- ☐ Socks (2-3 pairs)*
- ☐ Rain jackets (especially in spring and fall)
- ☐ Sun hat (especially in the summer)
- ☐ Warm hat (especially in the spring and fall)
- ☐ Gloves & scarf (especially in the fall)
- ☐ Pajamas

Bedding

- ☐ Sleeping bag or blankets to sleep under
- ☐ Sleeping pad or blankets to sleep on
- ☐ Pillow

Gear

- ☐ Day backpack or book bag
- ☐ Water bottle(s); please bring water bottles that can hold a total of 2 liters.
- ☐ Toiletries (wash cloth, toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, deodorant, etc.)
- ☐ Sunscreen (especially in the summer)

* In cold/rainy seasons avoid cotton if possible. Materials such as wool or polyester will keep the students much warmer and dryer.

OPTIONAL ITEMS: sunglasses, headlamp/flashlight, camera (optional; phone cameras will be allowed at specific times), bag for dirty clothes, slippers, binoculars, paper, journal, pencil, reading books, quiet games

DO NOT BRING: guns, knives, any other weapon, alcohol or drugs, radio, music players, electronic games or equipment including cell phones, aerosol products, animals

DRIVING & GATE DIRECTIONS

To the Science and Learning Center at Coldwater

- From I-5, take Exit #49 Castle Rock (SR 504)
- Head east on SR 504 (Spirit Lake Memorial Highway)
- Travel approximately 43 miles to the Science and Learning Center at Coldwater
- You do NOT need a parking pass.

*Please note that there are no signs for the Science and Learning Center. Once you enter the Monument, you will travel east on Hwy. 504. After mile marker 42, you will encounter a fork in the road. Stay left at the fork in the road (DO NOT veer right to go to the Johnston Ridge Observatory). You will soon reach a closed gate at the Science & Learning Center that is unlocked but looks locked. **Follow the directions on the map on the next page to open the gate.** See Google Map [here](#).*

To the Hummocks Trail Head

- From I-5, take Exit #49 Castle Rock (SR 504)
- Head east on SR 504 (Spirit Lake Memorial Highway)
- At approximately 43 miles veer right at the fork in the road, heading down hill toward Coldwater Lake and Johnston Ridge Observatory Visitor Center
- After about 2 miles, the Hummocks Trail Head will be on your right.
- You do NOT need a parking pass.
- See Google Map [here](#).

To Coldwater Lake Picnic Area

- From I-5, take Exit #49 Castle Rock (SR 504)
- Head east on SR 504 (Spirit Lake Memorial Highway)
- At approximately 43 miles veer right at the fork in the road, heading down hill toward Coldwater Lake and Johnston Ridge Observatory Visitor Center
- After about 2 miles, turn left for the Coldwater Lake picnic area.
- You do NOT need a parking pass.
- See Google Map [here](#).



From I-5 take exit 49: WA-504 E/Mt St Helens Way NE

Remember to gas up your vehicle in Castle Rock or Toutle! It is 40+ mile uphill drive. The closest gas to the SLC/JRO is at Drew's Grocery in Toutle: 5304 Spirit Lake Highway.

Around mile marker 43, the speed limit goes to 25 mph and the road forks.

TO GO TO:

Science and Learning Center (SLC)

LEFT at fork.

Stay straight to open and go through gate (see bottom of page for instructions on how to open gate). Close gate. The road will turn right, continue straight downhill to the parking lot.

Coldwater Lake Picnic Area, Hummocks Trail, or Johnston Ridge Observatory (JRO)

RIGHT at fork.

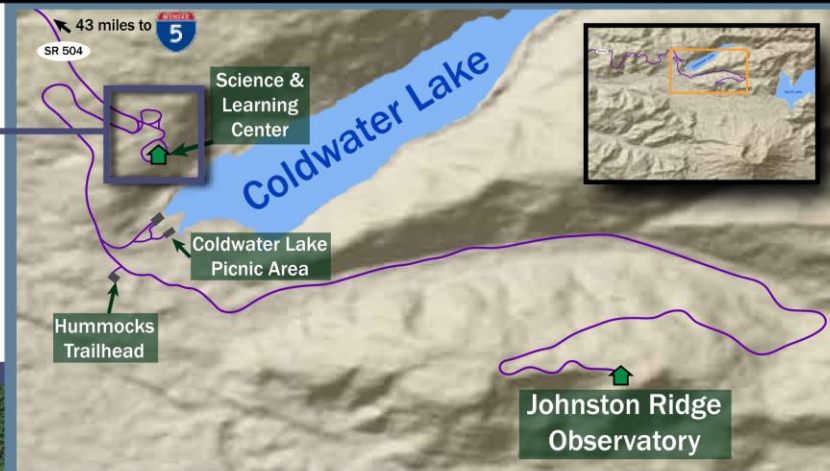
Follow the road downhill and follow signage.

Coldwater Lake Picnic Area- 1.5 miles, turn L
Hummocks Trail- 2 miles, turn R
Johnston Ridge Observatory- 9 miles, end of road

TRAVEL DISTANCES

	I-5 exit 49	SLC	Coldwater Lake Picnic Area	Hummocks Trailhead	JRO
I-5 exit 49		43 miles	45 miles	45 miles	52 miles
SLC	43 miles		2 miles	2 miles	9 miles
Coldwater Lake Picnic Area	45 miles	2 miles		<1 mile	7 miles
Hummocks Trailhead	45 miles	2 miles	<1 mile		7 miles
JRO	52 miles	9 miles	7 miles	7 miles	

MOUNT ST. HELENS AREA MAPS



Contact
learn@mshinstitute.org
for instructions on how to open the gate.