

EARTHQUAKES – OREGON COAST

A series of crustal-shallow earthquakes have occurred over the last two weeks off the Oregon Coast. The largest of these quakes range from 5.0 to 5.2 in magnitude, with a depth of 6.2 miles set by program. These quakes lie along a laterally moving fault known as the Blanco Fracture Zone. The Blanco Fracture Zone is an active seismic area located about 225 miles off the Pacific Coast. In this area, segments of the oceans crustal plate are tearing apart by moving in opposite directions to each other.

Although this is a common area of seismicity, the rate at which these moderate size quakes are occurring in the last few weeks appears more frequent than usual. It is important to note that these shallow or crustal quakes are not directly associated with the Cascadia Subduction Zone, which is capable of producing a magnitude 9.0 earthquake. The Subduction Zone fault is located further east, just off the Pacific Coast.

Graphic:

The attached graphic illustrates the Blanco Fracture Zone in comparison to the Cascadia Subduction Zone. The Subduction Zone is indicated in RED. The Subduction is located further east off the Pacific Coast.

