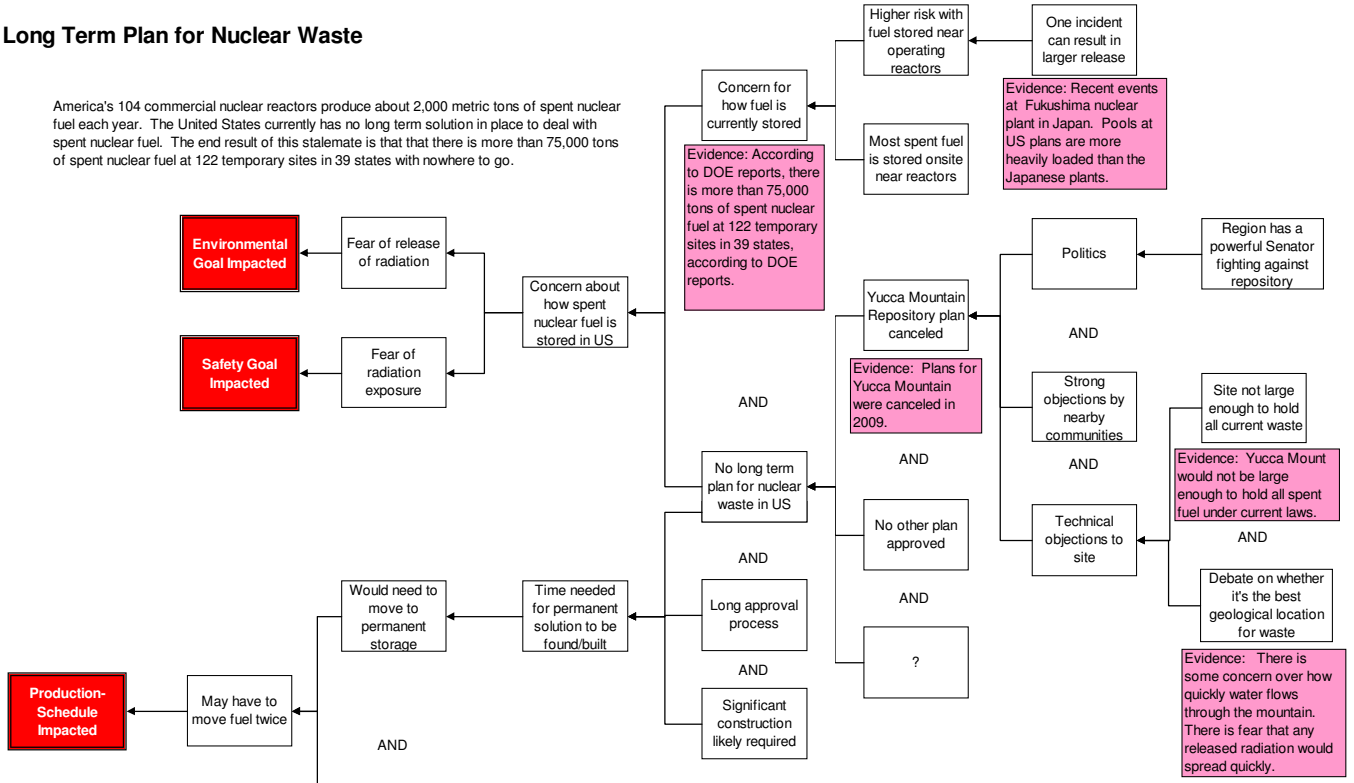
No Long Term Plan for Nuclear Waste

USA

2011

America's 104 commercial nuclear reactors produce about 2,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel each year. The United States currently has no long term solution in place to deal with spent nuclear fuel. The end result of this stalemate is that that there is more than 75,000 tons of spent nuclear fuel at 122 temporary sites in 39 states with nowhere to go.



Spent fuel pool.

Looking at the Cause Map, it's apparent one of the causes of this problem is that the plan for the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository was canceled without an alternative plan being created. Yucca Mountain Repository was planned to be a deep geological repository where nuclear waste would be stored indefinitely, shielded and packaged to prevent any release of radiation. The Yucca Mountain Repository was canceled in 2009 for a number of reasons, some technological and some political. Environmentalists and residents near the planned site were very vocal about their opposition to the selection of Yucca Mountain site for the nation's repository.

A Blue Ribbon Commission of experts appointmed by President Obama recently presented their recommendations of how to approach this problem. Their proposal was to develop one or more sites where spent reactor fuel could be stored in above ground steel and concrete structures. These structures could contain fuel for decades, allowing time for a more permanent solution to be developed. These structures would not require any cooling beyond simple circulation of air and they could be stored at locations deemed safe, with the lowest risk of earthquakes and other disasters. Hopefully the recommendations by the commission are the first step to solving this problem and developing a safe long term storage solution to the nation's nuclear waste.

Cause Map

High Level

ThinkReliability

Houston Office 281-489-2904
www.ThinkReliability.com

Copyright ThinkReliability 2011

Why?

Effect ← Cause

NOTE: Read the Cause Map from left to right with the phrase "Was Caused By" in place of