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Los Alamos NATIONAL LABORATORY

CI/CD Image Build Pipelining

Travis Cotton

Outline

Layered Image Building

- Layer Definition
- Tools in use

CI Pipeline

- Define CI Pipelines
- Simple Examples
- Automated Generation

Observations and Benefits

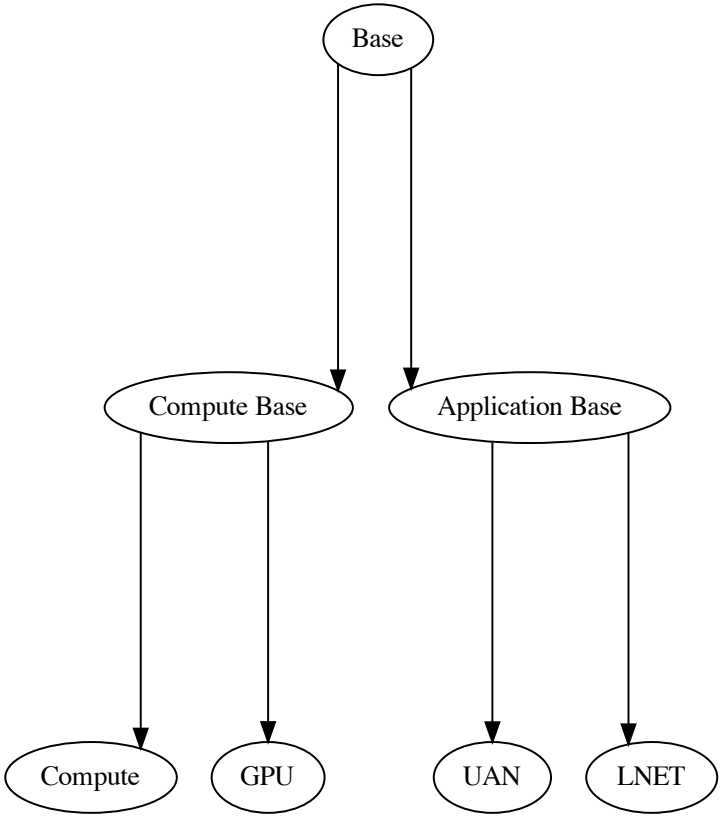
- Turnaround Time
- Portability and Scaling
- Consistency and Validation

Future Work

- Automated Testing

Part 1: What is a Layer?

- A distinct, self-contained piece or part of a larger image
- Has parent layer
  - Previously configured layer
  - Blank or scratch layer
- A defined configuration
  - Ansible playbook
  - List of packages



Tools in Use

- Containers!
  - A layer can be started as a container
  - Import from a parent, a.k.a a previously built container image or scratch
  - Treat configured layers as a container image
    - Push to a registry
    - Export to a tarball, squashfs, etc

- Buildah Containers!
  - On the fly containers
  - No Dockerfiles, or Daemons required
  - Easy to debug things

On the fly base image

- Start an empty container

```
image-testing:~ # CNAME=$(buildah
from scratch)
```

On the fly base image

- Start an empty container
- Mount the container

```
image-testing:~ # CNAME=$(buildah
from scratch)

image-testing:~ # MDIR=$(buildah
mount $CNAME)
```

On the fly base image

- Start an empty container
- Mount the container
- Install packages

```
image-testing:~ # CNAME=$(buildah
from scratch)

image-testing:~ # MDIR=$(buildah
mount $CNAME)

image-testing:~ # zypper --
installroot $MDIR in bash
```

On the fly base image

- Start an empty container
- Mount the container
- Install packages
- Commit image

```
image-testing:~ # CNAME=$(buildah
from scratch)

image-testing:~ # MDIR=$(buildah
mount $CNAME)

image-testing:~ # zypper --
installroot $MDIR in bash

image-testing:~ # buildah commit --rm
$CNAME sles15-base
```

On the fly base image

- Start an empty container
- Mount the container
- Install packages
- Commit image
- View it!

```
image-testing:~ # CNAME=$(buildah
from scratch)

image-testing:~ # MDIR=$(buildah
mount $CNAME)

image-testing:~ # zypper --
installroot $MDIR in bash

image-testing:~ # buildah commit --rm
$CNAME sles15-base

image-testing:~ # buildah images |
awk '{print $1}'
REPOSITORY
localhost/sles15-base
```

On the fly base image

- Let’s add more stuff to our base image

On the fly base image

- Let’s add more stuff to our base image
- Start a container from our base image
- Give it a name

```
image-testing:~ # buildah from --name
base-update sles15-base
```

On the fly base image

- Let’s add more stuff to our base image
- Start a container from our base image
- Give it a name
- Mount it again

```
image-testing:~ # buildah from --name
base-update sles15-base

image-testing:~ # MDIR=$(buildah
mount base-update)
```

On the fly base image

- Let’s add more stuff to our base image
- Start a container from our base image
- Give it a name
- Mount it again
- Add more packages

```
image-testing:~ # buildah from --name
base-update sles15-base

image-testing:~ # MDIR=$(buildah
mount base-update)

image-testing:~ # zypper --
installroot=$MDIR in coreutils
python3 zypper
```

On the fly base image

- Let's add more stuff to our base image
- Start a container from our base image
- Give it a name
- Mount it again
- Add more packages
- Commit it

```
image-testing:~ # buildah from --name
base-update sles15-base

image-testing:~ # MDIR=$(buildah
mount base-update)

image-testing:~ # zypper --
installroot=$MDIR in coreutils
python3 zipper

image-testing:~ # buildah commit --rm
base-update sles15-base-v2
```

On the fly layer configuration

- We’ve only installed packages so far

On the fly layer configuration

- We’ve only installed packages so far
- Let’s run ansible against our container!

On the fly layer configuration

- First make an inventory
  - Make a ”Compute” group
  - Add our layer “compute-cont” to the group
  - Set the connection type to be “buildah”

```
#Inventory hosts file
[Compute]
compute-cont ansible_connection=buildah
```

On the fly layer configuration

- Inventory is done
- Let’s make a playbook with some roles to run
  - Run against the “Compute” group
  - Use four roles
  - Pretty standard stuff
- Call the playbook compute.yaml

```
---
- hosts:
    - Compute
  roles:
    - repos
    - pkgs
    - chrony
    - nfs
```

On the fly layer configuration

- Start a new container

```
image-testing:~ # buildah from --name
compute-cont sles15-base-v2
```

On the fly layer configuration

- Start a new container
- Run ansible against this container

```
image-testing:~ # buildah from --name
compute-cont sles15-base-v2

image-testing:~/test-ansible #
ansible-playbook -i inventory/
compute.yaml
```

On the fly layer configuration

- Start a new container
- Run ansible against this container
- Hopefully it runs correctly…

```
image-testing:~ # buildah from --name
compute-cont sles15-base-v2

image-testing:~/test-ansible #
ansible-playbook -i inventory/
compute.yaml
…
ok=7    changed=4    unreachable=0
failed=0
```

On the fly layer configuration

- But if not, fix the error
  - Run against existing container
  - Or remove and start over
- Annoying or Mysterious errors
  - Jump into container and poke around!

```
image-testing:~ # buildah from --name
compute-cont sles15-base-v2

image-testing:~/test-ansible #
ansible-playbook -i inventory/
compute.yaml

…
ok=4    changed=2    unreachable=0
failed=1

image-testing:~/test-ansible #
buildah run --tty compute-cont bash
```

On the fly layer configuration

- If happy with your image, commit it
- And see our images so far

```
image-testing:~ # buildah commit --rm
compute-cont compute-v1

image-testing:~ # buildah images |
awk '{print $1}'
REPOSITORY
localhost/compute-v1
localhost/sles15-base-v2
localhost/sles15-base
```

On the fly layer configuration

- If happy with your image, commit it
- And see our images so far
- You can build more images if you want
- Any of the current images can be used as a parent

```
image-testing:~ # buildah commit --rm
compute-cont compute-v1

image-testing:~ # buildah images |
awk '{print $1}'
REPOSITORY
localhost/compute-v1
localhost/sles15-base-v2
localhost/sles15-base
```

Quick Recap

- Easily build base images
  - No complicated configurations needed
  - Easy to update
- Leverage Base Images
  - Import base and add configurations
  - Run ansible against layer container
  - Convenient to debug problems
- Still a very manual process
- Clunky ansible inventory

Let’s do a little programming

- Need a way to encapsulate the previous steps
- Things we need to know
  - Parent
  - Layer name/type
  - Ansible group(s)
  - Playbook and inventory to use
- Python is our language of choice because…
  - Pretty easy to use
  - Popular
  - I wanted to learn it

Let’s do a little programming

- Not going to paste a bunch of python code
- Highlight a few neat things
  - Ansible has python libraries available

Let’s do a little programming

- Not going to past a bunch of python code
- Highlight a few neat things
  - Ansible has python libraries available
  - Load up inventory

```
inventory =
InventoryManager(loader=loader,
sources=inv)
```

Let’s do a little programming

- Not going to past a bunch of python code
- Highlight a few neat things
  - Ansible has python libraries available
  - Load up inventory
  - Add group(s)

```
inventory =
InventoryManager(loader=loader,
sources=inv)

inventory.add_group(“Compute”)
```

Let’s do a little programming

- Not going to past a bunch of python code
- Highlight a few neat things
  - Ansible has python libraries available
  - Load up inventory
  - Add group(s)
  - Add container as host

```
inventory =
InventoryManager(loader=loader,
sources=inv)

inventory.add_group(“Compute”)

inventory.add_host(host=compute-cont,
group=“Compute”)
```

Let’s do a little programming

- Not going to past a bunch of python code
- Highlight a few neat things
  - Ansible has python libraries available
  - Load up inventory
  - Add group(s)
  - Add container as host
  - Run playbooks

```
inventory =
InventoryManager(loader=loader,
sources=inv)

inventory.add_group(“Compute”)

inventory.add_host(host=compute-cont,
group=“Compute”)

pbex =
PlaybookExecutor(playbooks=pbs,
inventory=inventory, …)
```

Let’s do a little programming

- Buildah can be easily wrapped
- Or you can steal wrappers from ansible-bender…

```
from ansible_bender.utils import
run_cmd
```

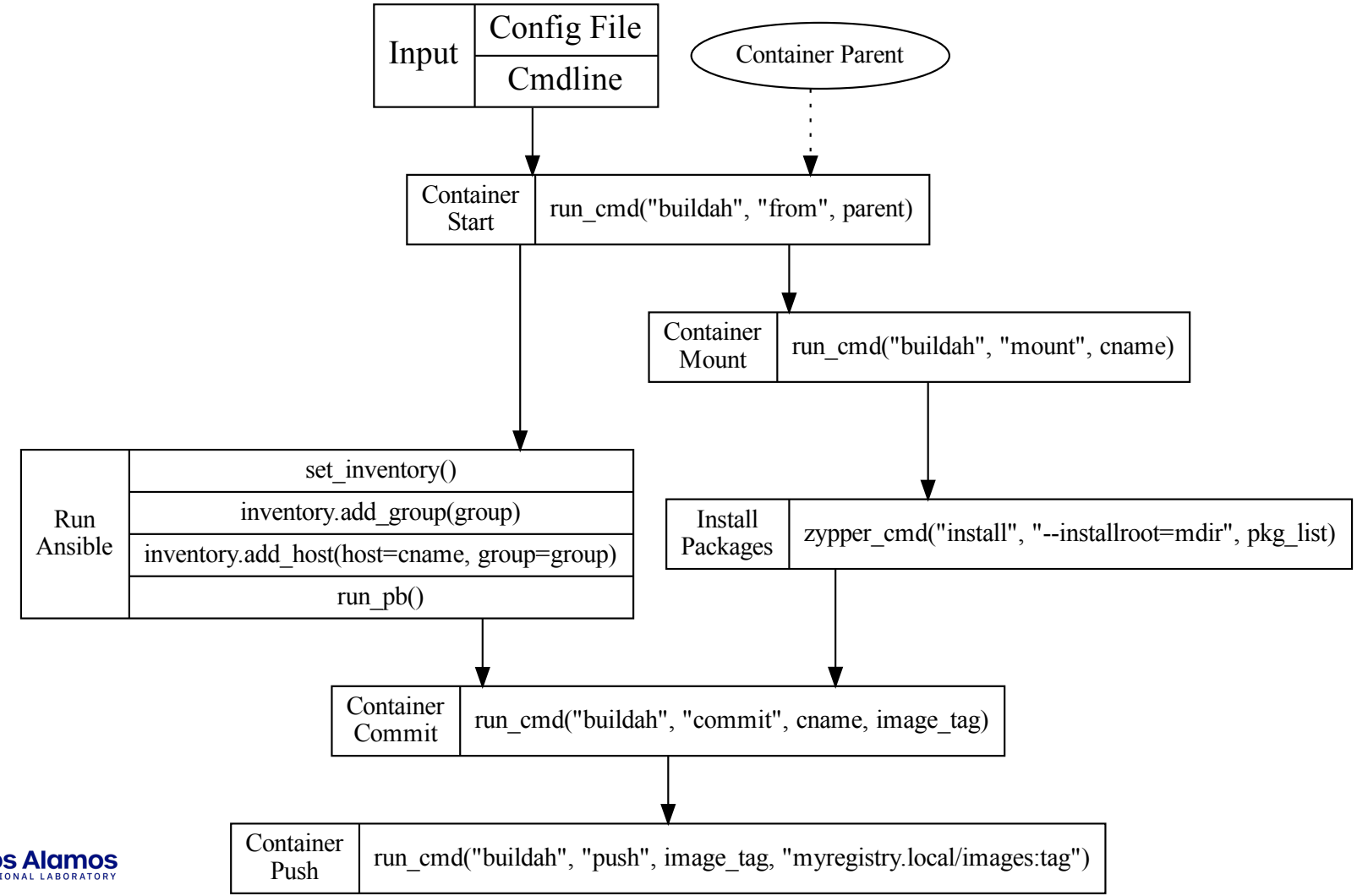
Let’s do a little programming

- Buildah can be easily wrapped
- Or you can steal wrappers from ansible-bender…
- And use the “run_cmd” function

```
from ansible_bender.utils import
run_cmd

cmd = [“buildah”, “from”, “scratch”]

cname = run_cmd(cmd,
return_output=True)
```


Input
Config File
Cmdline
Container Parent
Container Start
run_cmd("buildah", "from", parent)
Container Mount
run_cmd("buildah", "mount", cname)
Run Ansible
set_inventory()
inventory.add_group(group)
inventory.add_host(host=cname, group=group)
run_pb()
Install Packages
zypper_cmd("install", "--installroot=mdir", pkg_list)
Container Commit
run_cmd("buildah", "commit", cname, image_tag)
Container Push
run_cmd("buildah", "push", image_tag, "myregistry.local/images:tag")

Layered Image Build Recap

- Containerized layer builds
  - Import from Parent layer
  - Multiple Layers can use the same parent
- Multiple ways to build a layer
  - Package managers
  - Ansible playbooks
  - Custom scripts
- Programmatic Builds
  - Using Python
  - Easily add groups and inventory info
  - Can easily chain multiple layers together

Part 2: CI Pipelines

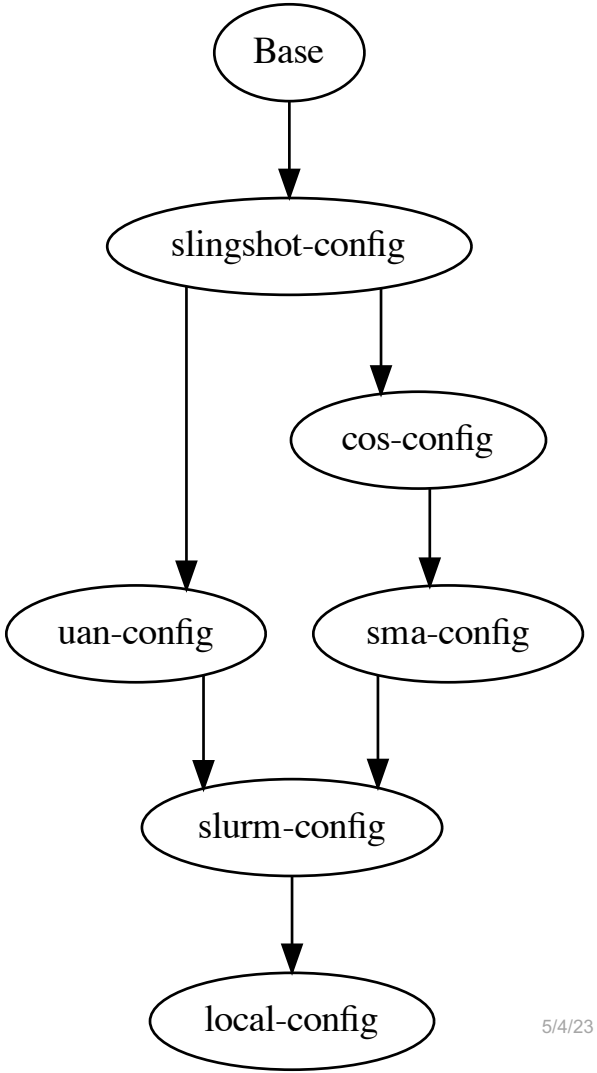
- Let Layer Builds be simple
  - Import from parent
  - Configure current layer
  - Commit layer as new image

Part 2: CI Pipelines

- Let Layer Builds be simple
  - Import from parent
  - Configure current layer
  - Commit layer as new image
- Let the pipeline handle the coordination
  - Who’s parent is who’s
  - What configuration to use
  - What to do with a configured layer

Part 2: What is a CI Pipeline?

- CI = Continuous Integration
  - An automatic way to integrate new configs into production branches
- Pipelines are the logic that dictates if changes can be integrated
- In this context a CI pipeline
  - Ensures configs results in a successful image build
  - Defines the layer dependencies that results in a complete image
- We are using gitlab – for now
  - https://about.gitlab.com/topics/ci-cd/



CI pipeline – simple example

- Let's start with a simple example
  - Single repo
  - These things are pretty verbose, bear with me

```
stages: [full, layer1, layer2]

inventory-job:
  stage: full
  script:
    - image-build base
    - image-build layer1
    - image-build layer2
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - inventory/**

layer1-job:
  stage: layer1
  script:
    - image-build layer1
    - image-build layer2
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 1 roles >

layer2-job:
  stage: layer2
  script:
    - image-build layer2
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 2 roles >
```

CI pipeline – simple example

- Let's start with a simple example
  - Single repo
  - These things are pretty verbose, bear with me
- Will run stages in order

```
stages: [full, layer1, layer2]

inventory-job:
  stage: full
  script:
    - image-build base
    - image-build layer1
    - image-build layer2
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - inventory/**

layer1-job:
  stage: layer1
  script:
    - image-build layer1
    - image-build layer2
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 1 roles >

layer2-job:
  stage: layer2
  script:
    - image-build layer2
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 2 roles >
```

CI pipeline – simple example

- Let's start with a simple example
  - Single repo
  - These things are pretty verbose, bear with me
- Will run stages in order
- Script tells it what to do

```
stages: [full, layer1, layer2]

inventory-job:
  stage: full
  script:
    - imgbuild -name sles15-base -parent scratch
    - imgbuild -name layer1 -parent sles15-base
    - imgbuild -name layer2 -parent layer1
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - inventory/**

layer1-job:
  stage: layer1
  script:
    - imgbuild -name layer1 -parent sles15-base
    - imgbuild -name layer2 -parent layer1
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 1 roles >

layer2-job:
  stage: layer2
  script:
    - imgbuild -name layer2 -parent layer1
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 2 roles >
```

CI pipeline – simple example

- Let's start with a simple example
  - Single repo
  - These things are pretty verbose, bear with me
- Will run stages in order
- Script tells it what to do
- Rules decide when to run

```
stages: [full, layer1, layer2]

inventory-job:
  stage: full
  script:
    - imgbuild –name sles15-base –parent scratch
    - imgbuild –name layer1 –parent sles15-base
    - imgbuild –name layer2 –parent layer1
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - inventory/**

layer1-job:
  stage: layer1
  script:
    - imgbuild –name layer1 –parent sles15-base
    - imgbuild –name layer2 –parent layer1
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 1 roles >

layer2-job:
  stage: layer2
  script:
    - imgbuild –name layer2 –parent layer1
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 2 roles >
```

CI pipeline – simple example

- Let's start with a simple example
  - Single repo
  - These things are pretty verbose, bear with me
- Will run stages in order
- Script tells it what to do
- Rules decide when to run
- Changes are the files we trigger on

```
stages: [full, layer1, layer2]

inventory-job:
  stage: full
  script:
    - imgbuild -name sles15-base -parent scratch
    - imgbuild -name layer1 -parent sles15-base
    - imgbuild -name layer2 -parent layer1
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - inventory/**

layer1-job:
  stage: layer1
  script:
    - imgbuild -name layer1 -parent sles15-base
    - imgbuild -name layer2 -parent layer1
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 1 roles >

layer2-job:
  stage: layer2
  script:
    - imgbuild -name layer2 -parent layer1
  rules:
    - if: $CI_MERGE_REQUEST_ID
  changes:
    - < list of layer 2 roles >
```

CI pipeline – simple example

- Our simple repo might look something like this
- A list of packages for our base layer
- A playbook for each layer
  - Each with a list of roles

```
.
├── base_packages
├── inventory
│   └── hosts
├── layer1.yaml
├── layer2.yaml
└── roles
    ├── chrony
    ├── cve_fixes
    ├── nfs
    ├── nhc
    ├── pkgs
    ├── repos
    └── ssh
```

CI pipeline – simple example

- The layer playbooks
- Our changes for each stanza have a source
  - The base packages file and inventory for the base layer
  - Each layer playbook's list of roles

```
---
# Layer1
- hosts:
    - Compute
  roles:
    - repos
    - pkgs
    - chrony
    - nfs


---
# Layer 2
- hosts:
    - Compute
  roles:
    - ssh
    - cve_fixes
    - nhc
```

CI pipeline – simple example

- Layer1 for example will have this
- If anything in these folders changes, the pipeline will start from layer1
- Layer2 will also be built
- But we didn’t need to rebuild the base

```
script:
  - imgbuild –name layer1 –parent sles15-base
  - imgbuild –name layer2 –parent layer1
changes:
  - roles/repos/**
  - roles/pkgs/**
  - roles/chrony/**
  - roles/nfs/**
```

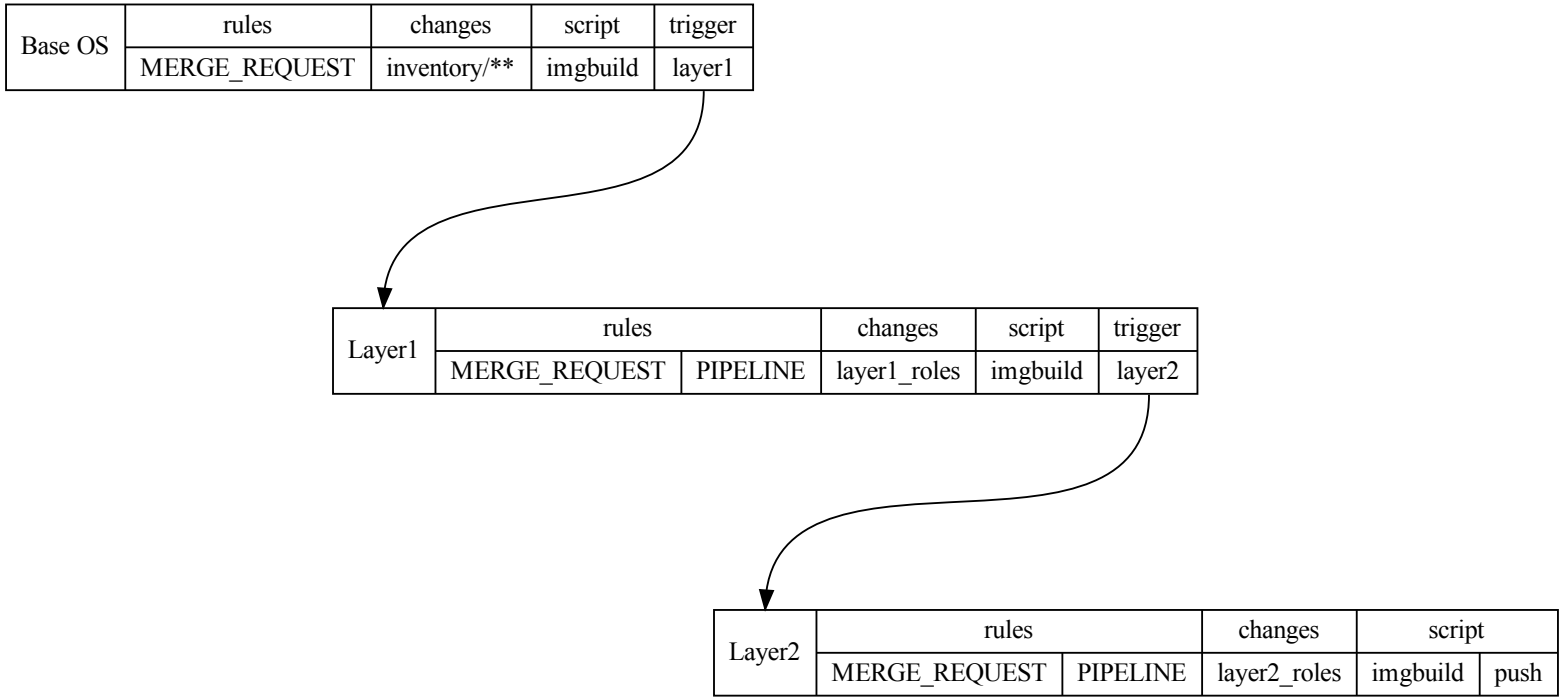
CI pipeline – multi-repo example

- What if I don’t want to use a single repo?
- Gitlab has the “trigger” keyword
  - Start a pipeline in another repo
- Instead of lengthy configs, we’ll attempt this with pictures

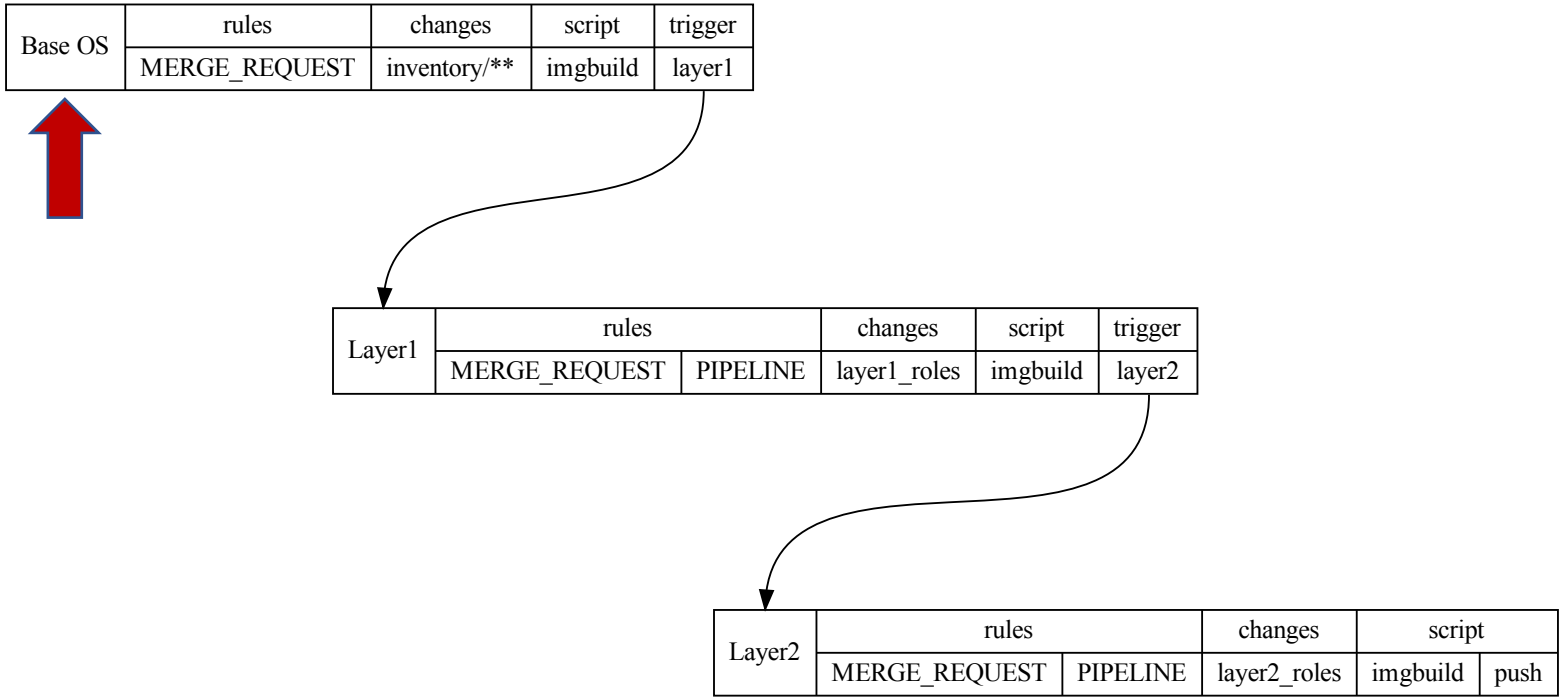
CI pipeline – multi-repo example

- Same setup as before
  - Base
  - Layer1
  - Layer2
- Each in their own special repo
- Pipelines will trigger when
  - A merge request is made
  - A parent pipeline triggers

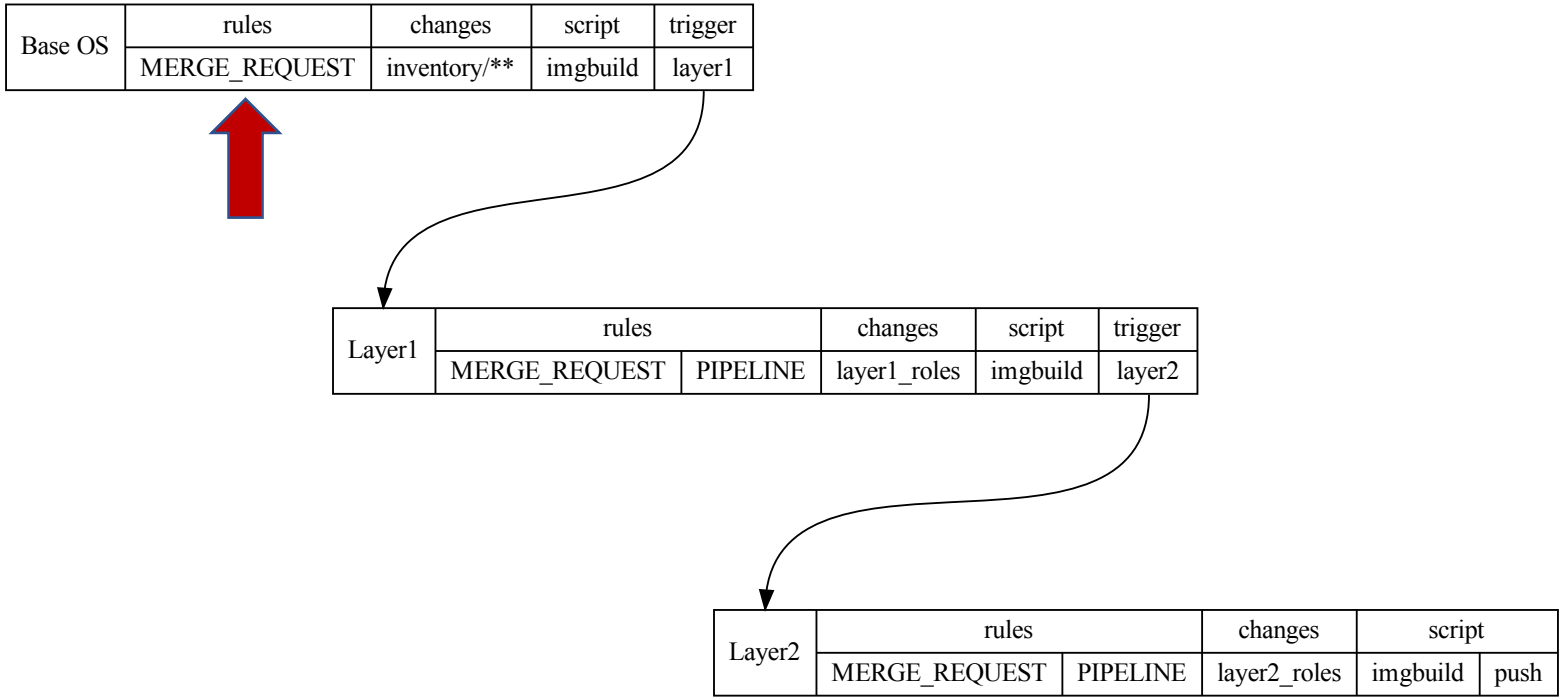
CI pipeline – multi-repo example - Base



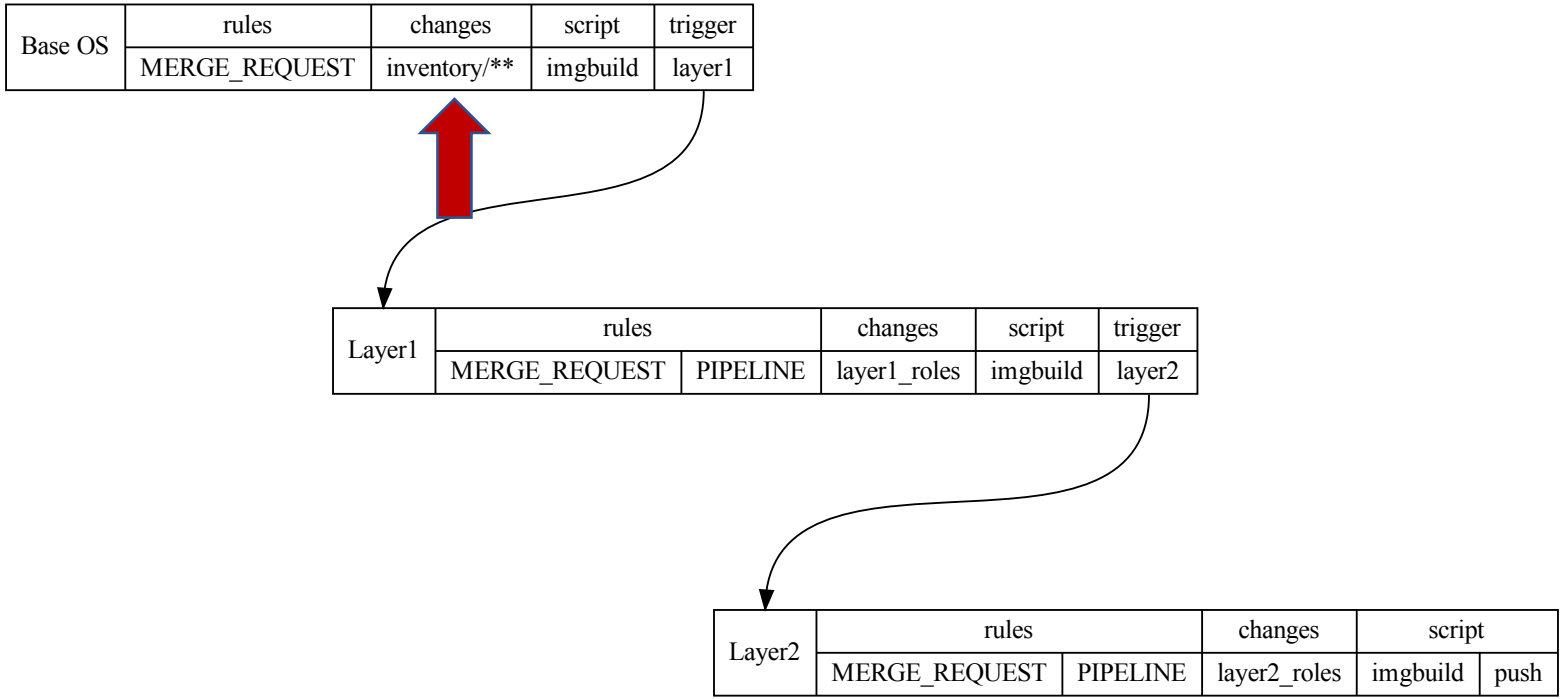
CI pipeline – multi-repo example - Base



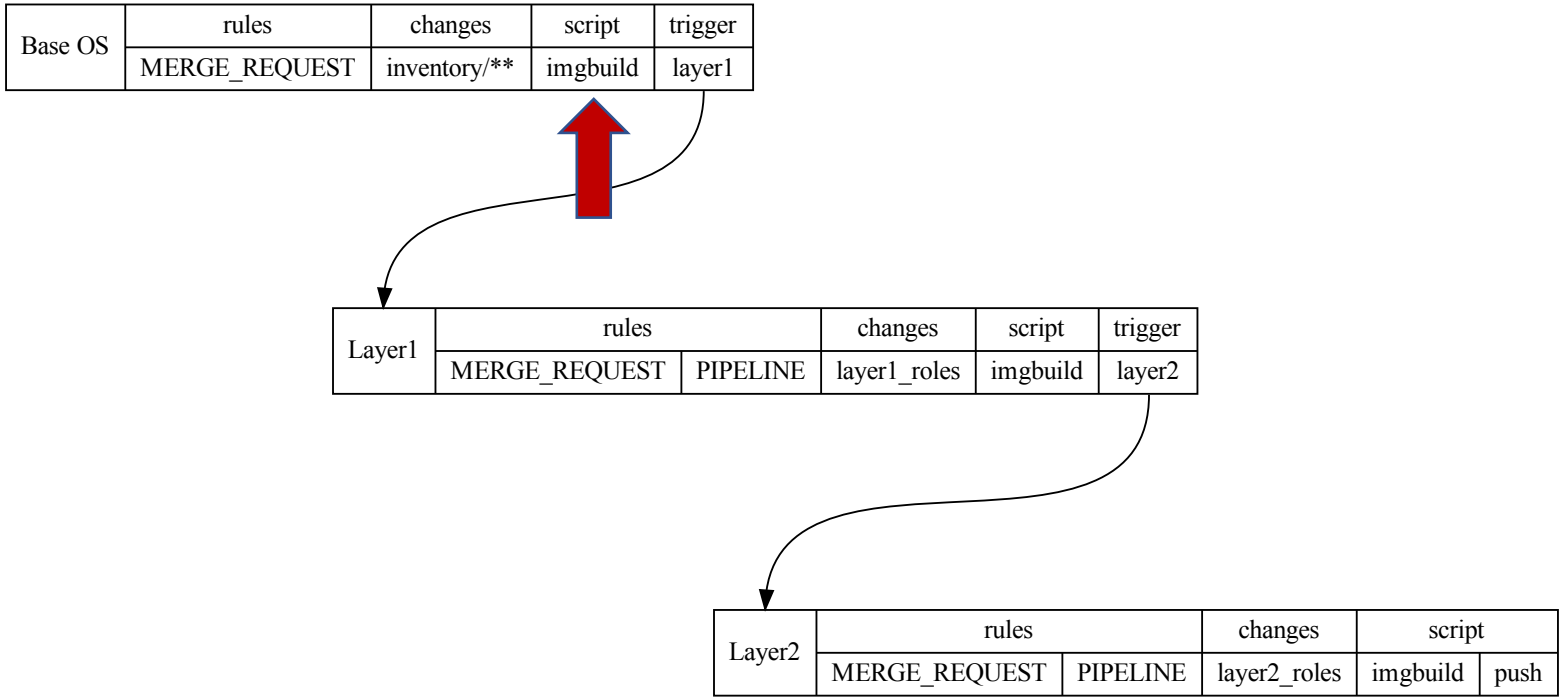
CI pipeline – multi-repo example - Base



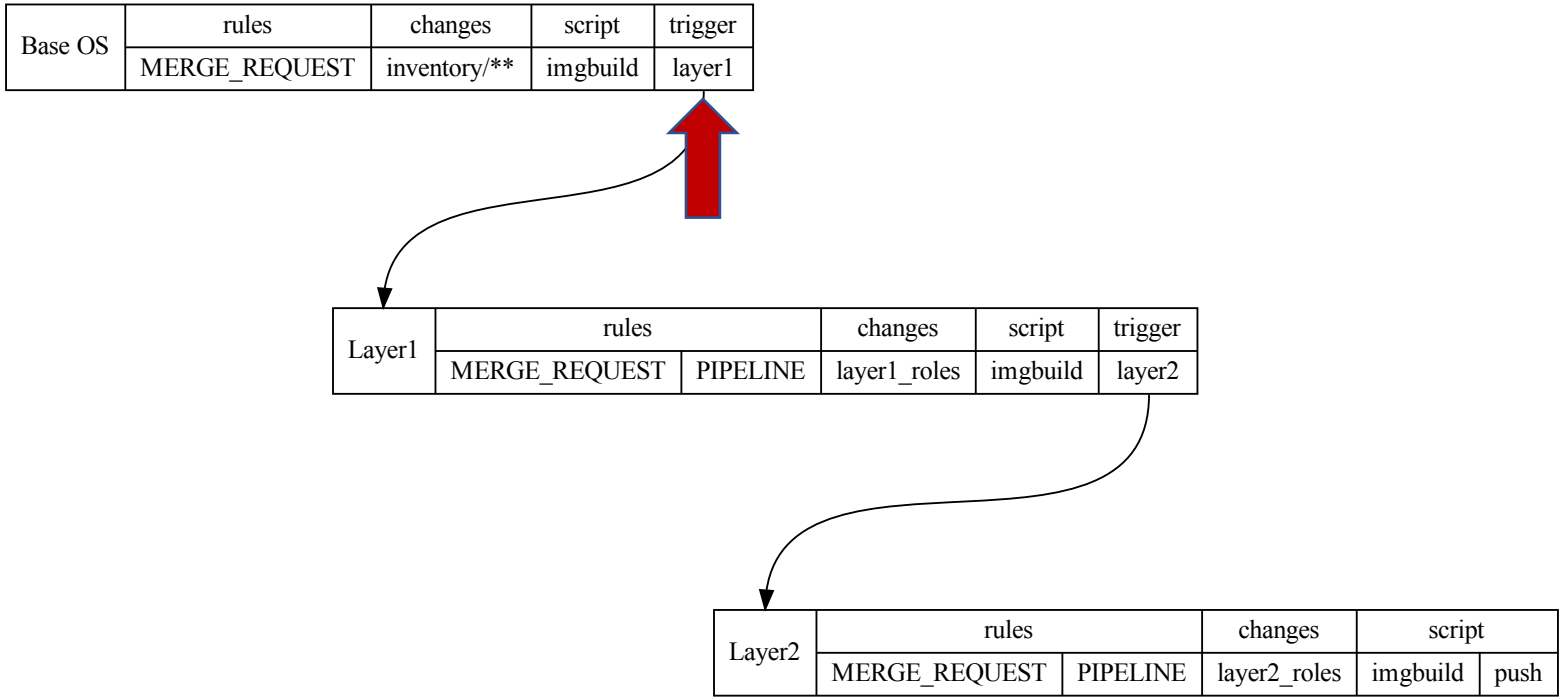
CI pipeline – multi-repo example - Base



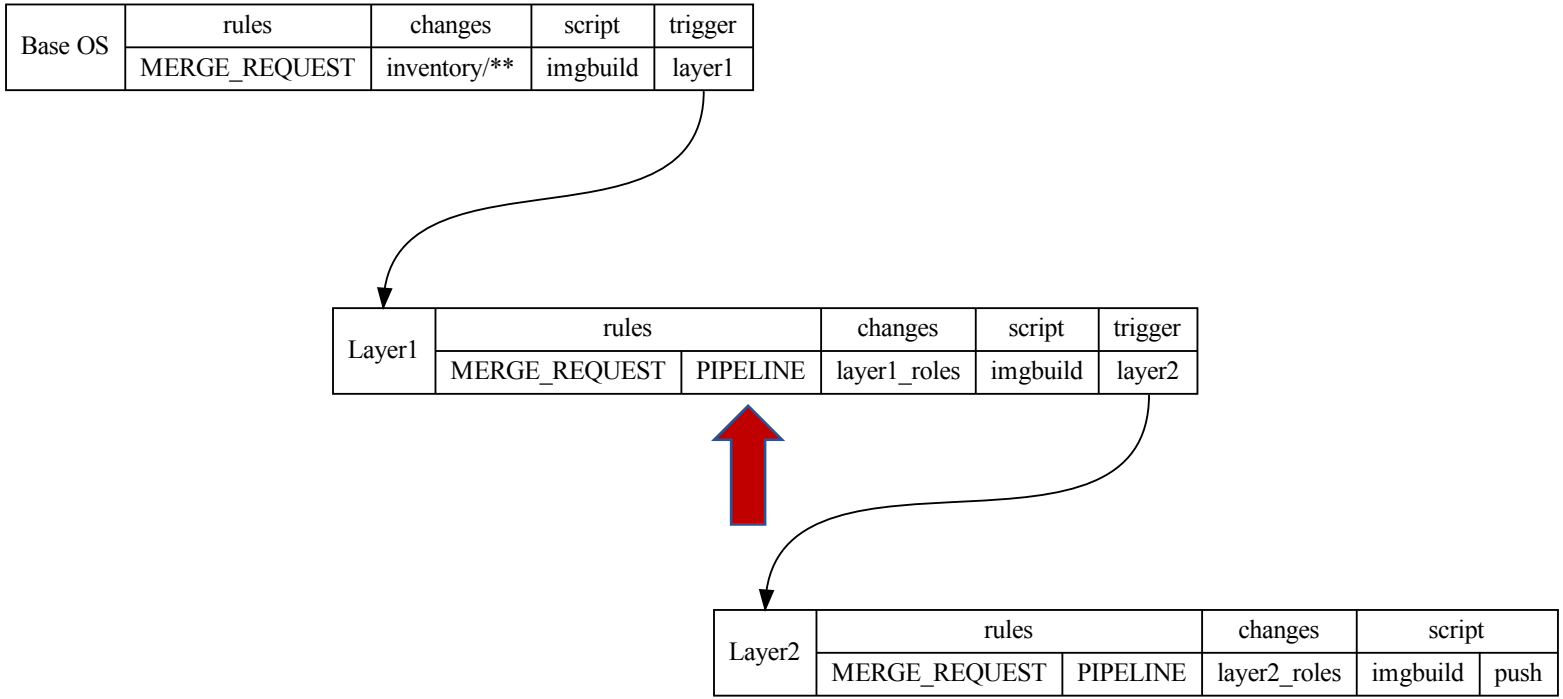
CI pipeline – multi-repo example - Base



CI pipeline – multi-repo example - Base



CI pipeline – multi-repo example - Base



CI pipeline – examples recap

- The pipeline will auto-trigger on
  - Merge request
  - And if defined changes are detected
- Any changes will be validated
  - Breaking changes will cause build failure
  - Prevent merge
  - Notify assignees
  - No sneaking in changes

CI pipeline – examples recap

- This can grow to be pretty complex
  - Rearranging can be painful
    - Parent-child relationship can change
  - Keeping track of changes to the pipeline
    - Map the right configs to layers
    - Adding new layers
- Let’s automate it!

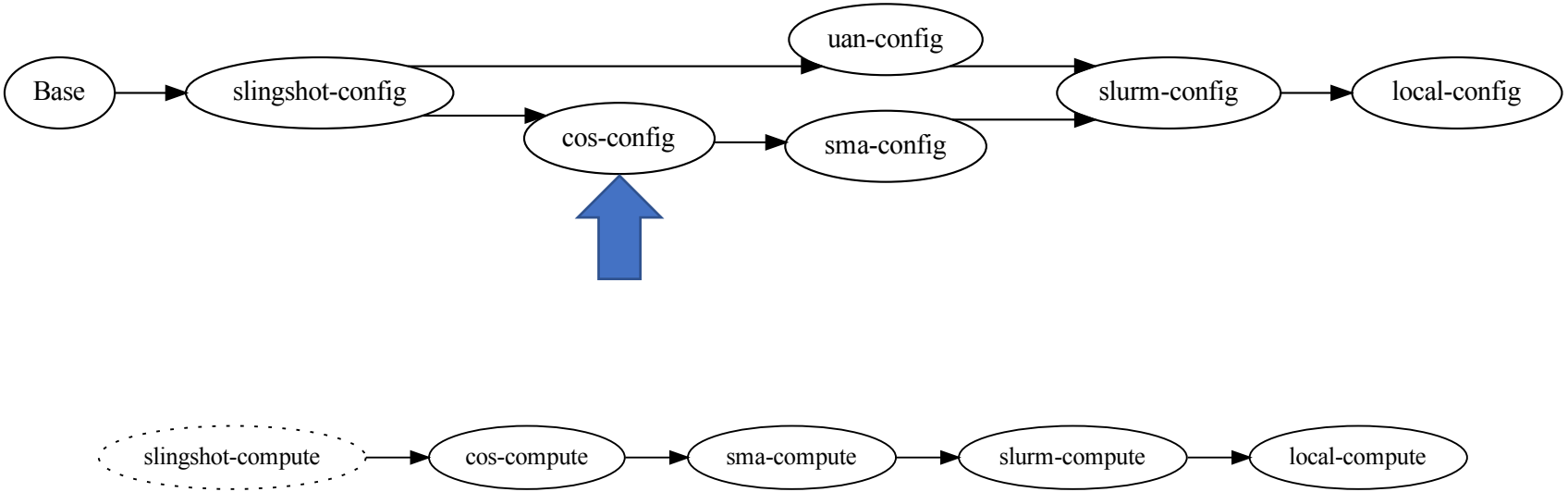
CI pipeline – Automated

- Dynamically write the pipeline configs
  - Pipeline configs are written in yaml
  - Easy to build and write in python
- Treat parent child relationships as a DAG
  - Start the pipeline in the correct place
  - Layer configs can apply to multiple image types
  - Use correct configurations for layers

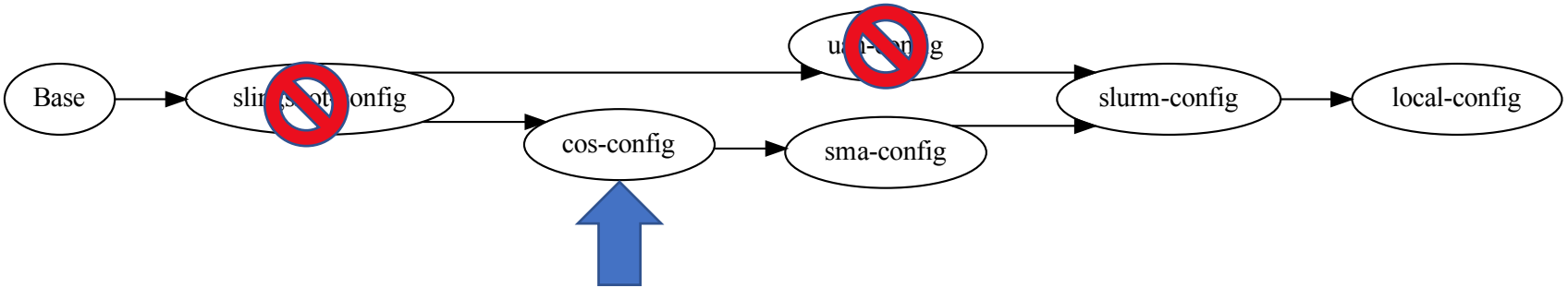
CI pipeline – Automated

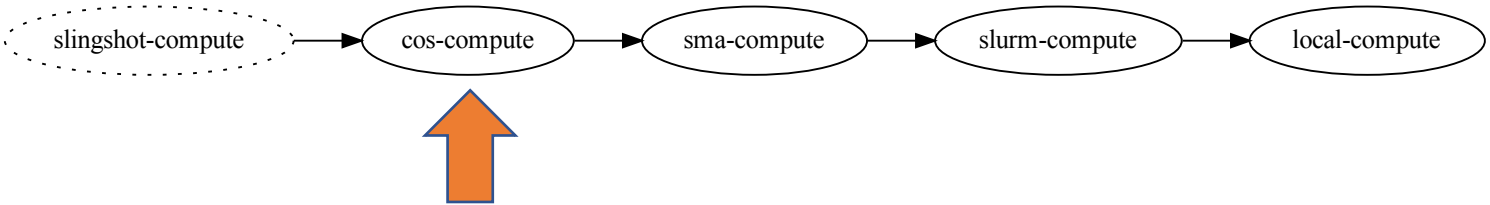
- Use a staging repo
  - Triggered by layer repos
  - Responsible for writing pipeline
  - Holds layer dependency DAG

CI pipeline – Automated



CI pipeline – Automated





CI pipeline – LANL

- Separate Inventory for each system
- Generic repos for each layer
  - Can apply to all systems
  - Can apply to multiple image types
- Three trigger types
  - Inventory
  - Roles
  - Base

Base type trigger

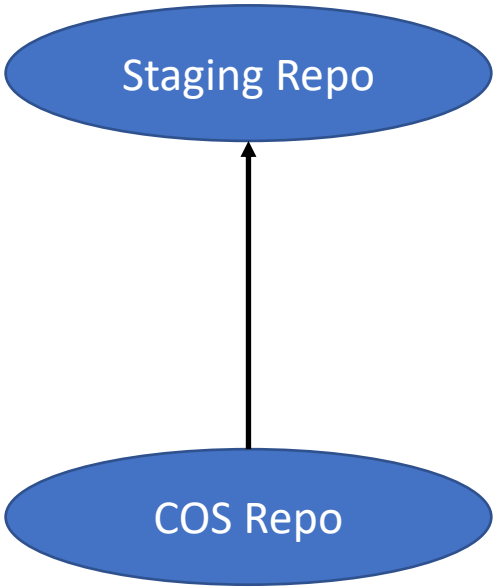
- Still under development
  - Currently only one base type layer
  - Plan is to move towards group base layers
    - Application
    - COS

Role type trigger

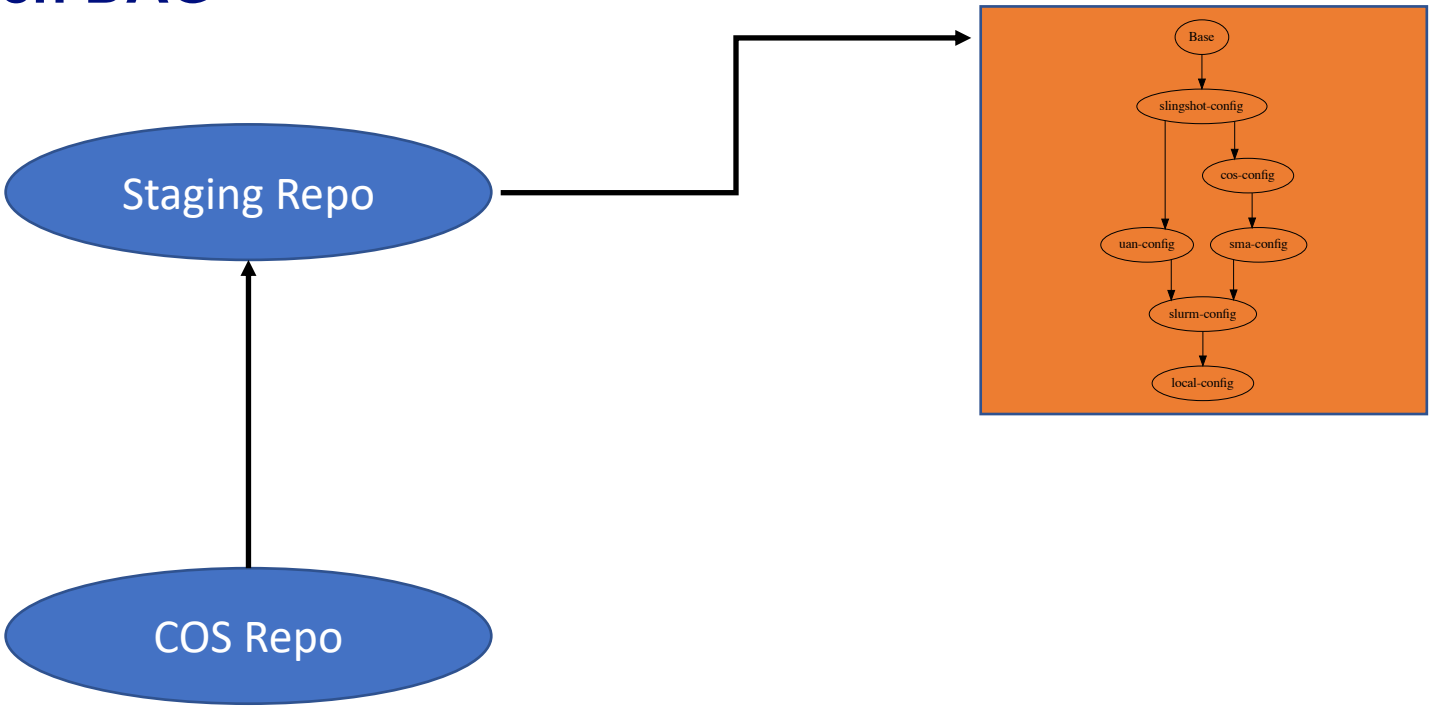
- Looks for source in DAG
- Match changes to roles/tasks used in defined playbooks
- Write pipeline for affected layer types

A merge request is made

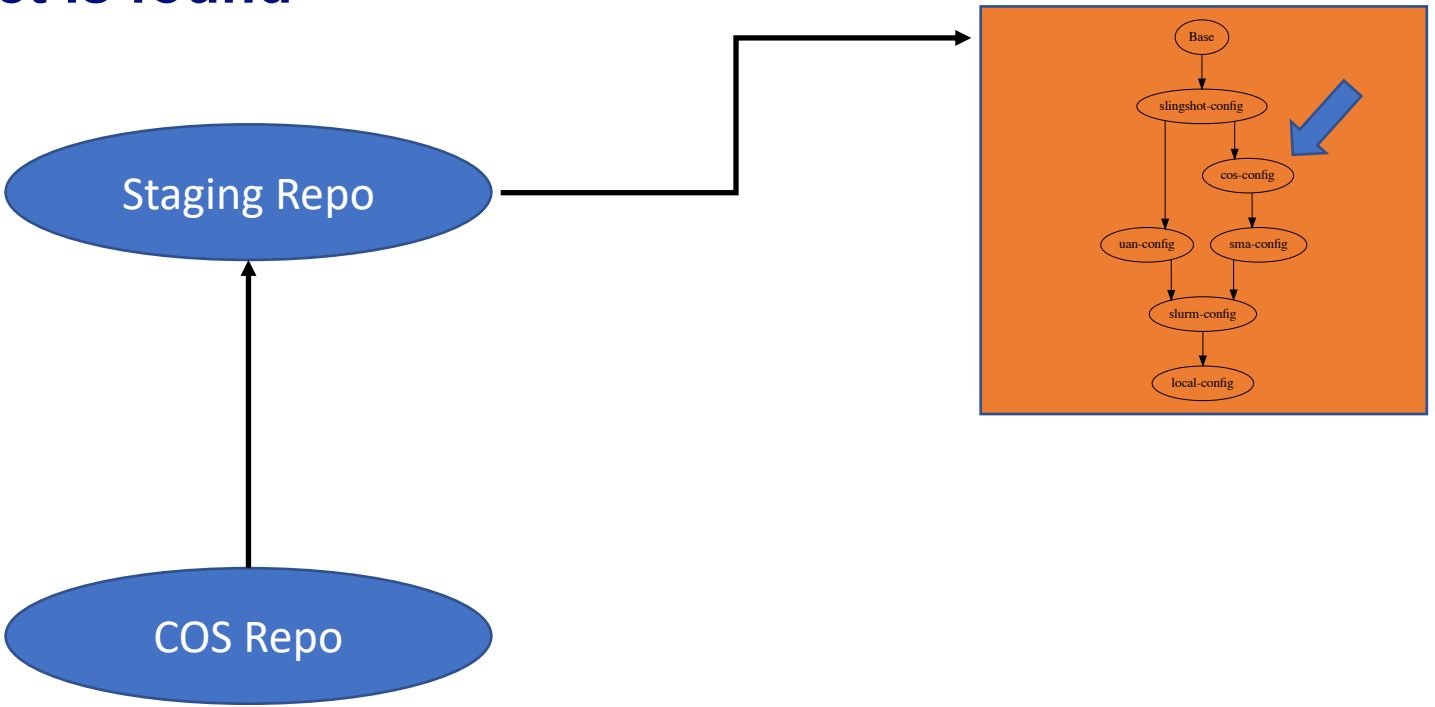
Staging repo is triggered



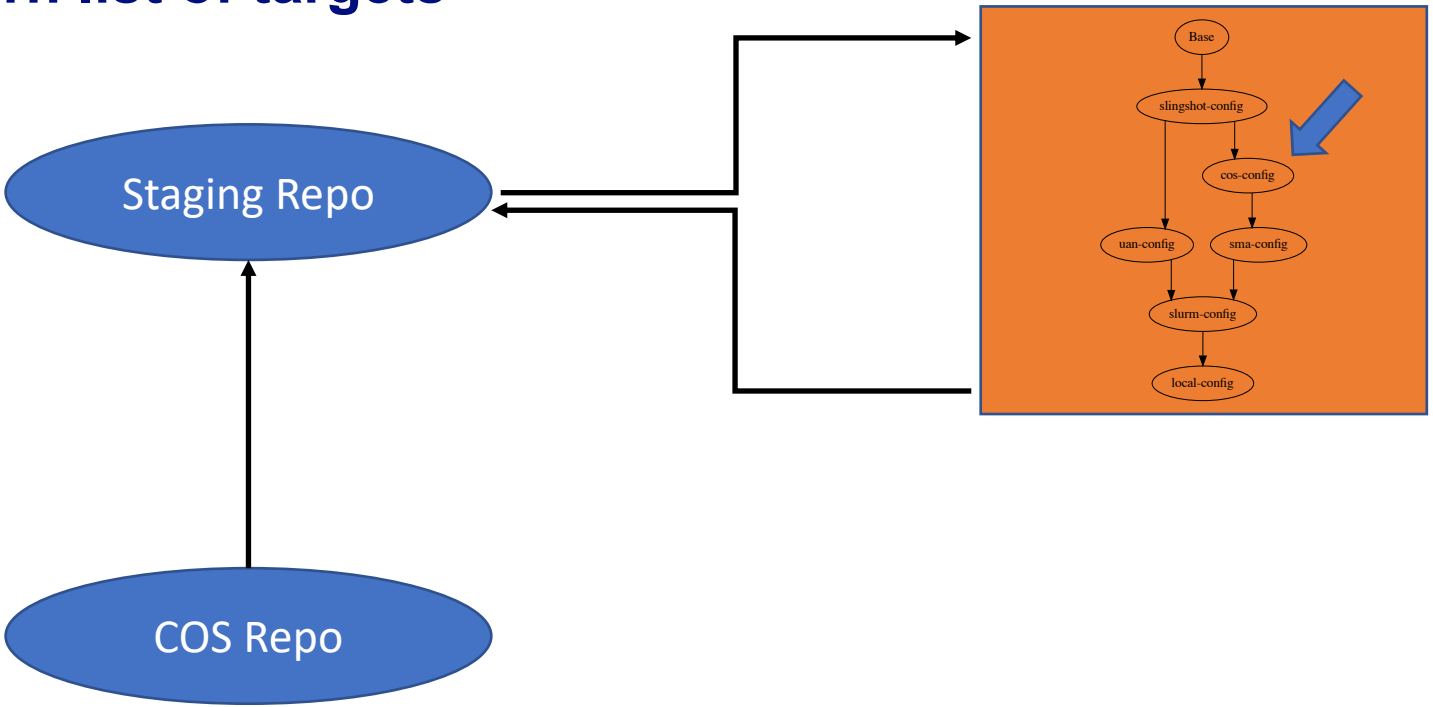
Search DAG


Staging Repo
COS Repo
Base
slingshot-config
cos-config
uan-config
sma-config
slurm-config
local-config

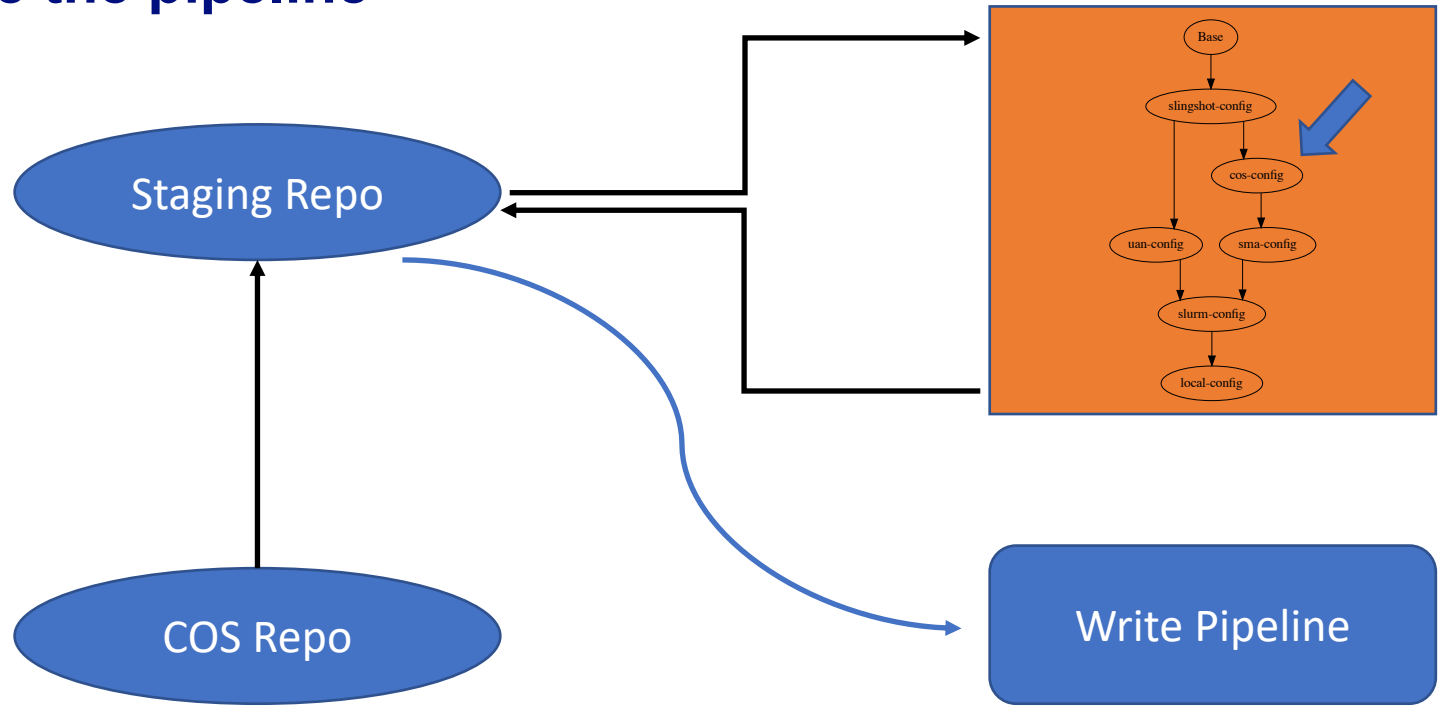
Target is found



Return list of targets



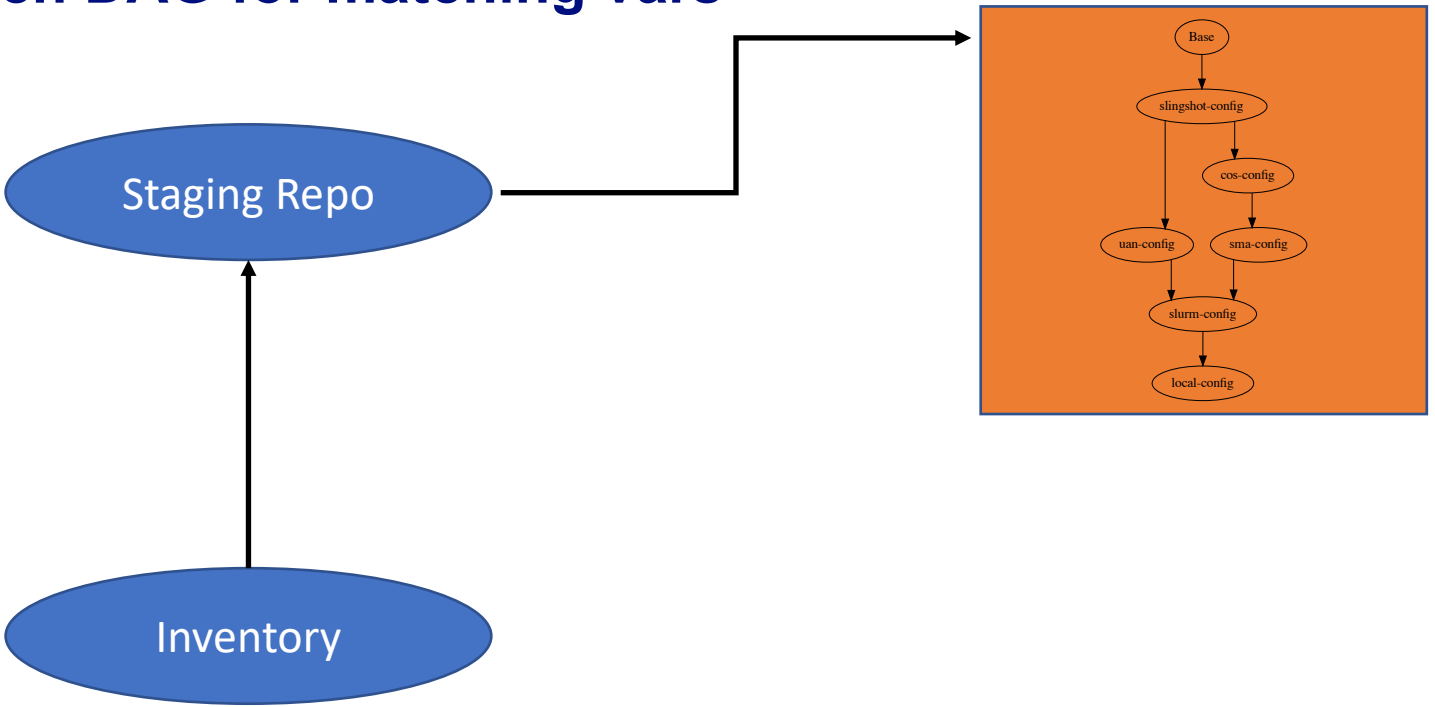
Write the pipeline



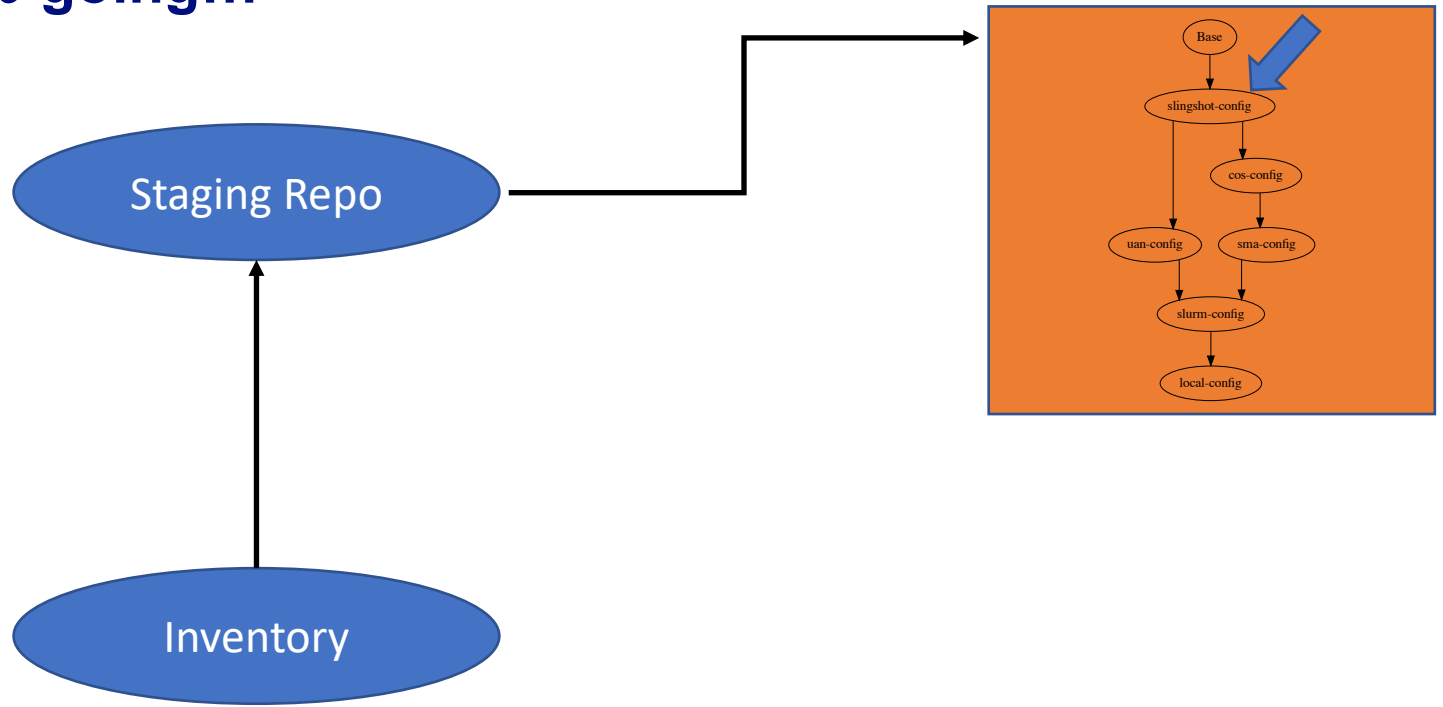
Inventory type trigger

- Also still a work in progress
  - Still file based
  - Variables defined from other variables still needs work
- Map changed variable files to roles repos
  - Don’t inherently know where to start the pipeline
  - Iterate through layer dependency DAG
    - Check each layer type’s defined playbooks
    - Search for changed variables used in roles/tasks
    - Search templates
- If no match is found, no layer pipeline

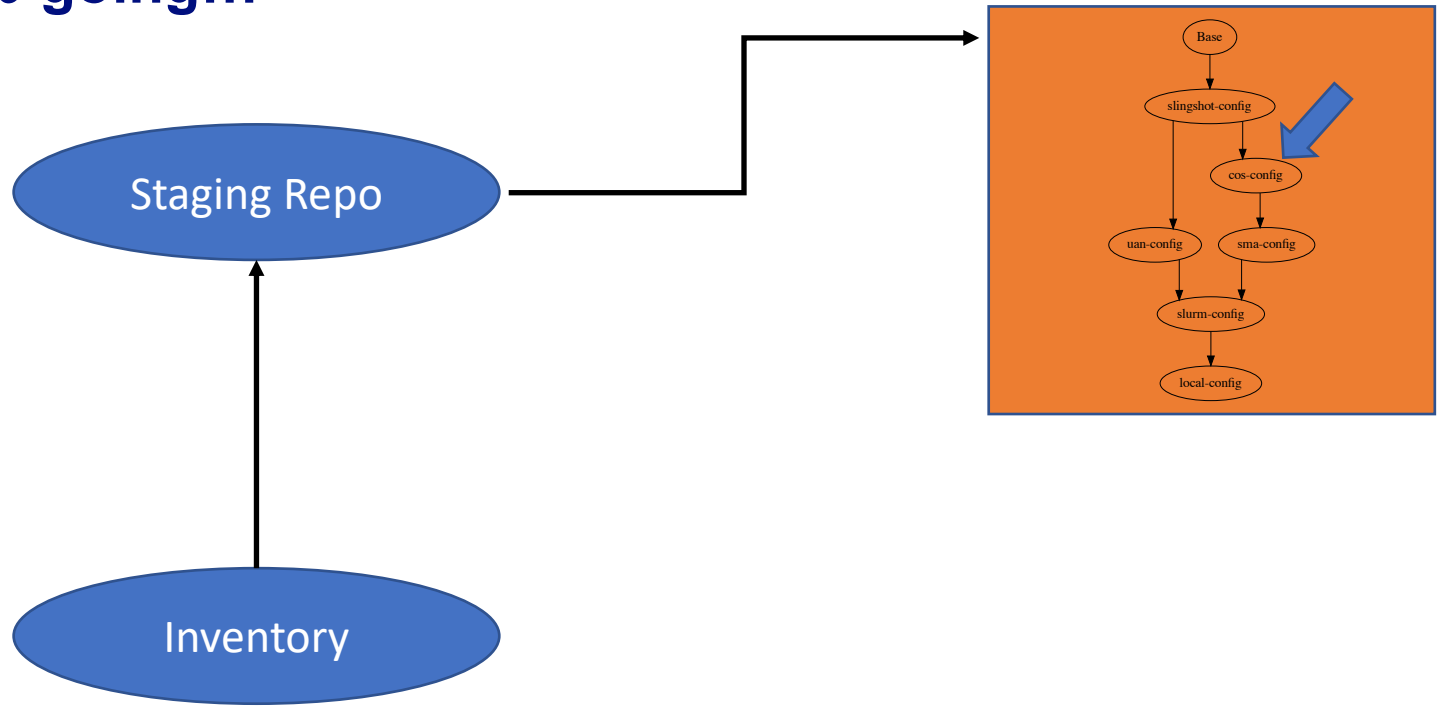
Search DAG for matching vars



Keep going…


Staging Repo
Inventory
Base
slingshot-config
cos-config
uan-config
sma-config
slurm-config
local-config

Keep going…


Staging Repo
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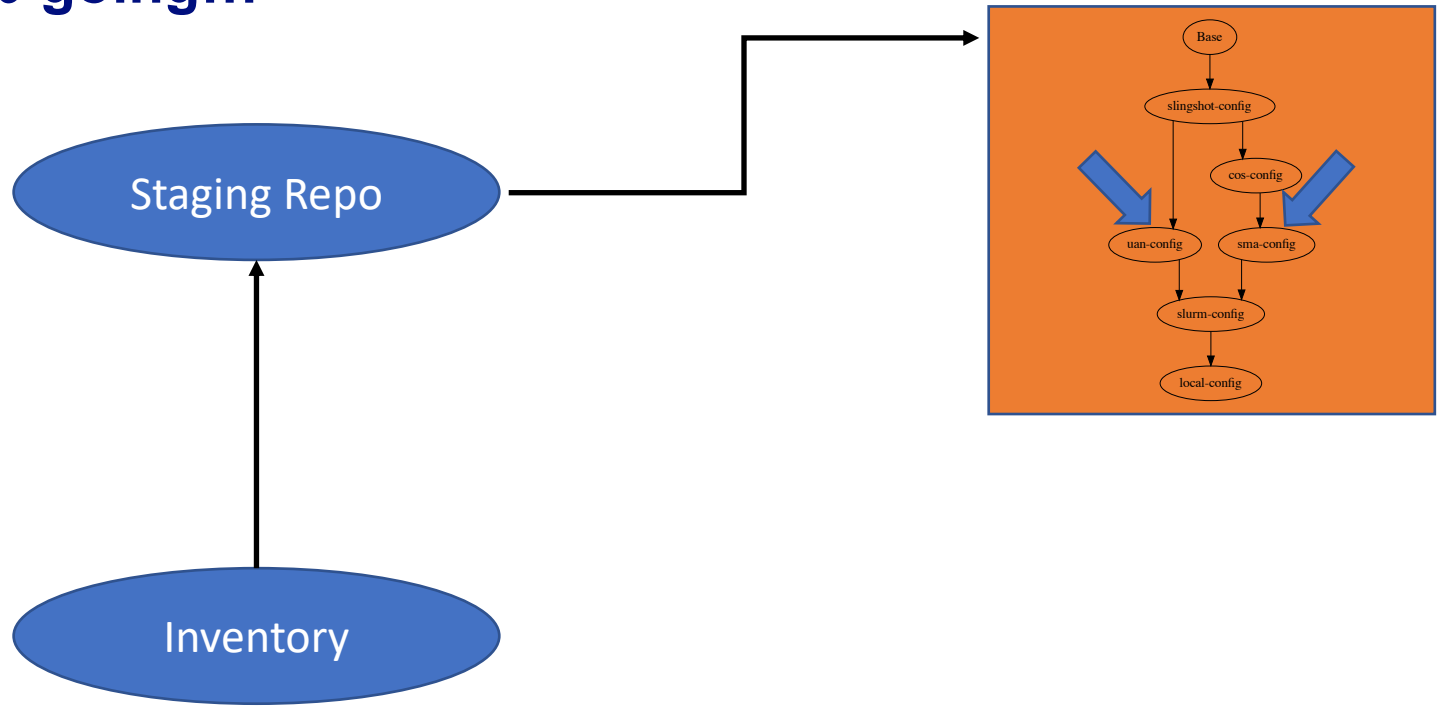
Keep going…


Staging Repo
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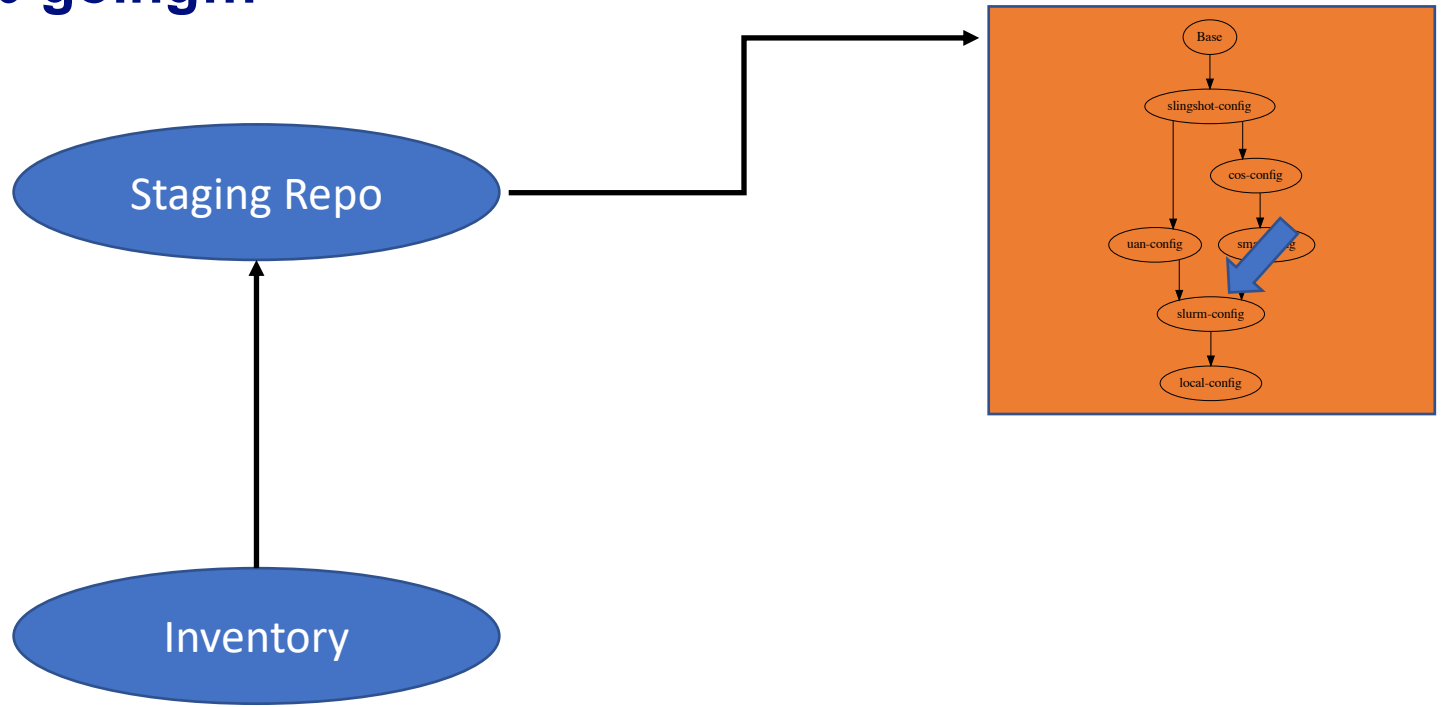
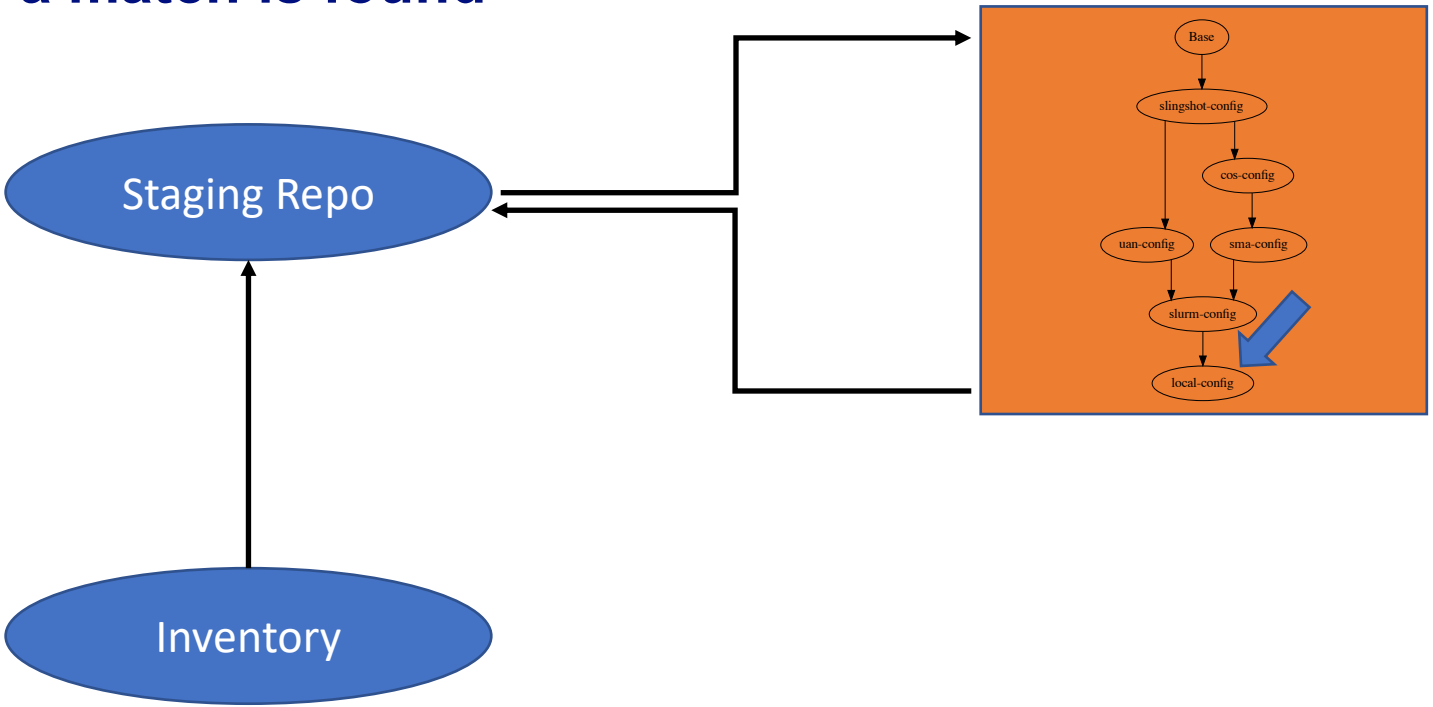
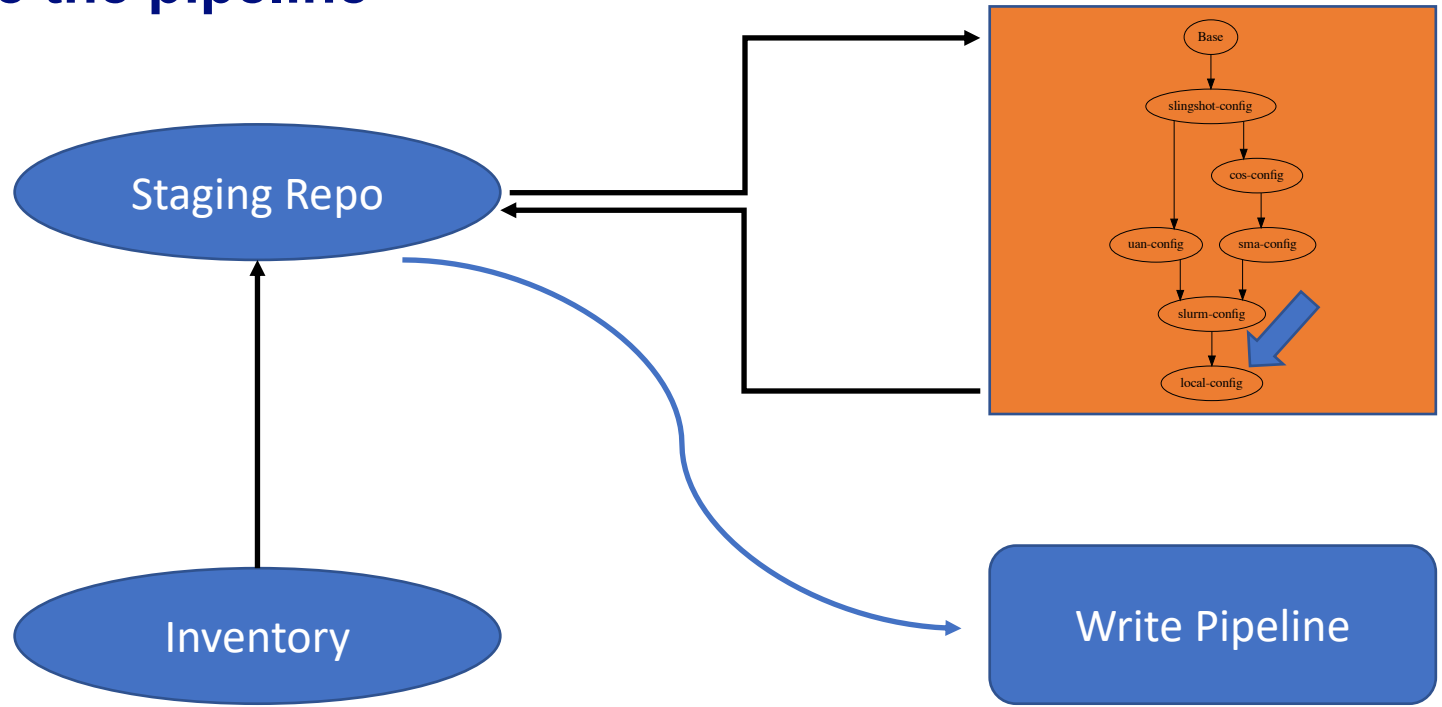
Keep going…


Staging Repo
Inventory
Base
slingshot-config
cos-config
uan-config
slurm-config
local-config

Until a match is found



Write the pipeline



DAG definition file

```
inventory:
   path: 'cluster-inventory'
   cluster_name: 'clusterA'
   cluster_name_short: 'ca'

my-fav-os:
  image_types:
    - {type: 'base', firstlayer: True, children: ['hsn']}
hsn:
  repo: 'hsn-config'
  image_types:
    - { type: 'base', groups: ['HSN'], pb: 'hsn.yml', children: ['compute','uan']}
compute:
  repo: 'compute-config'
  image_types:
    - { type: 'compute', groups: ['Compute'], pb: 'comp.yml', children: ['slurm']}
slurm:
  repo: 'slurm-config'
  image_types:
    - { type: 'compute', groups: ['Compute'], pb: 'slurm.yml'}
```

How the DAG is built and used

- Uses the definition file as source
  - Can have separate files for each system
  - Joined together during build
- Use networkx
  - Adds edges from parent -> child
  - Adds layer info (playbooks, repo, etc) to each node
  - Used during search for matching repos/changes
- Recursively iterate over neighbors

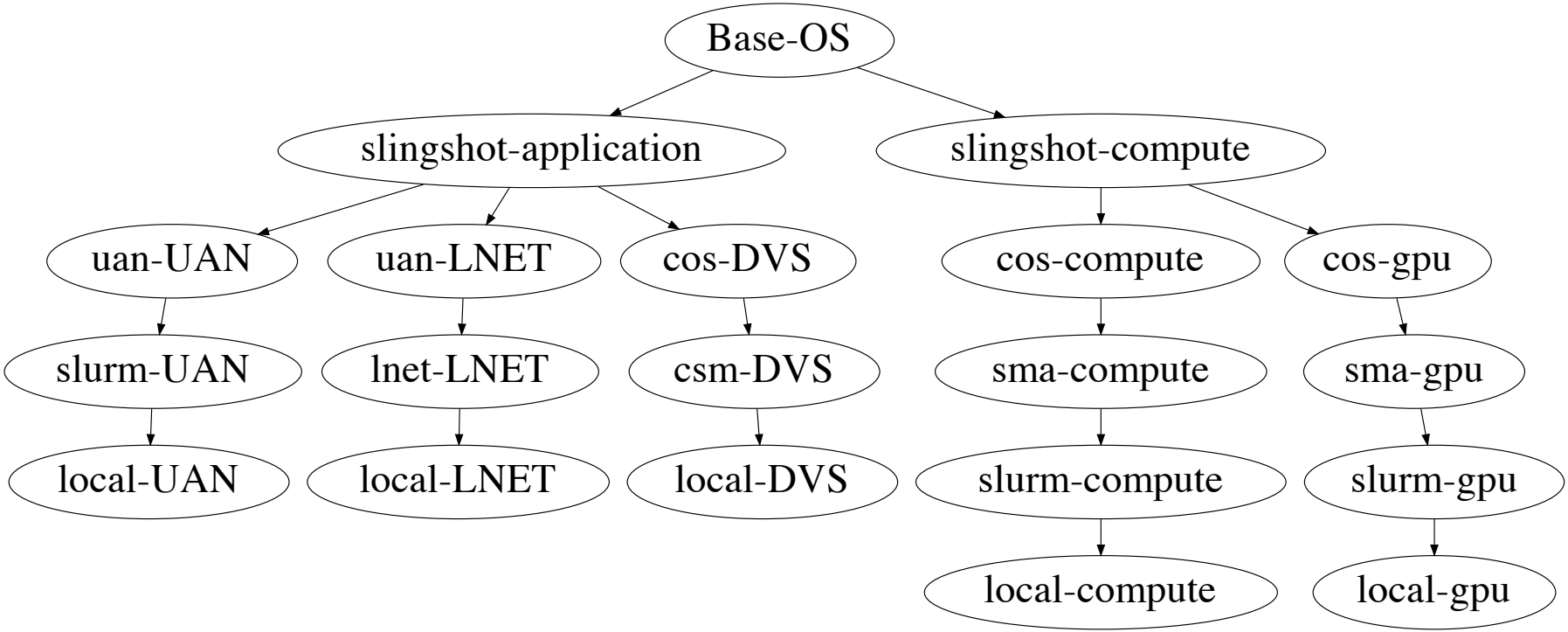
Automated Pipeline - recap

- Keep source of truth in one place
- Don’t need to manage complicated pipeline configs
- Configs are written for you
- Only write pipelines for layers where changes matter

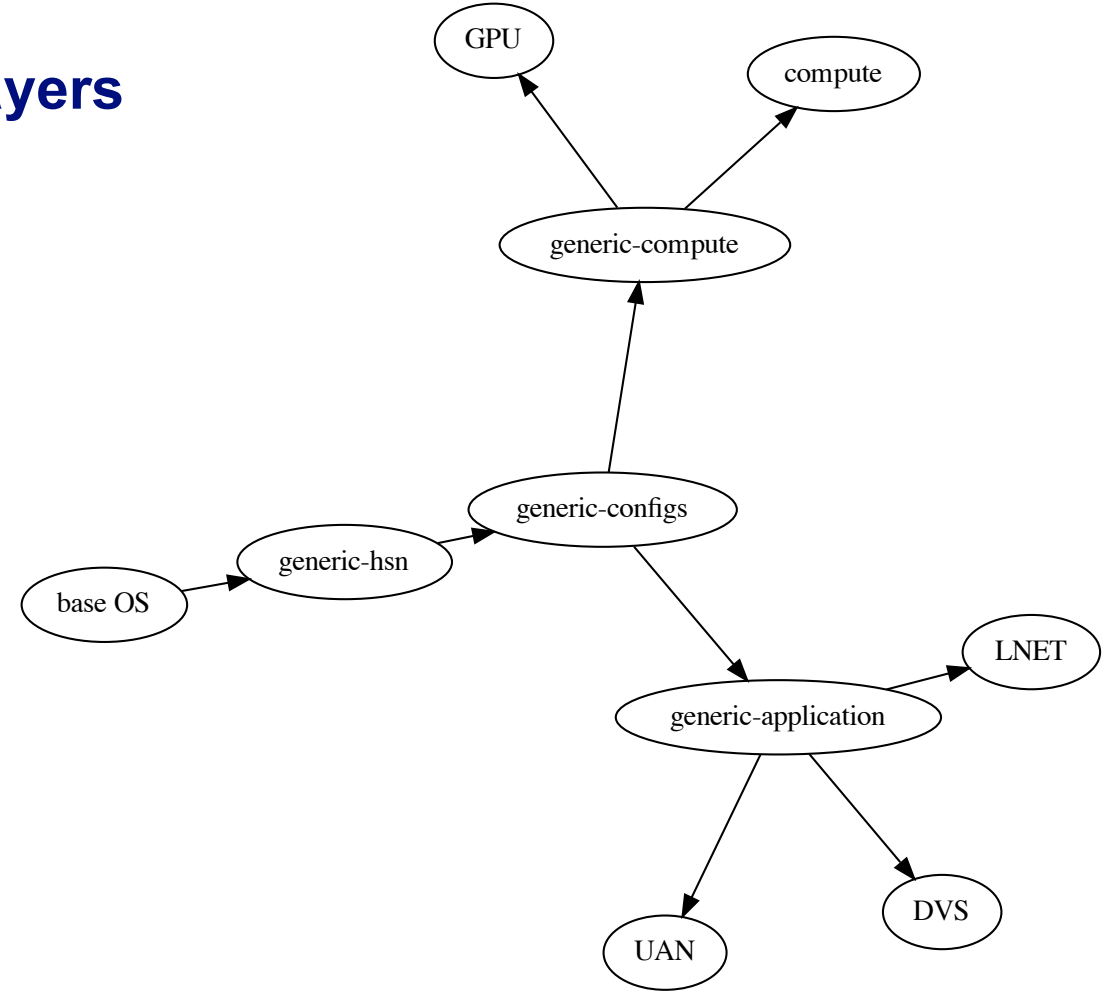
Part 3:Observations and Benefits

- Turnaround Time
  - Don’t build layers unnecessarily
  - Target layers where it matters
  - Easy to debug
    - Run ansible repeatedly, quickly
  - Build layers for multiple systems
  - Current CFS based DAG branches early in layer dependency DAG
    - Would like to push generic configs to earlier in DAG

CFS layers – simplified a little



Example layers



Part 3:Observations and Benefits

- Portability and Scaling
  - The goal is to be able to run it anywhere (that makes sense)
    - In Kubernetes
    - In a podman container
    - Some other fancy container thing
  - Can run as many layer builds as available runners
    - Can potentially scale up and down
    - Would like to do layer builds separate from systems

Part 3:Observations and Benefits

- Consistency and Validation
  - Changes can’t sneak in anymore
  - Helps mitigate human errors
  - Layers unchanged unless configs updated
  - Shared layers are the same across multiple systems
  - Breaking changes are caught in the pipeline

Part 3:Observations and Benefits

- It works!

Part 3:Observations and Benefits

- It works!
  - Mostly

Part 3:Observations and Benefits

- It works!
  - Mostly
  - On test systems
- Debugging ansible with buildah is so nice
  - Currently working on a debug tool
- Currently pushing directly to s3
  - Feels icky and scary
  - Use something like quay

Future work

- Expand base type images
- Validate Inventory type changes
  - Move away from file based
  - Complicated variable definitions
- Integrate other pipelines
  - Ansible linting
  - Ansible syntax checks
  - Automated testing – boot images from pipeline and run tests
  - Auto-deploy with rolling updates?
- Open source it? Would you like to know more?

Questions?