

## YUCCA MOUNTAIN - PROGRAM REDIRECTION FACT SHEET

- In order to improve the safety and reliability of operations at Yucca Mountain, the Department of Energy's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management has instructed its managing contractor to devise a plan to operate the site as a primarily "clean" or non-contaminated facility.
- This design will mean that most spent nuclear fuel would be sent to Yucca Mountain in a standardized canister that would not require repetitive handling of bare fuel prior to disposal.
- Prior plans called for shipping spent fuel assemblies in various types of canisters to the repository where workers would handle 70,000 tons of bare spent nuclear fuel up to four separate times per fuel assembly. The NRC has never licensed a similar facility.
- The improved design will simplify fuel handling and will reduce complexities in Yucca Mountain's operations. The new path envisions spent fuel being delivered to Yucca Mountain primarily in standard canisters which are then placed in a waste package for emplacement, without handling individual fuel assemblies. This change will require coordination with utilities and the NRC.
- This design will be simpler and more straightforward, reduce programmatic risk, and take complexity out of the NRC licensing process. It also should save billions of dollars.
- Switching to a "clean" facility frees the project from having to construct several multi-million square-foot, multi-billion dollar facilities for handling bare spent fuel. It also nearly eliminates the potential hazards caused by the oxidation of bare spent fuel during handling.
- The contractor will submit a preliminary draft of the Conceptual Design package (or CD-1) to DOE, once the final package is complete and approved by OCRWM, it will then be submitted to the Secretary of Energy's Acquisition Advisory Board for review. If the board approves the package it will become the project's baseline design.