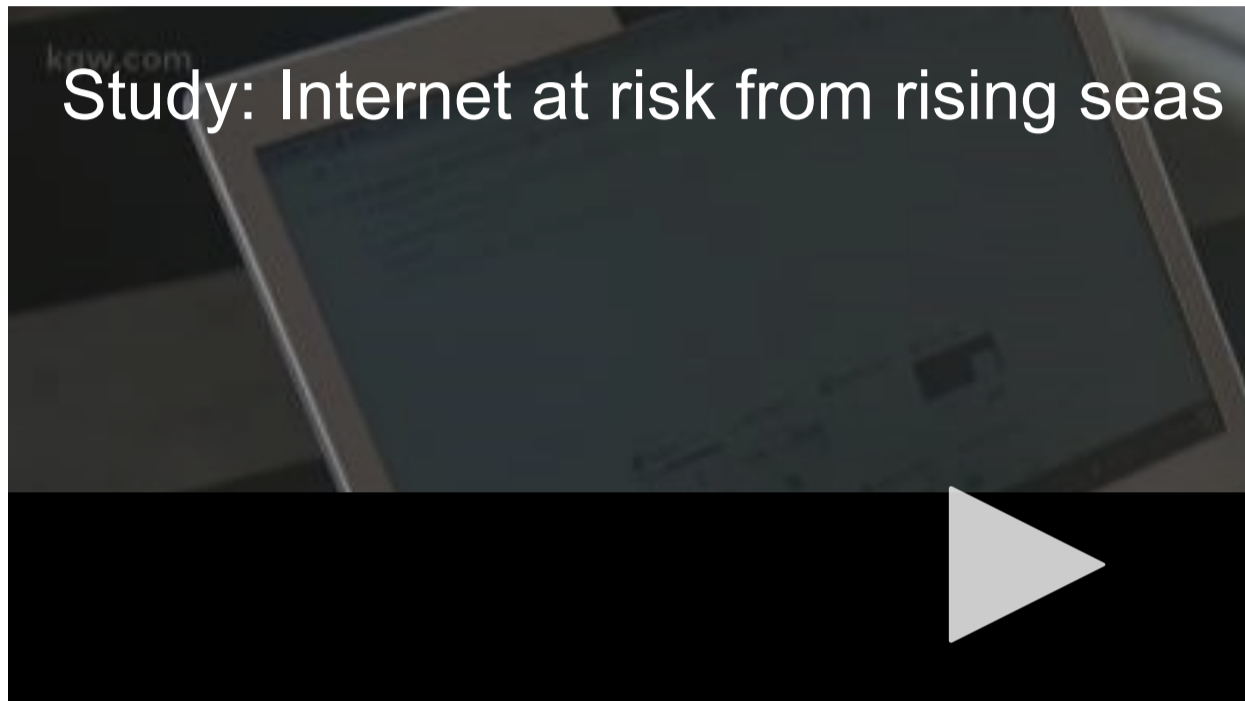
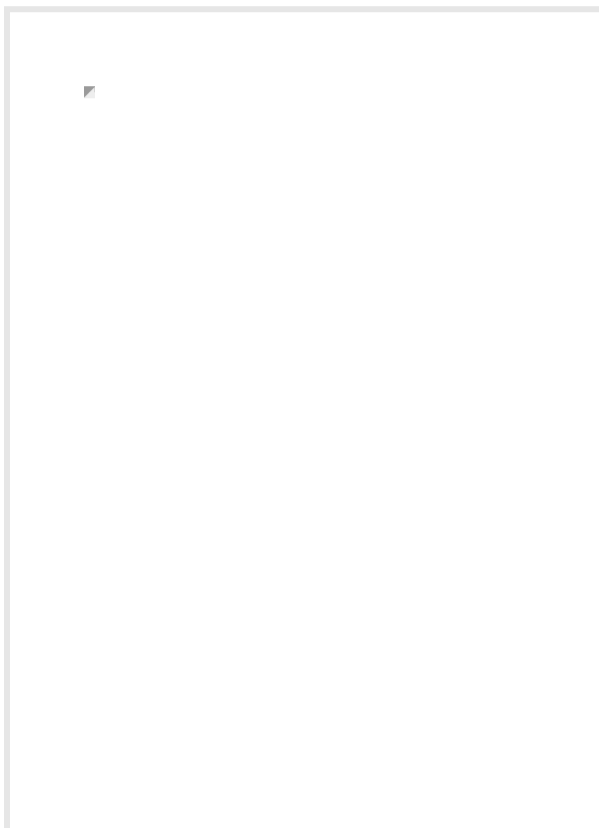




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NW sea levels could rise 2.5 to nearly 5 feet by 2150, report says

Researchers hope the location-specific data about rising sea levels will help put disaster planning processes in action.

SEATTLE — A [new report](#) offers more detailed projections for how fast sea levels are expected to rise along Washington state and some Oregon shorelines over the next decades.

The estimates released Monday show what to expect at 171 locations each decade through 2150. The study includes Oregon shorelines south to Seaside.





“Previous assessments were zoomed out, and were not fine-scale enough to capture the variations in land movement along the coastlines,” said author Harriet Morgan, a research consultant with the UW Climate Impacts Group, in a statement. “Neah Bay is rising, and south Puget Sound is sinking. That up and down movement has a pretty big influence on how far the ocean will be able to travel inland.”

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The assessment by the Washington Sea Grant and the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group is part of a larger project to help communities prepare for natural events that threaten the coast due to climate change.

The authors calculated the likelihood that sea levels will reach or exceed a certain level for each location and under different greenhouse gas scenarios. They also factored in variations in land movement.

By 2050, seas could rise by about six inches to nearly a foot depending on the greenhouse gas projection. By 2100, levels could rise 1.6 to 2.8 feet and by 2150, some 2.5 to 4.9 feet.

TABLE 1: Absolute sea level rise projections, in feet, for Washington State. Projections are expressed in terms of the “probability of exceedance” for three different time periods (2050, 2100, and 2150) and two different greenhouse gas scenarios (RCP 4.5 [“Low”] and RCP 8.5 [“High”]; van Vuuren et al., 2011). Projected changes are assessed relative to contemporary sea level, which we define as the average sea level over the 19-year period 1991-2009. Projections for 2050 and 2100 for RCP 8.5 (highlighted below) are also shown in Figure 2. Examples of *location-specific* relative sea level rise projections are available in Table 2.

PROJECTED ABSOLUTE SEA LEVEL CHANGE (feet, averaged over each 19-year time period)						
Time Period	Greenhouse Gas Scenario	Central Estimate (50%)	Likely ⁵ Range (83-17%)	Higher magnitude, but lower likelihood possibilities		
				10% probability of exceedance	1% probability of exceedance	0.1% probability of exceedance
2050 (2040-2059)	Low	0.6	0.4 - 0.8	0.9	1.2	1.8
	High	0.7	0.5 - 0.9	1.0	1.3	2.0
2100 (2090-2109)	Low	1.6	1.0 - 2.2	2.5	4.1	7.2
	High	2.0	1.4 - 2.8	3.1	4.8	8.3
2150 (2140-2159)	Low	2.5	1.5 - 3.8	4.4	8.5	16.2
	High	3.4	2.3 - 4.9	5.6	10.0	18.3

Absolute sea level rise projections, in feet, for Washington State. Projections are expressed in terms of the “probability of exceedance”; for three


different time periods (2050, 2100, and 2150) and two different greenhouse gas scenarios.

Rollins, Michael


MAP: [Relative sea level projections by area](#)

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