Panama Canal set for major expansion

Panama's government is to unveil a plan to widen the Panama Canal. now operating at near full capacity, to cope with the surge in shipping worldwide. The project, which is to make way for large container ships, will cost at least \$5 billion, take about seven years and employ up to 10,000 people

Canal traffic (2005)

U.S. east coast - Asia U.S. east coast - South

Tons. millions

110.90

24.32

19.55

10.08

9.50

9.39

94.54

Largest

vessels

Ocean

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Trade route

14.011 ships passed

through canal

in 2005

MAIN TRADE

ROUTES

Ocean

America west coast Europe - South America west coast Europe - West coast of U.S. and Canada U.S. Intercoastal PANAMA U.S. east coast - Central ATI ANTIC Colon America west coast OCEAN Other routes Total 278.28 million tons Gatun Panama locks Canal Panama Gatun City Lake Two shipping lanes Pedro Miguel locks container Miraflores locks 10km now up to PACIFIC 50% wider 6 miles **OCFAN** than 32.3m **Expansion:** New locks to be built at each limit of older end of canal, creating third lane of traffic "Panamax" ships Gatun locks Ships raised 26m Pedro Miguel locks Miraflores above sea level Gatun Lake locks Pacific **Atlantic**

PANAMA CANAL

Sources: Panama Canal Authority, Global Security

Length: 80km

Picture: Associated Press