

Rising Odds for a Great Northwest Quake by 2060

Andrew C. Revkin, *New York Times*, 6-1-10

It's time for communities from Northern California through Seattle to check their earthquake and tsunami plans and get busier than ever retrofitting vulnerable buildings. A comprehensive new study looking at layered seabed sediment up and down the Northwest Coast has raised the odds of a great 8.0-magnitude earthquake occurring by 2060 to nearly 4 in 10, according to the news site of the journal *Nature*. The raised risk is mainly in the southern part of that region.

This nice cross section of the geology in the region, produced for the Pacific Northwest Seismic Network, helps explain the forces that are in play:

This study merely clarifies the chances of the quake happening within the lifetimes of residents there. The reality of the threat has been growing for several decades, and the earthquake in Chile — a reasonably comparable temblor — provided an illustration of the forces that are building off the North American coast.