

Johnston Ridge Observatory to Reopen for the Summer Season on May 17 **Admission will be Free on the 29th Anniversary of the Eruption – Monday, May 18th**

The Johnston Ridge Observatory will reopen for the season on Sunday, May 17. The visitor center will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. through October. Admission to Johnston Ridge and Coldwater Lake is \$8 per person, kids 15 and under are free.

The reopening of State Route 504 and Johnston Ridge will restore access to a monument that has been largely inaccessible due to roads blocked by snow. Visitors will be able to gaze into the crater and view North America's youngest glacier and learn how the landscape was reshaped by the 1980 eruption. The visitor center offers live seismographs, geologic exhibits, 16-minute eruption movie, ranger-talks, and bookstore.

Admission on the 29th Anniversary of the 1980 Eruption, on Monday, May 18, is free; this includes admission to Johnston Ridge and Coldwater Lake. As part of the monument's 29th anniversary commemoration Dr. Steve Schilling, with the USGS Cascades Volcano Observatory, will present a slide program featuring recent eruptive activity at Mount St. Helens and the amazing changes that occurred to the Crater Glacier during the 2004 to 2008 eruption. The slide show will precede the showing of the award winning movie 'Message from the Mountain' at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.

The Mount St. Helens Institute (MSHI) welcomes Bill Nye, The Science Guy® to Johnston Ridge Observatory at Mount St. Helens on May 16, 2009 for It's a Blast: Volcano Science in Your Backyard. This public, ticketed event features a variety of fun and engaging science activities, scientist led hikes, and special anniversary talks.

Tickets are available online at www.mshinstitute.org. Admission is \$10 per person (kids 8 and under are free) or \$35 per person for admission plus the Bill Nye presentation. Visit the Institute website for more information.

The Pine Creek Information Station, located along Forest Road 90 at the east end of Swift Reservoir, will reopen in time for Memorial Day weekend. The information station is a partnership between the Forest, Mount St. Helens Institute, Skamania County, Discover Your Northwest, Cougar Area Trail Seekers and the Swift Community Action Team. Hours of operation will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily through Labor Day. Volunteers are still needed to staff Pine Creek, if you are interested please contact Hailey Heath with the MSHI at 360-449-7887.

Forest Road 99 leading from Forest Road 25 to the Windy Ridge viewpoint on the east side of Mount St. Helens is currently closed by snow. This road should be open by late-June pending snowmelt and reconstruction.

As additional information about access to the monument and roads blocked by record snow pack can be obtained online at www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/recreation/current-conditions or by calling (360) 449-7800.