

Rising seas to displace millions on coasts

By David Perlman, San Francisco Chronicle

Millions of Americans living along the nation's coasts will be forced to move inland by the end of the century as sea levels rise and storm surges become more frequent in this era of global climate change, a team of demographers foresees.

And nearly 700,000 coastal residents in the Bay Area would be forced to move from their low-lying neighborhoods under the most extreme conditions, the forecasters say.

According to their study, published last week in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, America's coastal areas, where as many as 13.1 million people will be living, could be prone to flooding by 2100. In the Bay Area, 250,000 people living in low-lying parts of San Mateo County would be forced to move, and in San Francisco some 33,000 would be affected, the researchers calculate.

Their forecasts, they say, indicate that that if sea levels rise 3 feet by the end of this century, many sections of America's coastal lands will be underwater and a total of 4.2 million people will have been forced to move toward higher ground.

And if the oceans rise by as much as 6 feet, the drowning lands will have sent 13.1 million Americans moving to higher ground, the demographers say.

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