

2025

January-April

NATURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS

Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center

Lake Hills Greenbelt Ranger Station

Lewis Creek Visitor Center



Bellevue Parks & Community Services Natural Resource Division

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Let us know how we're doing!

Bellevue Parks & Community Services wants to know how we can make our environmental education programs better. We invite you to give us feedback about programs you've attended and suggestions for future programs. You can do this two ways:

1. Ask for an evaluation card at a visitor's center that you can fill out on the spot, OR
2. Simply send us an email at program_feedback@bellevuewa.gov

Any thoughts you have about our programs are welcome, but we're specifically wondering;

- Did the program you attended increase your knowledge of the natural world?
- Did the program you attended increase your respect for natural areas?
- What would the ideal length be for a ranger program?
- Do you prefer programs on animals, plants, ecosystems, natural resources, or something else?
- Do you/your family prefer programs outdoors/in parks or indoors with photos and videos?

Thank you for your help in shaping the future of our educational programs!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

Special Events

WORLD WETLANDS DAY

Saturday, February 1, 11 a.m. -2 p.m.

Location: Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center
1625 118 Ave SE | Bellevue, WA 98005

World Wetlands Day is a global event that recognizes the importance of protecting our wetland ecosystems. These ecosystems provide critical habitat for many threatened and endangered wildlife, maintain water quality, and support biodiversity. We are partnering with several non-profits and other organizations to provide a fun-filled family friendly event with hands-on activities, crafts and nature walks through the wetland. **Ages:** All are welcome. **Cost:** Free!

*Bellevue
Naturalist*



Local Area Hikes

RANGER-LED HIKE AT LEWIS CREEK PARK

Saturday, January 4, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Saturday, March 1, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Saturday, April 5, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Join a Bellevue Park Ranger to explore the natural and cultural history of Lewis Creek Park. Look for signs of local wildlife and learn what to do when encountering animals in the wild. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Preregistration is required for each participant. **Ages:** All Ages **Cost:** Free!

Distance: 1 mile.

Level of Difficulty: Easy (Approximately 50 ft elevation change).

Meeting Place: Lewis Creek Park Visitor Center
5808 Lakemont Blvd SE

RANGER-LED HIKE AT MERCER SLOUGH NATURE PARK

Sunday, January 5, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 19, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 9, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 23, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 9, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 23, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 6, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 20, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.



Bring the whole family to join a Ranger on a guided hike through the Mercer Slough Nature Park. This kid-oriented program aims to educate kids and their parents about the Nature Park while discovering the birds and animals that call the Mercer Slough home. The hour-long nature walk ends at the channel bridge in the middle of the park. From there you can continue to further explore the rich diversity the park has to offer. **Ages:** All are welcome but best for 5 and up.

Cost: Free!

Distance: 1.5 miles.

Level of Difficulty: Easy

Meeting Place: Mercer Slough Nature Park, 1625 118 Avenue SE

Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

RANGER-LED HIKE AT LAKEMONT COMMUNITY PARK

Sunday, January 19, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Sunday, April 27, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

This lovely trail winds alongside a creek as we ascend and descend throughout the park. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Preregistration is required for each participant. **Ages:** All Ages. **Cost:** Free!

Distance: 2 miles.

Level of Difficulty: Moderately Difficult
(Approximately 700 ft total elevation change).

Meeting Place: Lakemont Community Park,
5170 Village Park Dr SE

RANGER-LED HIKE AT LAKEMONT HIGHLANDS OPEN SPACE

Sunday, February 9, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Join a Bellevue Park Ranger at the Lewis Creek Visitor Center to explore the Lakemont Highlands Open Space trail system. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Preregistration is required for each participant. **Ages:** All Ages. **Cost:** Free!

Distance: 3.5 miles.

Level of Difficulty: Level of Difficulty: Difficult
(Approximately 680 ft elevation change).

Meeting Place: Lewis Creek Park Visitor Center,
5808 Lakemont Blvd SE



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

RANGER-LED HIKE AT COAL CREEK

Sunday, March 30, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Explore Coal Creek at the Cinder Mine Trailhead to discover Bellevue's largest park and get lost in the wilderness while still in the city! This area is rich in history and wildlife you'll learn about while being guided by a Bellevue Park Ranger. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Preregistration required for each participant. **Ages:** All Ages **Cost:** Free!

Distance: 2 miles.

Level of Difficulty: Moderately Difficult
(Approximately 240 ft elevation change).

Meeting Place: Cinder Mine Trail Head,
15400 SE Newcastle Coal Creek Road



RANGER-LED HIKE AT LAKE HILLS GREENBELT

Saturday, January 4, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, January 11, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, January 18, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, January 25, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, February 1, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, February 8, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, February 15, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, February 22, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, March 1, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, March 8, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, March 15, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, March 22, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, March 29, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, April 5, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, April 12, 2-3 p.m.

Saturday, April 19, 2-3 p.m.

Are you interested in a weekend activity that's both fun and educational? Bring the whole family to the Lake Hills Greenbelt Ranger Station for an easy 1-mile nature hike through the Greenbelt's trails and discover the season's myriads of flora and fauna. Wear weather appropriate clothing and shoes, and feel free to bring personal wildlife-viewing gear (e.g. binoculars or magnifying glasses) to further enjoy the park. If you're feeling especially energized, continue on to the Larsen Lake trail loop and use your newfound knowledge to explore. We'll be heading out rain or shine, so come prepared to learn and have a great time! The trail is mostly level and gravel substrate. Pre-registration is required. **Ages:** All Ages. **Cost:** Free!

Distance: 1 mile

Level of Difficulty: Moderately Difficult
(Approximately 240 ft elevation change).

Meeting Place: Lake Hills Greenbelt Ranger Station
15416 SE 16th St, Bellevue, WA 98007



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov



MERCER SLOUGH

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

*Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center,
1625 118 Avenue SE*

Hours: Daily, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. **Phone:** 425-452-2565

Email: mseec@bellevuewa.gov

Overlooking the 320 acre Mercer Slough Nature Park, the Visitor Center offers remarkable view of the forest canopy and swampy wetlands below. Inside, enjoy an interactive library and interpretive displays for adults and families. Park Rangers provide information and free weekly programs. Pick up trail maps, brochures, and program information today.

We welcome your service animal to our programs. For planning purposes, please include them on your RSVP.

Mercer Slough Programs

NIGHT HIKE: A SLOUGH OF SENSES

Saturday, January 11, 7 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 8, 7 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 8, 7 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 12, 7 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Awaken your senses and step into the nocturnal world for a guided hike into the Mercer Slough Nature Park. Exploring the park at night will certainly prove to be a unique and memorable experience for the whole family. Dress for the weather and bring a headlamp.

Ages: 5-10. **Cost:** Free!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

STORY AND A STROLL

Friday, January 17, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

Friday, February 21, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

Friday, March 21, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

Friday, April 18, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

Join a park Ranger to explore the forested Wetlands of the Mercer Slough Nature Park. Each week as we venture outside, children will be fascinated by all there is to discover and become more comfortable navigating the trail. Children will also enjoy a nature-based story connecting them to the natural world. **Ages:** 3-5. **Cost:** Free!

RANGER PROGRAM: A LONG WINTER'S NAP

Saturday, January 25, 2-3 p.m.

Can you imagine sleeping all winter and waking up in the Spring? Wouldn't you get hungry. While some animals can adapt to winter conditions others will hibernate right here in our own backyards. Join a park Ranger find out what happens to their bodies that allows them to survive without any food.

Ages: 4-8. **Cost:** Free!

RANGER PROGRAM: WILDLIFE IN THE WETLAND

Saturday, February 22, 2-3 p.m

The Mercer Slough Nature Park is home to many woodland creatures. Together they create a balanced ecosystem where all can thrive. Find out just who is living in this mosaic of habitats. Join a Park Ranger to see if you can spot the signs of wildlife. **Ages:** 4-8. **Cost:** Free!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

RANGER PROGRAM: NATURE'S RECYCLERS

Saturday, March 22, 2-3 p.m.

Who is cleaning up the forest floor? Fungus, bacteria, and invertebrates are nature's busy recyclers working endlessly to break down organic material. Not only do they break down decaying matter, but they also turn it into rich nutrient filled soil necessary for healthy forests. Enjoy a stroll thru the forest and meet some wiggly recyclers **Ages:** 4-8. **Cost:** Free!



RANGER PROGRAM: WAKE UP WETLAND

Saturday, April 19, 2-3 p.m.

As the seasons change, so does nature. Many creatures big and small are emerging from their long winters nap in search of food and friends. Branches and shrubs are coming to life. Learn more about the plants and animals that indicate the first signs of Spring. **Ages:** 4-8. **Cost:** Free!

MOVIES AT MERCER SLOUGH

FORTRESS OF THE BEARS

Friday, January 24, 7-8 p.m.

Admiralty Island in Southeast Alaska supports the largest concentration of brown bears anywhere in the world. This hour-long documentary takes a closer look at the struggles these bears face to survive in an unknown future. **Ages:** 6 and up. **Cost:** Free!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

CLASH ENCOUNTERS OF BEARS AND WOLVES

Friday, February 21, 7-8 p.m.

The mighty Grizzlies and powerful wolves test their strength and strategies as they compete for survival. An entire food chain of scavengers survives in their wake. Enjoy watching these amazing keystone species in Yellowstone National Park.

Ages: 6 and up. **Cost:** Free!

LIFE IN THE UNDERGROWTH

Friday, March 21, 7-8 p.m.

Join David Attenborough in this groundbreaking exploration of the bizarre, ferocious and surprisingly beautiful world of invertebrates. **Ages:** 6 and up. **Cost:** Free!

SUPER HUMMINGBIRDS

Friday, April 25, 7-8 p.m.

With high-speed camerawork and break through science, we can dive into the fast paced world of hummingbirds as never seen before. They may be the smallest birds on earth but these brilliant creatures are fascinating. **Ages:** 6 and up. **Cost:** Free!



Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center is a collaboration between the City of Bellevue and the Pacific Science Center. For information on programs provided by Pacific Science Center, please visit pacificsciencecenter.org



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov



Lake Hills Greenbelt Ranger Station, 15416 SE 16 Street

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 12-4 p.m. **Phone:** 425-452-6993

Email: parkrangerprogram@bellevuewa.gov

Surrounded by community farms, gardens, and beautiful wetlands, you will find interpretive displays, trails, environmental program information, and friendly Park Rangers to answer your questions.

We welcome your service animal to our programs. For planning purposes, please include them on your RSVP.

Lake Hills Greenbelt Programs

FREEZING FURRY FRIENDS

Saturday, January 11 , 10-11 a.m.

Saturday, January 18 , 10-11 a.m.

During the coldest months of the year, animals need a way to stay warm and survive. What makes coyote fur so special? Do bears really hibernate? Join us in discovering how the wildlife around us has adapted to the cold as we experience the winter conditions firsthand on a walk through the Lake Hills Greenbelt trails. Then stay to make a cozy critter craft. Dress for the weather, rain or shine. Pre-registration required for all attendees. **Ages:** 4-13 with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

MAGNIFICENT TINY SWIMMERS

Saturday, February 8, 10-11 a.m.

Saturday, February 15, 10-11 a.m.

Water comes to life under a magnifying glass! Even seemingly clear water is home to insect larvae, worms, snails, and tiny fish. Learn about how water is used as a crucial part of their life cycle and how they contribute to the larger ecosystem. Explore the tiny aquatic world of the lakes and ponds at the Lake Hills Greenbelt as we collect and identify specimens, getting an up close look at these fascinating aquatic creatures. Dress for the weather, rain or shine. Pre-registration required for all attendees. **Ages:** 4-13 with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!



FUNGI FRENZY

Saturday, March 22, 10-11 a.m.

Saturday, March 29, 10-11 a.m.

The impact of fungi in the forest extends far deeper than the mushrooms we see pop out of the ground. Join us for a walk along the Lake Hills Greenbelt trails as we spot different types of mushrooms and learn about how fungi grow, recycle nutrients, and create an immense underground network for plants. Dress for the weather, rain or shine. Pre-registration required for all attendees. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Ages: 4 and up. **Cost:** Free!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov



SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Saturday, April 19, 10-11 a.m.

Spring is the season of new growth! This is the time for seeds to sprout, dormant plants to come back to life, and wildlife to emerge from their winter slumber. Explore the life cycle of plants, tour our gardens, and take a walk along the trail to see the spring revival of the wetland. Then get ready to garden with us as we decorate flowerpots to take home along with your very own native seeds to plant. Dress for the weather, rain or shine. Pre-registration required for all attendees.

Children must be accompanied by an adult. **Ages:** 4 and up.

Cost: Free!

MOONLIT STROLL

Friday, April 4, 8-9 p.m.

Friday, April 11, 8-9 p.m.

While we are typically resting, the nocturnal wildlife at Lake Hills Greenbelt is just waking up. Explore the trails with us, just after sunset, to try to catch a glimpse of these nighttime creatures, discover what helps them survive at night, and how to avoid a potentially dangerous encounter with nocturnal predators. Bring a flashlight or headlamp. Dress for the weather, rain or shine.

Pre-registration required for all attendees. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Ages: All ages. **Cost:** Free!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

TODDLER TRAILS AT THE LAKE HILLS GREENBELT

Friday, March 7, 10-10:45 a.m.

Friday, April 25, 10-10:45 a.m.

Ignite the curiosity of your little ones at the Lake Hills Greenbelt! Your adventurers will explore the plants and wildlife along the trails with a park ranger, learn through stories, and get creative with an artsy craft. We'll be heading out rain or shine, so dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Pre-registration required for all attendees. **Ages:** 2-5 with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!

Distance: 0.5 miles.

Level of Difficulty: Easy

Meeting Place: Lake Hills Greenbelt Ranger Station,
15416 SE 16th St, Bellevue, WA 98007



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov



LEWIS CREEK

V I S I T O R C E N T E R

*Lewis Creek Visitor Center,
5808 Lakemont Blvd SE*

Hours: Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m **Phone:** 425-452-4195

Email: lcvc@bellevuewa.gov

This beautiful park offers ample opportunity to wander through forests, meadows, and wetlands. Come inside the Visitor Center to pick up trail and park maps for the area, attend a free Natural Resource program, or simply enjoy the relaxing atmosphere.

We welcome your service animal to our programs. For planning purposes, please include them on your RSVP.

Lewis Creek Programs

FAMILY DISCOVERY SERIES PROGRAMS

TODDLER TRAILS

Saturday, January 25, 10-11 a.m.

Saturday, February 8, 10-11 a.m.

Sunday, March 2, 10-11 a.m.

Saturday, April 19, 10-11 a.m.

Explore the trails at Lewis Creek Park with a park ranger and get out some wiggles this spring. We'll take frequent stops while we investigate the different environments of Lewis Creek Park we wander through and learn how we can make hiking fun for everyone. This is an outdoor program, please dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes. Preregistration is required for children and adults. **Ages:** 18-36 Months with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!

Distance: .5 miles.

Level of Difficulty: Easy

Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

CREATURE CRAFTS

Saturday, January 11, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Sunday, February 23, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Saturday, March 15, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 13, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Join us for an hour of themed crafts and fun with your little ones. Create a take home craft and have fun with additional activities your little explorer can discover at their own pace. Each month we'll have a new topic to focus on. Preregistration is required for children and adults. **Ages** 3-7 with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!



WHOOOO'S HOOTING?

Sunday, January 5, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 18, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 25, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

How does a barn owl find its prey in total darkness? How does a great horned owl clasp its talons with 28 pounds of force? Join us as we learn all about our favorite silently flying friends, try out our hoots, and dig deeper into an owl's diet by dissecting owl pellets! Preregistration is required for children and adults. **Ages:** 5-10 with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!

MAKING TRACKS IN LEWIS CREEK PARK

Sunday, February 2, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 8, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 22, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Animals leave all kinds of clues that tell us which critter has been visiting and what they were up to. Join a park ranger to learn Bellevue's animal signs, then head outside to see what animals have been wandering through Lewis Creek Park! We'll look for prints, feathers, and even scat to see what's been happening in the park. Preregistration is required for children and adults.

Ages: 5-10 with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

BEST BUDS

Sunday, March 9, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 16, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 22, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

All winter long the trees have been holding onto their buds, but now that spring is here leaves will be opening everywhere! Join a park ranger to discover what's hiding inside the protected buds, see some that have already opened and dig deeper into a closed bud. Preregistration is required for children and adults.

Ages: 5-10 with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!



BUSY BEAVERS

Sunday, April 6, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 12, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 19, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Beavers shape the environment with help from their whole family to make places where animals of all shapes and sizes live. Join us as we learn about nature's engineers, dive in with a fun fur experiment, and go on a short walk outside around our wetland. Preregistration is required for children and adults.

Cost: Free!

NIGHT HIKE AT LEWIS CREEK PARK

Saturday, January 18, 5:30-7 p.m.

Saturday, February 15, 6-7:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 8, 6:30-8 p.m.

Saturday, April 12, 8-9:30 p.m.

When the sun sets and the dark of night creeps in, Lewis Creek Park comes alive! Learn about the different nocturnal and crepuscular species that call the park home. Bring a flashlight or headlamp, as well as good shoes and warm clothes for the journey. Preregistration is required for children and adults.

Ages: 5 and up with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

Adult Enrichment Program

EVENING NATURE WALK

Saturday, January 4, 7-8:30 p.m.

Join a Bellevue Park Ranger for a (grown-ups only) hike where we'll explore some of the park's nocturnal species, as well as strategies for seeing these shy animals at night. Please bring a flashlight or headlamp, dress for the weather, and wear sturdy shoes. Preregistration required for each participant. **Ages:** 18+ **Cost:** Free!



Distance: 1 mile.

Level of Difficulty: Easy (Approximately 50 ft elevation change).

Meeting Place: Lewis Creek Park Visitor Center,
5808 Lakemont Blvd SE

COAL MINING AT COUGAR MOUNTAIN

(Presented by the Eastside Heritage Center)

Sunday, January 26, 1-3 p.m.

This program focuses on 100 years of local coal mining. In 1888, there were 20 mules and 200 men employed here! Exporting coal to San Francisco turned Seattle into a dominant seaport. Learn what is underneath a mountain that is older than Rainier. Presented in partnership by the Eastside Heritage Center and Bellevue Parks & Community Services. No pre-registration required. **Ages:** This program is best for adults, but participants ages 13+ are welcome with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!



Online registration required for all participants.

register.bellevuewa.gov

HISTORY OF EASTSIDE LOGGING

(Presented by the Eastside Heritage Center)

Sunday, March 23, 1-3 p.m.

Did you know that most of the east side of Lake Washington was clear-cut by 1920 or that nearly all the big trees that we see today are less than 100 years old? (It will take another 400 years for our evergreens to reach 'maturity')! Come and see the equipment that evolved from two men working one tree all day with a hand-saw, to sky-line cable operations that could clear a whole Cougar Mountain valley in a single day. Presented in partnership by the Eastside Heritage Center and Bellevue Parks & Community Services. No pre-registration required.

Ages: This program is best for adults, but participants ages 13+ are welcome with accompanying adult(s). **Cost:** Free!



Visitor Centers



Mercer Slough Environmental
Education Center
425-452-2565
1625 118 Avenue SE

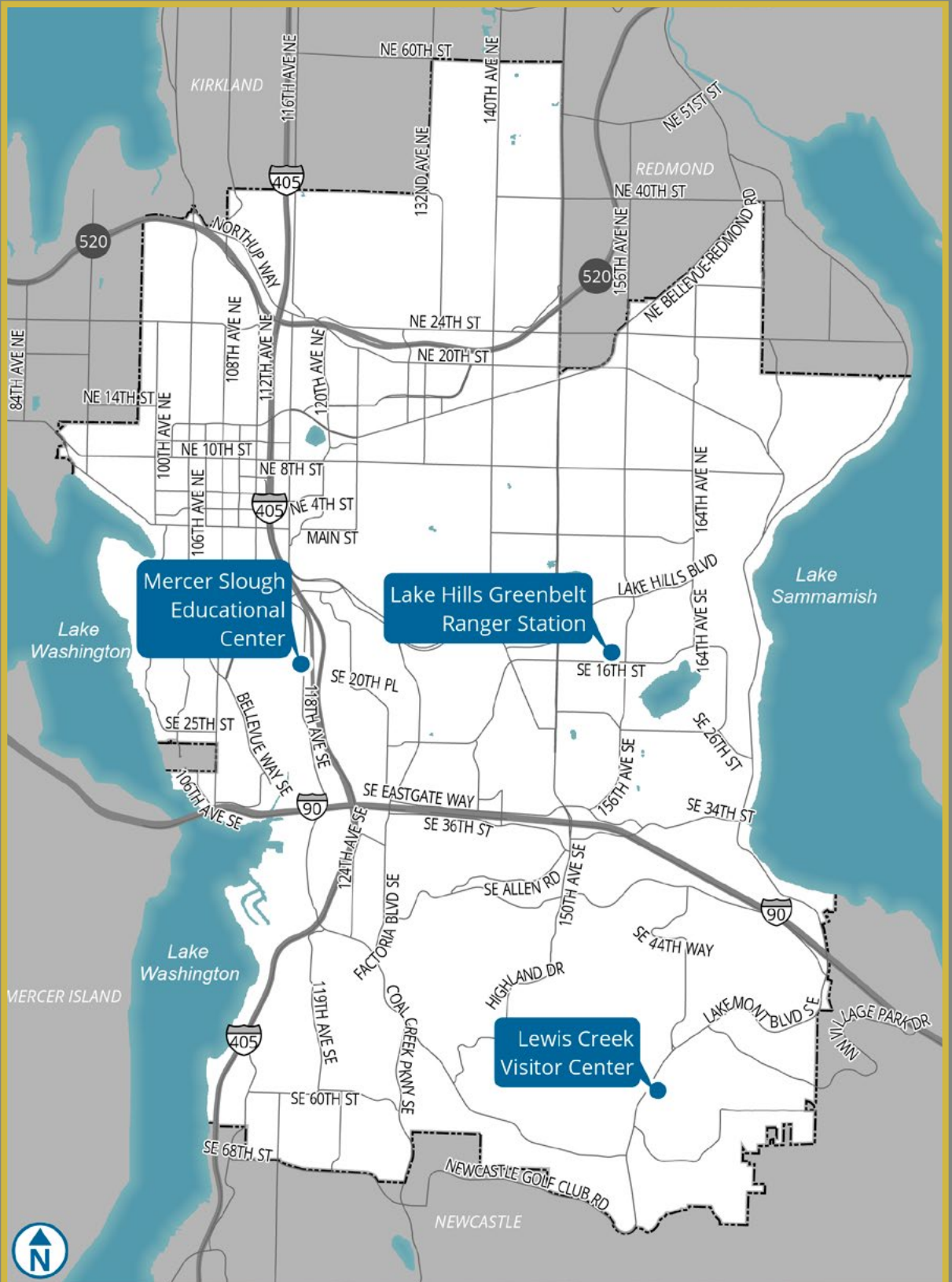


Lake Hills Greenbelt
Ranger Station
425-452-6993
15416 SE 16 Street
(15500 SE 16 Street:
Parking Location)



Lewis Creek Visitor Center
425-452-4195
5808 Lakemont Blvd SE

Visitor Center Locations



Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center

425-452-2565

1625 118 Avenue SE

Lake Hills Greenbelt Ranger Station

425-452-6993

15416 SE 16 Street

15500 SE 16 Street: Parking Location

Lewis Creek Visitor Center

425-452-4195

5808 Lakemont Blvd SE



For alternate formats, interpreters, or reasonable modification requests please phone at least 48 hours in advance 425-452-2565 (voice) or email dvannieula@bellevuewa.gov. For complaints regarding modifications, contact the City of Bellevue ADA, Title VI, and Equal Opportunity Officer at ADATitleVI@bellevuewa.gov.

