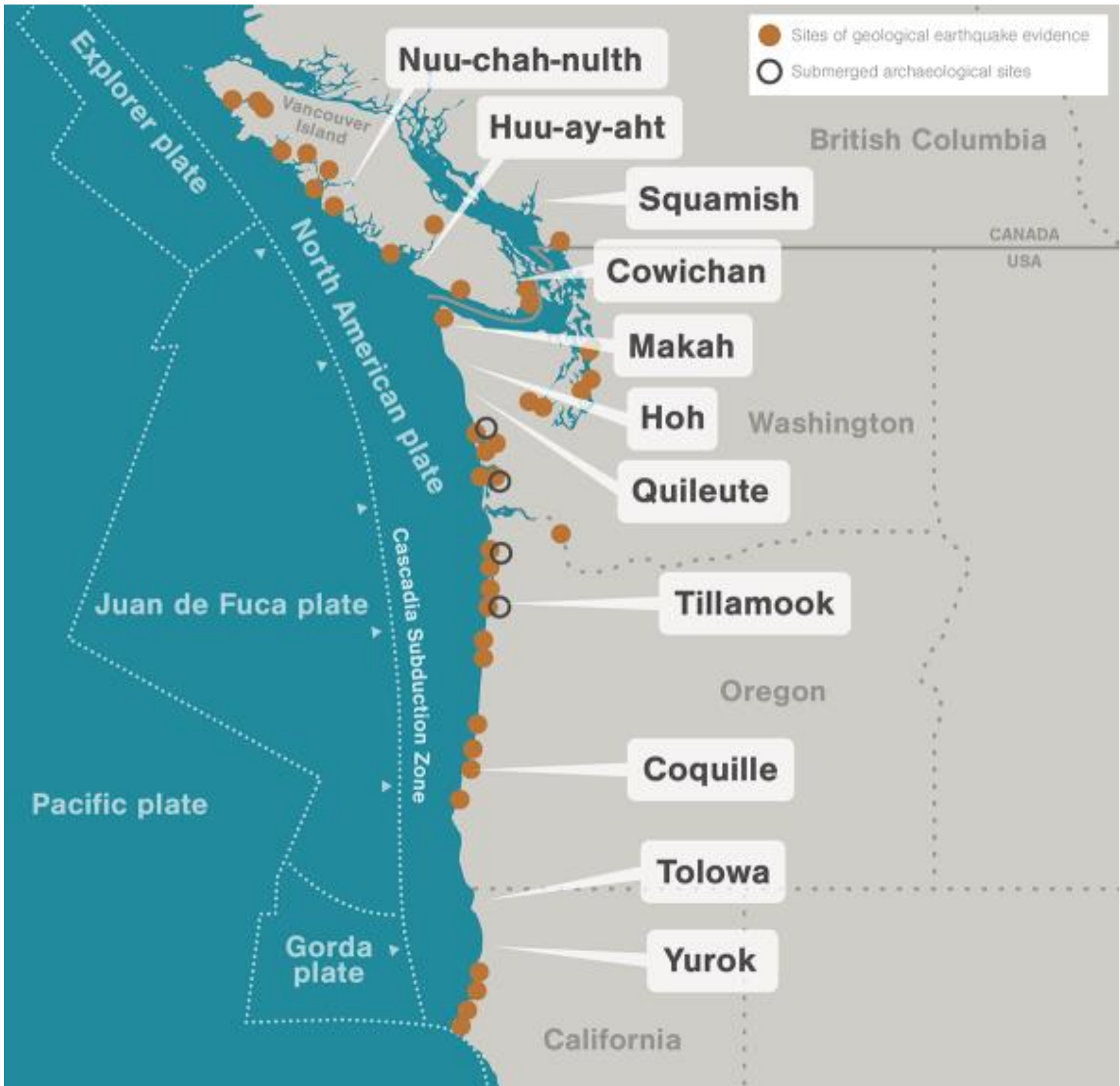


# NATIVE AMERICANS KNOW CASCADIA



Scholars led by geologist Ruth Ludwin of the University of Washington took 40 stories collected from native groups along the Pacific Northwest Coast. They compared the narratives with physical evidence of the 1700 earthquake and tsunami. They found that native Americans along the whole coast remembered the catastrophe.

In Canada, the Nuu-chah-nulth and Cowichan people on Vancouver Island told stories of Earthquake, Thunderbird fighting Whale, and the mountain dwarfs and their earthquake drum. This coincides with tales from the Squamish in southern BC.

In Washington, the Makah, Quileute and Quinault told of how Thunderbird and Whale fought and made the prairies and caused great floods. The Makahs describe the height of the tsunami over the Waatch Praire.

In Oregon and California, the Yurok and Tolowa in northern California, the Tillamook in Oregon described the heart breaking sight of neighbors sinking in sand and being washed away in tsunamis and subsidence.

Thanks to Alan McMillan and Ian Hutchinson for systematically plotting this data on a map to show evidence of Cascadian earthquakes and tsunamis..



# VANCOUVER ISLAND

## Nuu-chah-nulth

On Vancouver Island, dwarfs who lived in a mountain invited a person to dance around their drum; the person accidentally kicked the drum and got earthquake-foot, said the Nuu-chah-nulth people, and after that every step he took caused an earthquake.

## Huu-ay-aht

The land shook (**EARTHQUAKE**) & the ocean flooded in (**TSUNAMI**), said the Huu-ay-aht people who are part of the Nuu-chah-nulth, and people didn't even have time to wake up and get into their canoes, and "everything then drifted away, everything was lost and gone."



On Vancouver Island, the Nuu-chah-nulth people told tales of mountain dwarves inviting a person to dance around their drum. When the person accidentally kicked the drum—depicted in the illustration above by Nuu-chah-nulth artist Tim Paul—he got earthquake foot and his steps set off vast tremors. Image courtesy of the Royal BC Museum and Archives



# Pachena Bay



Heather Lippingwell - Pachena Bay, Bamfield

## Huu-ay-aht

In the Huu-ay-aht village of Anacla, people were just going to sleep in the longhouses when the quake hit. The ground heaved and rolled for more than half a minute (**EARTHQUAKE**). Many of the huge longhouses sank into the sand as it turned to liquid (**LIQUIFACTION**). When the rumbling stopped, people who hadn't heard the screams of those who sank into the sand figured the danger had passed, and started to go back to sleep. That's when the wave hit (**TSUNAMI**).

## Nuu-chah-nulth

A wall of water estimated at over 50 feet swept through Anacla and other coastal villages drowning thousands of Nuu-chah-nulth-aht. In Anacla, only one person from a village of more than 600 survived.

Seven Huu-ay-aht villages were wiped out that night, according to Chief Councillor Robert Dennis, who was told the story by the late Chief Louie Nookmiis. Only the village of Malthsit on the east side of Pacheena Bay survived, since it was 75 feet up a mountainside.

<http://ammsa.com/publications/ravens-eye/prepare-next-tsunami-says-chief>



# The Flood

QUILEUTE

In what is now Washington, Thunderbird and Whale had a terrible fight, making the mountains shake (**EARTHQUAKE**) and uprooting the trees (**LANDSLIDE**), said the Quileute and the Hoh people; they said the ocean rose up and covered the whole land.



HOH

“There was a great storm and hail and flashes of lightning in the darkened, blackened sky, and a great and crashing ‘thunder-noise’ everywhere (**EARTHQUAKE**),” said the Hoh people of Washington. “There were also a shaking, jumping up and trembling of the earth beneath (**EARTHQUAKE**), and a rolling up of the great waters (**TSUNAMI**).



# NEAH BAY FLOOD



## MAKAH

"A long time ago, but not at a very remote period, the water of the Pacific flowed through what is now the swamp and prairie between Waatch village and Neeah Bay, making an island of Cape Flattery. The water suddenly receded leaving Neeah Bay perfectly dry (**TSUNAMI**). It was four days (?) reaching its lowest ebb, and then rose again without any wave or breakers (**TSUNAMI**), till it had submerged the Cape, and in fact the whole country, excepting the tops of the mountains at Clioquot. The water on its rise became very warm, and as it came up to the houses, those who had canoes put their effects into them, and floated off with the current, which set very strongly to the north. Some drifted one way, some another; and when the waters assumed their accustomed level, a portion of the tribe found themselves beyond Nootka, where their descendants now reside, and are known by the same name as the Makahs in Classet, or Kwenaitchechat. Many canoes came down in trees and were destroyed, and numerous lives were lost. The water was four days (?) regaining its accustomed level."



# The Great Quake and the Great Drowning



## YUROK

Earthquake was running up and down the coast. His feet were heavy and when he ran he shook the ground so much it sank down and the ocean poured in (**SUBSIDANCE**). “The earth would quake and quake again and quake again (**EARTHQUAKE**),” said the Yurok people. “And the water was flowing all over.” The people went to the top of a hill, wearing headbands of woodpecker feathers, so they could dance a jumping dance that would keep the earthquake away and return them to their normal lives. But then they looked down and saw the water covering their village and the whole coast (**TSUNAMI**); they knew they could never make the world right again.





# COQUILLE



## COQUILLE

“It wasn’t too long ago when our people learned a great lesson, and a great tide would sweep many of them away. Just like the fog comes in now, the great tide would come in like that. “They were told by their elders ‘to weave long ropes because you never know when a big tide (**TSUNAMI**) is coming and you won’t have much time. If you don’t have long ropes when the waters rise you’ll be swept away.’ “Soon after, an offshore earthquake made a big tide. The waters rushed up the valleys and quickly overwhelmed many in the villages. Those few who had prepared for the great tide quickly gathered their ropes. The water rose higher and higher until the tops of the tallest trees were visible. Some didn’t have long enough ropes and eventually they were carried off by the rising waters.”

Story by Jason Younker, an active member of the Coquille Indian Tribe and an assistant professor of anthropology at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Tectonic History and Cultural Memory on the Oregon Coast by R. Scott Byram, Oregon Historical Quarterly OH1082