

# **Report from the Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Subcommittee of the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program October 1997**

## **Measuring Mitigation Funded by the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program**

Progress in tsunami hazards mitigation can be measured for 1997 in several ways by looking at: 1) the number of working partnerships that have formed within state boundaries, 2) the range of products that have been developed that inform, educate and raise awareness about tsunami issues, and 3) by the forward momentum that has been created within states and that is carrying communities closer to reducing future impacts from tsunamis. The activities and products listed here do not include those existing prior to the National Program funding in order to measure what that funding has accomplished in its first year.

### **Partnerships:**

States have brought together interested parties within their boundaries to work together in identifying and prioritizing community needs, and have already taken actions or are discussing actions they need to take to forward mitigation. In Alaska, an Oversight Committee is forming to evaluate what information about individual communities receiving inundation mapping must be gathered and to verify the accuracy of the needed information. California state and local agencies held a workshop to prioritize community needs and list recommendations for actions which have just been published, but the main benefit of the workshop was the constituency building within the newly formalized partnership. Hawaii has a number of existing partnerships. Oregon is exploring the desire for and development of a state and local work group among a number of agencies having interest in tsunami mitigation although many of these agencies have worked with specific communities in the past. Washington has formed a state and local group where locals prioritized their needs and the state helped them begin to address the needs. In some states, these partnerships led to awareness raising actions such as tsunami hazard and evacuation sign installation and brochures for the public. In all cases, the National Tsunami Program resources made these things possible where they otherwise would not have happened in the foreseeable future.

The value of the state and local partnerships is the generation of feelings of support and enthusiasm to accomplish things which have been difficult to do alone in the past because of

lack of funds and expertise. The National Program funded each state a total of \$25,500. Another \$50,000 was set aside for development of a Strategic Implementation Plan and some inventory and coordination needs.

## **Product Development:**

Products developed with Program funding whose purpose is to reduce tsunami risk are an easily visible measure.

### Alaska with \$25,000

Formed Blue Ribbon Oversight Committee to ground-truth data for inundation mapping

Is updating a 20 year old community risk assessment for 90 communities

Is assembling data sets and resources for inundation mapping

Arranged for NOAA assistance in evaluating complicated wave height and effect questions for Sitka area

Is building a web page on tsunami hazards and mitigation

Is exploring tsunami hazard and evacuation sign installation

### California with \$25,000

Held a tsunami conference which led to the following accomplishments:

Is planning interpretive programs for parks

Developed a tsunami brochure based on Oregon's

Developed a partnership with locals to assess needs and priorities on tsunamis as the Redwood Coast Tsunami Work Group

Developed a web site to include state/local work group meeting minutes, products, signage progress, etc.

Published a mitigation recommendations document from their conference

Developed tsunami signs based on Oregon's model

Hawaii with \$25,000

Is contracting for an inventory of materials

Held several meetings with other agencies including locals

Drafted an Executive Summary and Position Paper on Tsunami Issues which include recommendations now in circulation for review, comment and prioritization

Oregon with \$25,000

Developed brochures and bookmarks for the public

Is forming a partnership with other state agencies and locals to address tsunami issues

Held dedication ceremonies for 3 more sign installation sites

Developed educational tsunami coffee mugs to help fund tsunami education program

Updated a school survey on tsunami issues to measure progress

Developed a school certification program for assisting schools in developing tsunami plans and evacuation routes

Is working with hotel/motel associations to put tsunami materials in rooms for guests

Is working on tsunami curriculum development

Finished an inventory of needs assessment with county emergency managers

Washington with \$25,000

Is building a web page on tsunami hazards and mitigation

Is partnering with locals to address mitigation needs as the State/Local Tsunami Mitigation Work Group

Installed some tsunami evacuation signs

Is sending out tsunami brochures

Is developing ideas to provide materials to hotels and video stores

Developed a tsunami brochure based on Oregon's

Held table-top exercise using the occurrence of a tsunami

\$50,000 was used to

Draft a strategic plan to implement mitigation (still in progress)

Inventory some tsunami resources (organizations and people) in Hawaii that may benefit the broader group

## **Momentum from Constituency Building:**

The funded activities have built constituencies within and between states that have forward momentum currently and have resulted in many of the mitigation products listed above, and others yet to be developed to meet the local needs. Mitigation is local, and involving and enthusing the locals by providing them with monetary and technical support has allowed them to begin expressing their needs and even develop some of their requested tools. The National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program has been a model for the state tsunami work groups and is making it possible to accomplish steps toward mitigation that might otherwise never have been taken by individual agencies.