

# Local Source (Cascadia Subduction Zone) Tsunami Inundation Map Chetco River, Oregon

## Introduction

The Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) has been identifying and mapping the tsunami inundation hazard along the Oregon coast since 1994. Oregon DOGAMI manages the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program, which has been administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) since 1995. DOGAMI's work is designed to help cities, counties, and other state in coastal areas reduce the potential for disastrous tsunami-related consequences by understanding and mitigating the geologic hazard. Using federal funding awarded by NOAA, DOGAMI has developed a new generation of tsunami inundation maps to help residents and visitors along the entire Oregon coast prepare for the next Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) earthquake and tsunami.

The CSZ is the tectonic plate boundary between the North American Plate and the Juan de Fuca Plate (Figure 1). These plates are converging at a rate of about 1.5 inches per year but the movement is not smooth and continuous. Rather, the plates lock in place, and unreleased energy builds over time. At intervals, this accumulated energy is violently released in the form of a megathrust earthquake rupture, where the North American Plate suddenly slips westward over the Juan de Fuca Plate. This rupture causes a vertical displacement of water that creates a tsunami (Figure 2). Similar rupture processes and tsunamis have occurred elsewhere on the planet where subduction zones exist, for example, offshore Chile in 1960 and 2010, offshore Alaska in 1964, near Sumatra in 2004, and offshore Japan in March 2011.

**CSZ Frequency:** Comprehensive research of the offshore geologic record indicates that at least 19 major ruptures of the full length of the CSZ have occurred off the Oregon coast over the past 10,000 years (Figure 3). All 19 of these full-rupture CSZ events were likely magnitude 8.9 to 9.2 earthquakes (Witter and others, 2011). The most recent CSZ event happened approximately 300 years ago on January 26, 1700. Sand deposits carried onshore and left by the 1700 event have been found 12 miles inland, older tsunami sand deposits have also been discovered in estuaries 6 miles inland. As shown in Figure 3, the range in time between these 19 events varies from 120 to 1,150 years, with a median time interval of 460 years. In 2008 the United States Geological Survey (USGS) released the results of a study announcing that the probability of a magnitude 8-9 CSZ earthquake occurring over the next 30 years is 10% and that such earthquakes occur about every 500 years (WGCEP 2008).

**CSZ Model Specifications:** The sizes of the earthquake and its resultant tsunami are primarily driven by the amount and geometry of the slip that takes place when the plates suddenly slip westward over the Juan de Fuca Plate during a CSZ event. DOGAMI has modeled a wide range of earthquake and tsunami sizes that take into account different fault geometries that could amplify the amount of seawater displacement and increase tsunami inundation. Seismic geological profiles show that there may be a deep sub-sea fault running nearly parallel to the CSZ but closer to the Oregon coastline (Figure 1). The effect of this sub-sea fault moving during a full-rupture CSZ event would be an increase in the amount of vertical displacement of the Pacific Ocean, resulting in an increase of the tsunami inundation exposure in

Oregon. DOGAMI has also incorporated physical evidence that suggests that portions of the coast may drop 4 to 20 feet during the earthquake; this effect is known as subsidence. Detailed information on fault geometries, subsidence, computer models, and the methodology used to create the tsunami scenarios presented on this map can be found in DOGAMI Special Papers 41 (Priest and others, 2009) and 42 (Witter and others, 2011).

## Map Explanation

This tsunami inundation map displays the output of computer models representing five selected tsunami scenarios, all of which include the earthquake-produced subsidence and the tsunami-amplifying effects of the spill fault. Each scenario assumes that a tsunami occurs at Mean Higher High Water (MHHW) tide. MHHW is defined as the average height of the higher high tides observed over a 19-year period at the Port Orford tide gauge. To make it easier to understand this scientific material and to enhance the educational aspects of hazard mitigation and response, the five scenarios are labeled as "T-shirt sizes" ranging from Small, Medium, Large, Extra Large, to XXL. The map legend depicts the respective amounts of slip, the frequency of occurrence, and the earthquake magnitude for these five scenarios. Figure 4 shows the cumulative number of buildings inundated within the map area.

The computer simulation model output is provided to DOGAMI as millions of points with values that indicate whether the location of each point is wet or dry. These points are converted to wet and dry contour lines that form the extent of inundation. The transition area between the wet and dry contour lines is termed the Wet/Dry Zone, which equates to the amount of error in the model when determining the maximum inundation for each scenario. Only the XXL Wet/Dry Zone is shown on this map.

This map also shows the regulatory tsunami inundation line (Oregon Revised Statutes 455.446 and 455.447, commonly known as the Senate Bill 379 line, Senate Bill 379 (2005) instructed DOGAMI to establish the area of expected tsunami inundation based on scientific evidence and tsunami modeling in order to prohibit the construction of new essential and special occupancy structures in this tsunami inundation zone (Priest, 1995).

**Time Series Graphs and Wave Elevation Profiles:** In addition to the tsunami scenarios, the computer model produces time series data for "gauge" locations in the area. These graphs are simulated gauge readings that record the time, in seconds, of the tsunami wave arrival and the wave height observed. It is especially noteworthy that the greatest wave height and velocity observed are not necessarily associated with the first tsunami wave to arrive onshore. Tsunami waves should not assume that the tsunami event is over until the proper authorities have sounded the all-clear signal at the end of the evacuation. Figure 5 depicts the tsunami waves as they arrive at a simulated gauge station. Figure 6 depicts the overall wave height and inundation extent for all five scenarios at the profile locations shown on this map.

## Cascadia Subduction Zone Setting

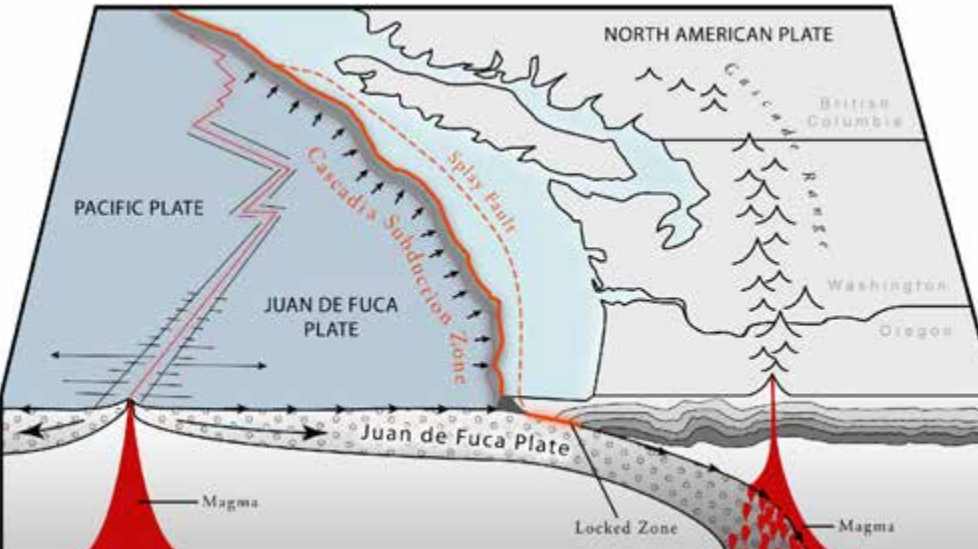
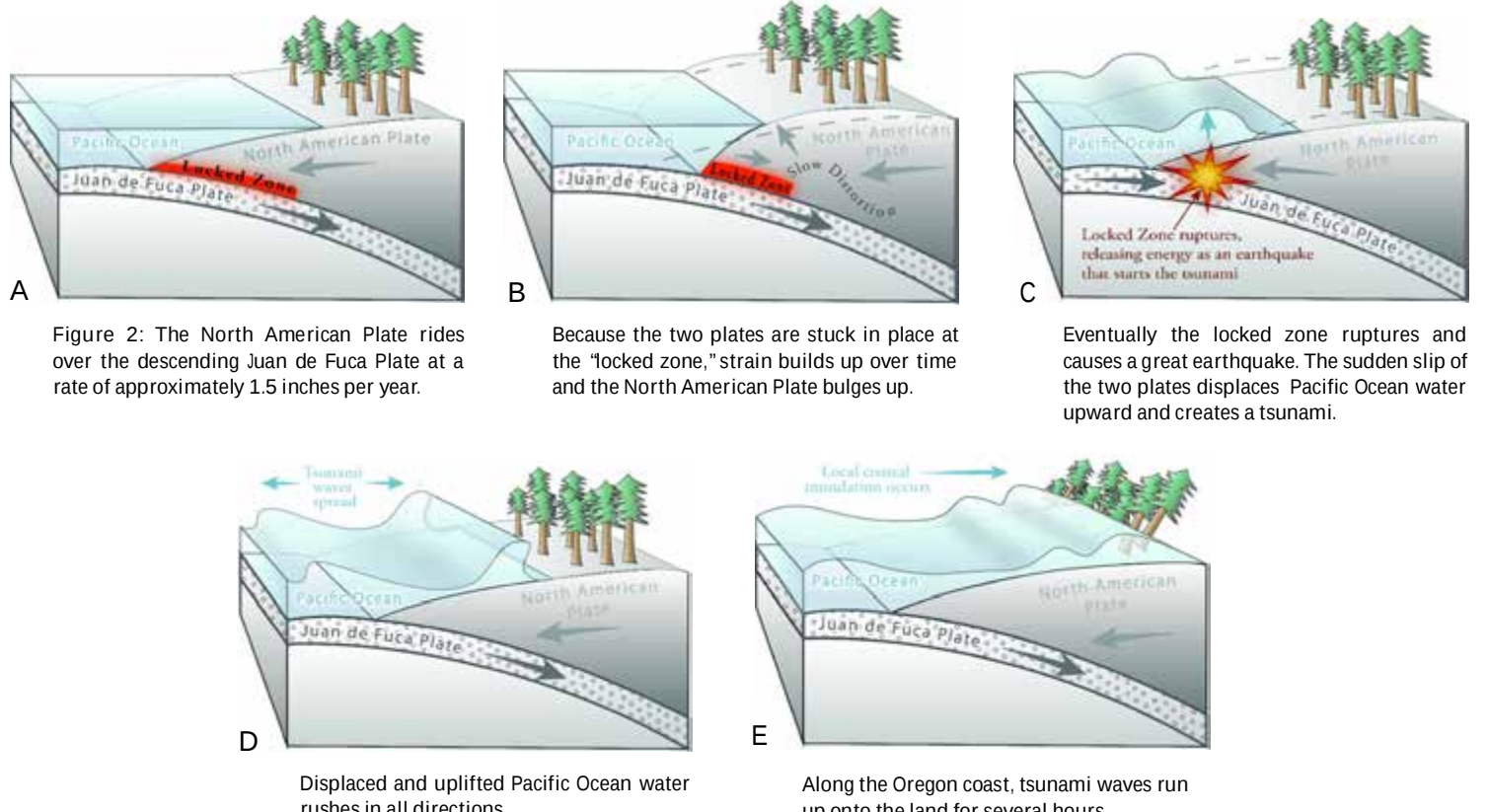


Figure 1: This block diagram depicts the tectonic setting of the region. See Figure 2 for the sequence of events that occur during a Cascadia Subduction Zone megathrust earthquake and tsunami.

## How Tsunamis Occur



## Occurrence and Relative Size of Cascadia Subduction Zone Megathrust Earthquakes

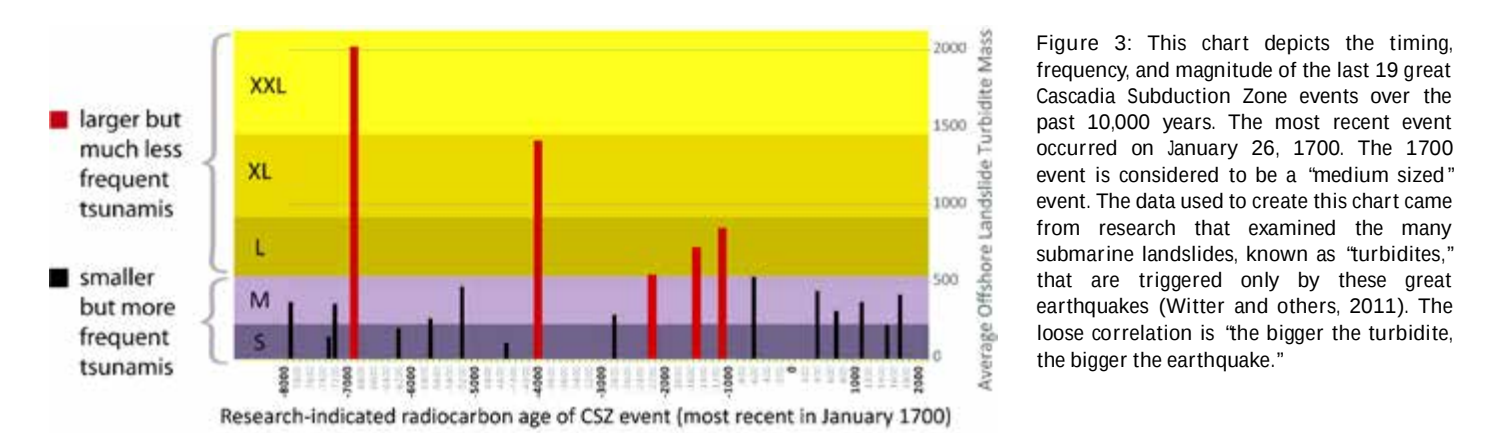


Figure 3: This chart depicts the timing, frequency, and magnitude of the last 19 great Cascadia Subduction Zone events over the past 10,000 years. The most recent event occurred on January 26, 1700. The 1700 event is considered to be a 'medium sized' event. The data used to create this chart came from research that examined the many submarine turbidites, known as 'turbidites', that are triggered only by those great earthquakes (Witter and others, 2011). The loose correlation is 'the bigger the turbidite, the bigger the earthquake'.

## Buildings within Tsunami Inundation Zones

|                                                  | Entire Map Area | City of Brookings | Unincorporated Area |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Total Buildings</b>                           | 7,525           | 7,053             | 472                 |
| <b>Buildings within Tsunami Zones*</b>           |                 |                   |                     |
| Small                                            | 171             | 171               | 0                   |
| Medium                                           | 362             | 362               | 0                   |
| Large                                            | 450             | 450               | 0                   |
| Extra Large                                      | 995             | 950               | 20                  |
| Extra Extra Large                                | 1,382           | 1,360             | 22                  |
| <b>Percent of Buildings within Tsunami Zones</b> |                 |                   |                     |
| Small                                            | 2.3%            | 2.4%              | 0.0%                |
| Medium                                           | 4.8%            | 5.1%              | 0.0%                |
| Large                                            | 6.0%            | 6.4%              | 0.0%                |
| Extra Large                                      | 13.2%           | 13.8%             | 4.2%                |
| Extra Extra Large                                | 18.4%           | 19.3%             | 4.7%                |

\*Building counts shown are based on polygon centroids, and are cumulative within the map area.

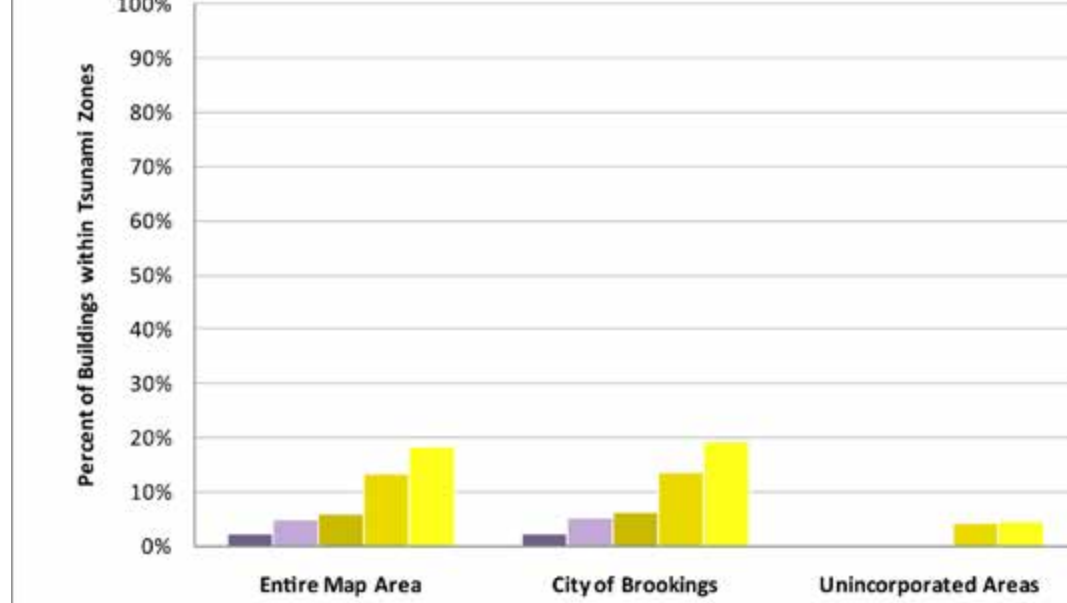
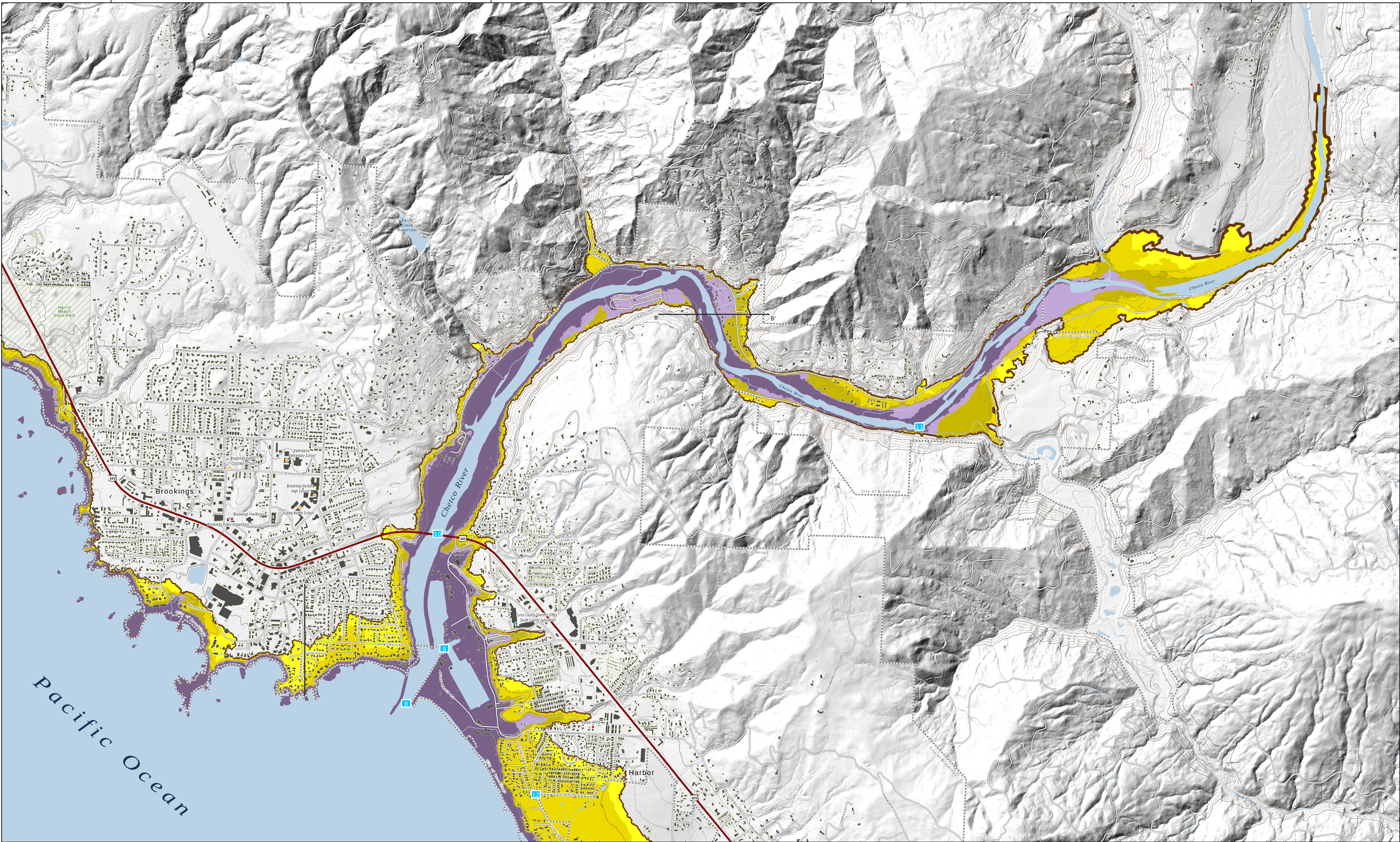


Figure 4: The table and chart show the number of buildings inundated for each "T-shirt" scenario for cities and unincorporated portions of the map.



## Estimated Tsunami Wave Height through Time for Simulated Gauge Station

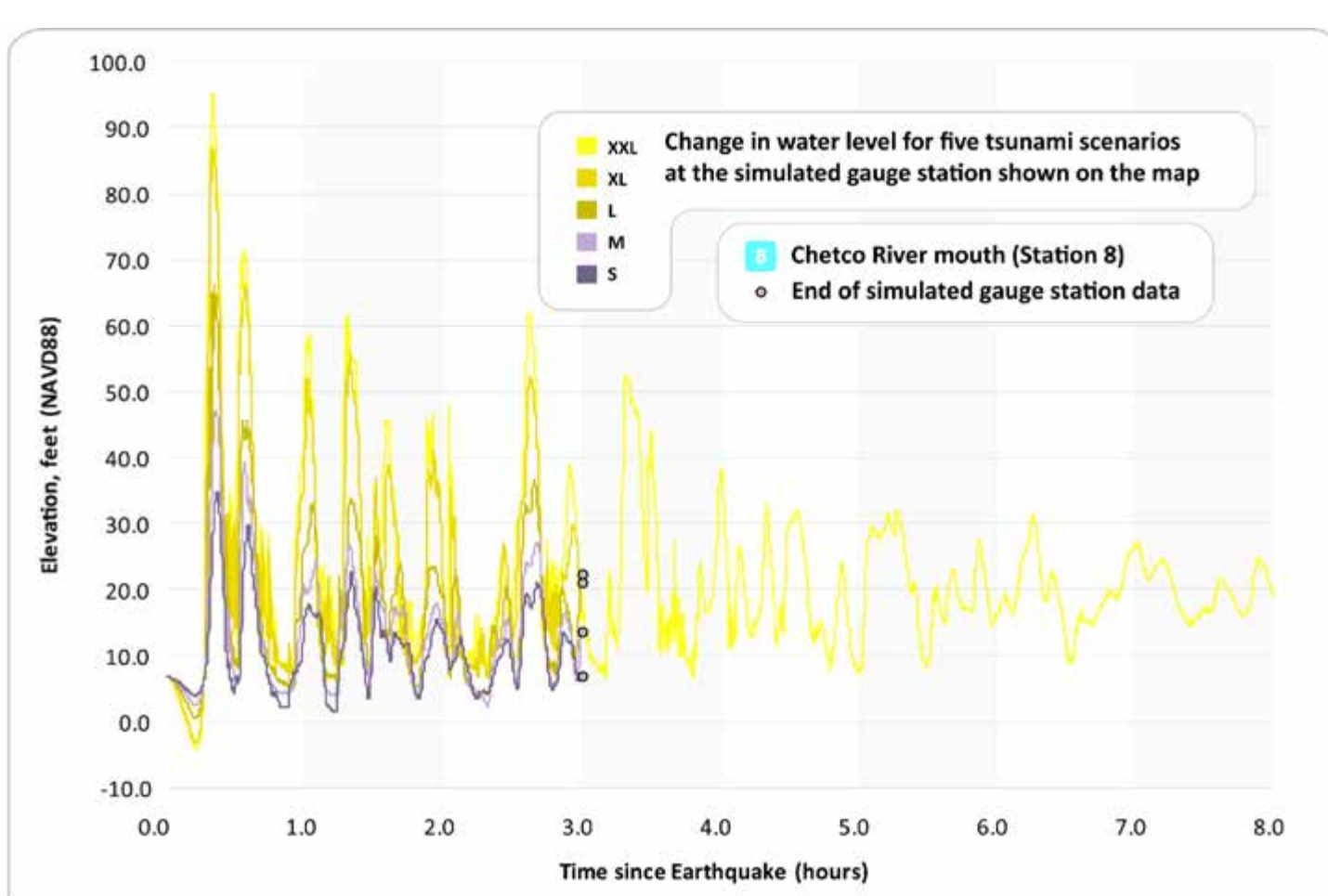


Figure 5: This chart depicts the tsunami waves as they arrive at the selected reference point (simulated gauge station). It shows the change in wave heights for all five tsunami scenarios over an 8-hour period. The starting water elevation (20 feet) takes into account the local land subsidence or uplift caused by the earthquake. Wave heights vary through time, and the first wave will not necessarily be the largest as waves interfere and reflect on local topography and bathymetry.

## Maximum Wave Elevation Profiles

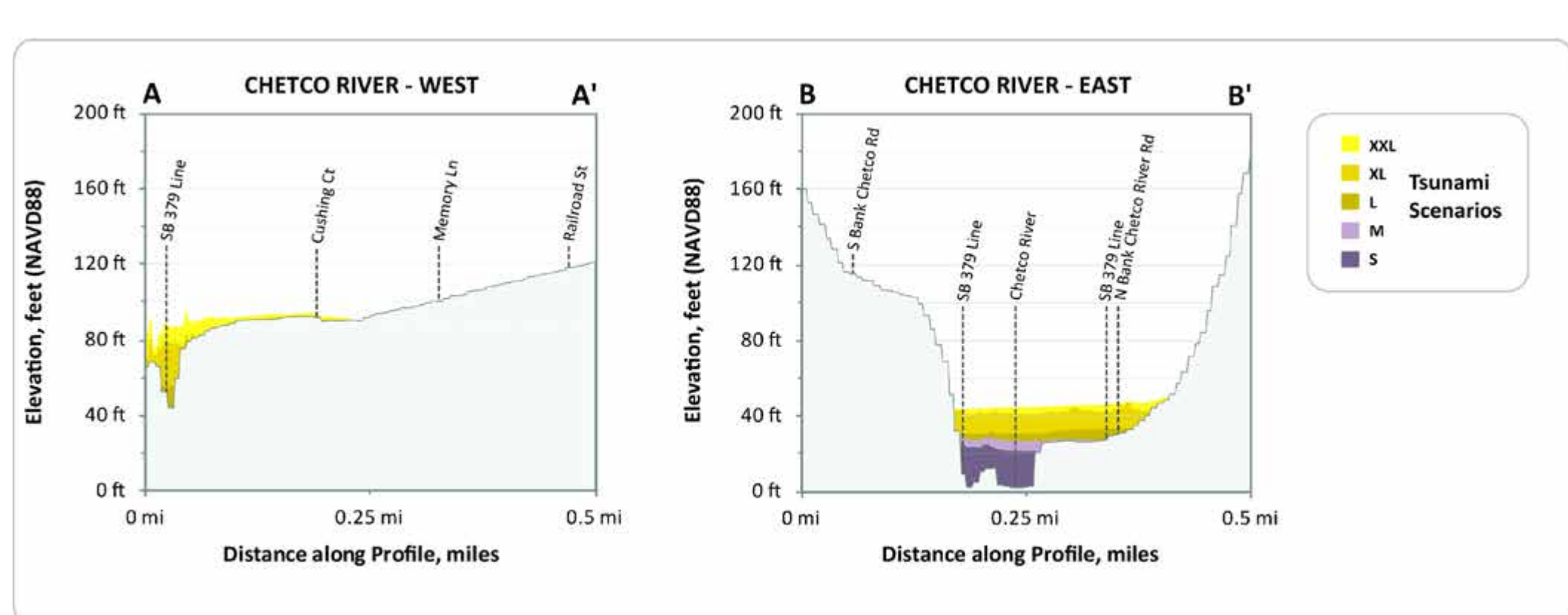
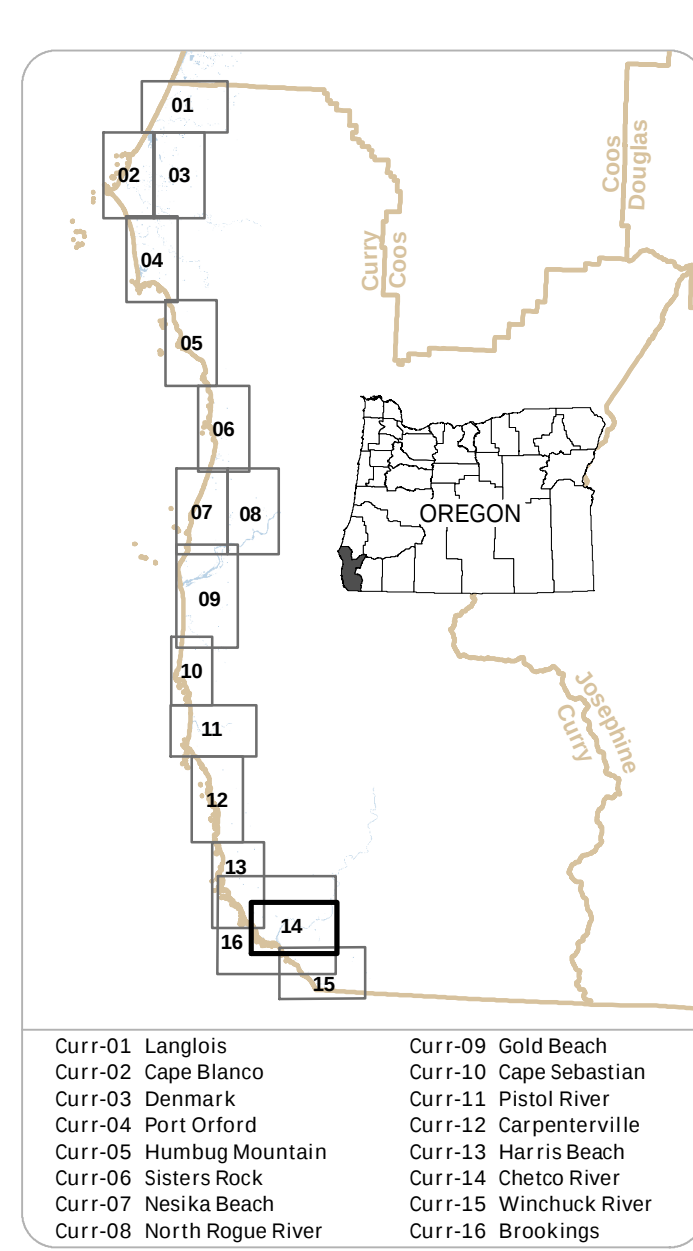


Figure 6: These profiles depict the expected maximum tsunami wave elevation for the five "T-shirt" scenarios "along lines A-A' and B-B'. The tsunami scenarios are modeled to occur at high tide and to account for local subsidence or uplift of the ground surface.

## Tsunami Inundation Map Index



## Legend

| Earthquake Size  | Average Slip Range (ft) | Maximum Slip Range (ft) | Time to Accumulate Slip (yrs) | Earthquake Magnitude |
|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| XXL              | 59 to 72                | 118 to 144              | 1,200                         | -9.1                 |
| XL               | 56 to 72                | 115 to 144              | 1,050 to 1,200                | -9.1                 |
| L                | 36 to 49                | 72 to 98                | 650 to 800                    | -9.0                 |
| M                | 23 to 30                | 46 to 62                | 425 to 525                    | -8.9                 |
| S                | 13 to 16                | 30 to 36                | 300                           | -8.7                 |
| XXL Wet/Dry Zone |                         |                         |                               |                      |

|                                                  |                             |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Urban Growth Boundary                            | Fire Station                |
| Building Footprint                               | Police Station              |
| Simulated Gauge Station                          | School                      |
| Profile Location                                 | Hospital/Urgent Care Clinic |
| Senate Bill 379 Line                             | U.S. Highway                |
| State Park                                       | State Highway               |
| Elevation Contour (25 ft intervals up to 200 ft) | Improved Road               |

## Data References

**Source Data:**  
The map is based on hydrodynamic tsunami modeling by Joseph Zhang, Oregon Health and Science University, Portland, Oregon. Model data input were provided by Larry Givens and George R. Priest, Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI), Portland, Oregon.  
**Hydrology data:** Current critical facilities, and building footprints were created by DOGAMI. Senate Bill 379 line data were redigitized by Rachel R. Lyles Smith and Sean G. Pickner. DOGAMI in 2011 (CSZ file set, in press, 2012).  
**Urban growth boundaries (UGB):** were provided by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD).  
**Topographic data (2010):** provided by Curry County were edited by DOGAMI to improve the spatial accuracy of the data. The data were derived from a vector data not present in the original data layer.  
**Lidar data:** are from DOGAMI Lidar Data Quadrangles 100-2008-42124-A2-A3 and 100-2008-42124-A3-A3.  
**Coordinate System:** Oregon Statewide Lambert Conformal Conic, Units: International Foot, Horizontal Datum: NAD 1983 HARN, Vertical Datum: NAVD 1988. Gridscale shown with geographic coordinates (latitude/longitude).  
**Software:** Esri ArcGIS 10.0, Microsoft® Excel®, and Adobe® Illustrator®.  
**Funding:** This map was funded under award H4000000400204 by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) through the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program.  
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**Editing:** Don W. Lewis, Rachel R. Lyles Smith.  
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