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July 26, 2016

Dear Coastal Zone Foundation, former Board of Directors,

It is with great pleasure that we provide you with an update on the tsunami safety initiative that the Coastal Zone Foundation funded in March 2015. Due to your generous contribution, the School Earthquake Safety Initiative (SESI), which includes about 100 members from the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI), was able to create the Tsunami Mitigation of Schools Subcommittee (herein referred to as the Tsunami Subcommittee).

The Tsunami Subcommittee was formed in mid-2015, and is currently composed of 25 volunteer members from California, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, Georgia, and American Samoa. These members aim to support schools with tsunami hazards by providing access to experts and sharing best practices for tsunami risk awareness and mitigation. The members include a broad representation of school districts, research academics, the private sector, and state and local government.

Members of the Tsunami Subcommittee initiated their efforts on tsunami risk mitigation in schools by identifying schools at risk along the U.S. Pacific West Coast, Alaska and Hawaii, using ASCE 7 Tsunami Design Zones (TDZ) in a GIS platform. This important effort has been summarized in the attached paper, was submitted to the 16th World Conference on Earthquake Engineering (16WCEE) conference, and will be shared in 2017 with an international engineering community.

Currently, subcommittee members are reviewing the schools in the ASCE 7 TDZ with state and local tsunami evacuation zones. We are engaging the designated state liaisons of the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP) from the states that have not yet been involved with this effort. A list of the schools at tsunami risk is being shared with these NTHMP liaisons to obtain feedback on whether they should be on the list. Also, we are exploring effective outreach strategies for dissemination of useful information to the identified schools at risk. We will request engagement from the NTHMP liaisons on developing strategies.

Again, we wish to thank you for your active support of EERI and tsunami safety of students. If you or others would like to actively participate on our subcommittee, please contact Shizza Fatima at shizza@eeri.org.

Sincerely,

Barry Welliver
Chair, EERI School Earthquake Safety Initiative Committee

Cc: Yumei Wang, Tsunami Subcommittee Interim Chair
SESI Tsunami Subcommittee members

Attachment: 16WCEE conference paper