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When the earthquake and tsunami occurred in Japan in March of 2011 I had been living in South Carolina at the time, working as a brand new meteorologist in the National Weather Service. I could fully see the disaster and tragedy that had happened in Japan. It was all over the news. It was awful and hard to believe. But I did not yet know the impacts that had happened on the west coast.

A month later my wife and I moved to Humboldt County after I got a new job with the local National Weather Service office and I began to see how folks here in Northwest California were also impacted. In addition to the obvious damage in Crescent City and recovery efforts ongoing there; particularly impactful to me were the videos from the Mad River of people getting way too close to the tsunami waves. I realized how important it was to communicate the threats of tsunamis and understanding our local hazards. For me, it was the videos from the Mad River that brought it home. From that point on I jumped into researching the tsunami source regions, investigating local faults that could cause earthquakes, and joined the Redwood Coast Tsunami Work Group to provide my input into communication of the threat. I am so proud of all the work this group has done to prepare our local communities for the day when we too will have a large local earthquake and tsunami.

Always remember to be prepared: If you feel an earthquake, drop, cover, and hold on! Then, if you are in the tsunami zone, go to high ground and stay there for a long time. Easy steps to remember to save your life.