



North Polar Gypsum Dunes in Olympia Undae

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Unlike most of the sand dunes on Mars that are made of the volcanic rock basalt, these are made of a type of sulfate mineral called gypsum. Whence the sand? Well, gypsum is a mineral that can often form from the evaporation of water that has sulfur and calcium dissolved in it. This sand was probably sourced from a northern region on Mars that used to be quite wet.