



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FLOATING DRY DOCK REPORT PROJECTS SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS TO COMMUNITY

The Port Alberni Port Authority (PAPA), in partnership with Canadian Maritime Engineering Ltd (CME) and with the support of the Floating Dry Dock Community Committee are actively pursuing Provincial and Federal Government support for a new floating dry dock marine facility in Port Alberni. A 2018 study definitively concluded a significant market opportunity for this proposed new infrastructure. A recently completed report by MMK Consulting projects significant economic impacts and benefits throughout our region if the floating dry dock were to be constructed and operated in Port Alberni.

The floating dry dock, as envisioned, is to be developed in three sections of 100 metre lengths each. Once completed, the facility would have the capacity to service all of the coast guard and navy ships as well as all of the current BC Ferries fleet. Upon completion, the project would cost an estimated \$68.8 million and take up to four and a half years for full construction. PAPA, CME and the Committee is advocating for this made-in-Canada, by Canadians for Canadians project to support the growing needs for the coastal marine industry. As importantly as providing much-needed ship building, repair and maintenance capacity, the project would create significant labour, income and training opportunities for the region. Highlights of projected economic impacts over the lifespan of the facility include:

- 5,665 person years of employment
- \$374 million in labour income
- \$605 million contribution to Gross Domestic Product
- \$1.2 billion in total economic output

In real terms to Port Alberni and region, the project's impacts and benefits translate to:

- New training program partnership between North Island College, Nuu-chah-Nulth Tribal Council and CME that would create at least 55 Indigenous new apprentices over the first 3 years
- Training program targeted to include at least 25% female participation
- Creation of 68 new jobs in the first year, alone, of operations at the floating dry dock
- At least 80 new, direct jobs to be created over the 4-year construction timeline
- New jobs created would reduce total unemployment levels by 9%
- Increase of total employment income by at least 2%

These benefits, and many more, demonstrate why the community has come together to identify this project as its priority economic development initiative. Clearly, the results would be transformational towards improving our region's economic and social well-being.

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These partnerships and economic opportunities are mutually important for the project and the community given that our region's 17% Indigenous population, relative to the general population, represents a significant human resource necessary to meet the facility's workforce demands.

Given the proactive partnerships with First Nations to be engaged in skills training and job opportunities related to the floating dry dock, the project is also an opportunity for reconciliation. In fact, Hereditary Chief of the Huu ay aht First Nation, Jeff Cook believes that: "The floating dry dock project, proposed for Port Alberni, is a very real, meaningful and achievable example of Reconciliation."

PAPA President and CEO, Zoran Knezevic outlines why the facility works for Port Alberni and why Port Alberni would work for the facility: "The market need for a floating dry dock in Port Alberni is clearly identified, diverse, sizeable and expanding. As a location, Port Alberni has a number of advantages including a proven, Canadian private partner in CME; ample supply of skilled trades labour and willing training partners; a growing marine cluster; and is in sheltered waters easily accessible by any size vessels, makes it an ideal location for the project." President of CME, Daniel Russell captures the vision of the project this way: "With knowledgeable, industry leadership and a collaborative community to approach, the floating dry dock will create impacts and benefits across sectors, needs and regions as Port Alberni would become a west coast centre for marine excellence."

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