

Mount saint helens

Business



Jan de Bont once said, “ One of the most amazing locations I’ve ever been is the top of the volcano in Tanzania, Africa. It’s an actual volcano where you really have this lava every day” (qtd.

in “ Volcano Quotes”). After the volcano erupts the ground is barren and nothing alive. The plants and animals have either been killed or ran away; however, scientists believe that Mount Saint Helens’ ecosystem will regrow. It may even grow back even better than before. The ecosystem will recover it is just a matter of time before they start recolonizing. Any time the plants and animals will start going through primary and secondary succession to rebuild the surrounding ecosystem.

Although the effects of a volcanic eruption are devastating at first, they become beneficial in the long run. One volcanic eruption that affected its ecosystem was Mount St. Helens. When ecologists ventured out into the Mount St. Helens area, they expected the various ecosystems that were hit to have to start from scratch, with plants and animals re-colonizing after arriving from surrounding forests. According to Thompson, while some areas around the volcano, particularly the pumice plains created by the eruption pyroclastic flow, were indeed left without any seeds of life to regrow the forest, many of the impacted areas unexpectedly still had some slivers of life.

Thompson goes on to explain that because of all of the ash suspended in the air and the rumbling of the volcano, the ecosystem could not start to recover until all of the ash and rumbling had ceased. Once all of the ash and rumbling had ceased, the ecosystem started to recover, and it started to

recover well. Both the abiotic and biotic factors flourished once they were able to because of all the ash and rumbling of the ground from the volcano. It took about fifteen years to start looking like it was before the eruption. Ecological succession is the change of plants and animals over a certain period of time, but this can't start until some of the animals and plants come back from surrounding ecosystem.

The elevation also affects where the plants grow and how fast they grow. If the elevation is higher the temperature is colder which makes the growing season shorter, and giving the plants less of an opportunity to grow. On the other hand in lower elevation the temperatures are warmer causing the growing season to be longer, so the plants' ecosystem can have a better chance at recolonization. Mount Saint Helens' ecosystem recovered and flourished in the long term after the eruption. It has been thirty years since the eruption of Mount Saint Helens', and the ecosystem and surrounding areas are almost back to its previous beauty. The ecosystem around Mount Saint Helens is still recovering today, but it has been pretty much restored back to what it looked like before the 1980 eruption.

Because of this eruption, it has given scientists great opportunities to study how ecological succession happens in nature. The buried seeds of the fallen trees and the amphibians and other animals that weren't affected by the eruption are the building blocks that will help regrow this area back to its original beauty. What was once a lush, green landscape was now a barren, gray landscape, but over time the green has slowly returned to Mount St. Helens (Werts). The Mount Saint Helens volcanic eruption was one of the most studied eruptions in the world.

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There hadn't been any steam or other activity for four days before the eruption. Then a 5.1 magnitude earthquake on the richter scale caused the north side of the volcano to collapse and turn into a mudslide/landslide. Because of this north side missing, the lateral blast covered area like a fan shape reaching out to twenty kilometers and thirty kilometers wide. Spirit Lake's bed rose sixty meters when the debris of the avalanche entered the lake. The shoreline of the lake doubled in size.

The eruption lasted for nine hours; in ten minutes the cloud of ash was up to twenty kilometers high. Because of the high winds that day to the east-northeast the ash was made into a umbrella shape. This umbrella region reached significantly in the midwest and minorly in farther east ("How Volcanoes Work"). Nearly 150 square miles of forest were destroyed almost instantly — and then the eruption continued for nine hours (Werts). The time of the season and the day were perfect for the animals and plants around the volcano at the time.

It happened at 8:32 a. m., so most of the nocturnal were bedded down and protected by their burrows. And it was winter so there was snow covering most of the plants so they weren't as affected as they would have been if it was summer (Thompson). So although the ecosystem around Mount Saint Helens was devastated, it found a way to grow back to its original beauty.

This example of an ecosystem returning to what it once was is an amazing feat of how the environments works together. Because of all the ecosystems working together, Mount Saint Helens' ecosystem is back to its original perfection. Works Cited "How Volcanoes Work – the Mt. St. Helens Eruption.

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