american geosciences institute

4220 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22302
P: (703) 379-2480
F: (703) 379-7563
www.agiweb.org
@AGI_Updates

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 20, 2014

Contact: Maureen Moses
mmoses@agiweb.org

EARTH Magazine: Tsunamis from the Sky

Alexandria, VA – On a beautiful, clear June morning in 1954, a massive wave suddenly swept out of Lake Michigan killing at least seven people along the Chicago waterfront. At the time, the wave was attributed to a storm that had earlier passed over northern Lake Michigan, but how it came to swamp faraway Chicago, with no warning, was not understood.

The Great Lakes, along with the Mediterranean, Japan and many other parts of the world, have a long history of such waves, which have characteristics similar to tsunamis triggered by earthquakes or landslides. Only recently, however, have scientists unraveled how a storm can create and propagate these far-traveling waves — called meteorological tsunamis or meteotsunamis. The waves, which arise out of a complex interplay of storm speed, wave dynamics and ocean-bottom bathymetry, may be less common than seismic tsunamis, but they can still be destructive and deadly.

EARTH Magazine talks to scientists trying to forecast meteotsunamis and develop a warning system for coastal residents, particularly along the U.S. East Coast, where in June 2013, a series of large waves swept into Barnegat Bay, New Jersey, knocking fishermen off jetties, and sending scuba divers over a breakwater, causing some injuries.

Read the full article at: *http://bit.ly/1fC7QEK.*

Buy the complete March 2014 issue, or subscribe to EARTH Magazine for breaking stories about geoscience in our society, including reflections on the 50th anniversary of the 1964 "Good Friday" earthquake in Alaska, a look back at the intriguing Comet ISON, and how scientists are using hillslopes to reveal a mountain's tectonic history at *www.earthmagazine.org*.

###

Keep up to date with the latest happenings in Earth, energy and environment news with EARTH magazine online at *www.earthmagazine.org*. Published by the American Geosciences Institute, EARTH is your source for the science behind the headlines.

The American Geosciences Institute is a nonprofit federation of 50 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 250,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.