



News Release

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ISLANDS TRUST WELCOMES SOLUTION TO GYPSUM DUST PROBLEM IN PLUMPER SOUND

VICTORIA — In response to concerns raised by the Islands Trust, the ocean shipper, CSL International, is designing an elongated chute that is expected to significantly address the issue of gypsum dust in Plumper Sound. The chute will keep the gypsum enclosed as it is off-loaded from freighters to barges.

“The residents of Mayne, North and South Pender and Saturna islands have expressed their concerns to the Islands Trust about this gypsum dust for several years,” said Sheila Malcolmson, Chair of the Islands Trust Council. “We had written to the federal government previously, and then Islands Trust staff contacted CSL in January to see if they could recommend a solution. We commend CSL for acting promptly to design a solution to this long term problem.”

“CSL wants to take a cooperative, proactive approach to help alleviate the dust concerns for residents who live near the area where our vessels anchor and unload in Plumper Sound,” said David King, Vice President of CSL International West Coast Operations.

Gypsum is a naturally occurring non-toxic mineral compound, primarily used in the cement industry, as a direct additive to raw cement and in the building construction industry to manufacture drywall. CSL ships the gypsum from mines on the west coast of Mexico and transfers it about 12 times per year to barges in Plumper Sound that are headed up the Fraser River. At times, winds carry plumes of gypsum dust towards the islands. CSL had previously controlled dust by applying a surfactant on the cargo prior to off-loading it from the ship on to a barge.

“The surfactant has been very successful in controlling airborne dust from vessels in some situations,” King explained. “However, at times the wind catches the gypsum, resulting in dust clouds. We believe an enclosed chute will drastically reduce this dust.”

CSL is investing \$10,000 in a study and expects to spend an additional \$60,000 to develop a prototype chute for testing on one of the two vessels that unload onto barges in Plumper Sound. The first chute would be installed for testing by August this year. “Assuming it is successful, we will retrofit the other vessel that calls at Plumper Sound,” King said.

The Islands Trust Council is a federation of independent local governments that represents some 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.

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*Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment*

Bowen, Denman, Hornby, Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Lasqueti, Mayne, N. Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, S. Pender, Thetis
