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## FEATURE: How important is the Panama Canal to US export projects?

The Panama Canal opened 100 years ago today. Since then, more than a million ships have passed through the 80 km (50 mile) canal. The current expansion project (also called the Third Set of Locks Project) is intended to double its capacity by 2015 – in terms of cargo tonnage – by creating a new lane of traffic and allowing more and larger container ships, known as the Post-Panamax class, to transit. Although the expansion project never considered LNG ships, for the US, the expansion is of special significance. Not only will it provide a fillip to traditional exporters and continue the country's recovery from the 2008 crisis, it will also open up the high value markets of north Asia to exporters of the country's most talked about commodity: LNG. So just how important is the Panama Canal to US LNG export projects?



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