

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for January 1, 2017. Well, the update may have been on hiatus last week but, your MOW Team sure wasn't. So, let's get you caught up on the latest MOW news before another year passes by.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday before Christmas, your MOW Team built a track to the east of the Boiler Shop in order to allow for the extraction of the rotary snow plow from the North Firing Line track. You may recall that the transfer-table does not reach the North Firing Line. Therefore, extraordinary measures were taken to move the rotary. Over three days, Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Anthony Filamor, Joe Margucci, Weston Snyder, Cliff Hayes, Gene Peck, Frank Werry, Heather Kearns, Chris Carlson, and Harry Voss put together this temporary track which ran across the north end of the transfer table runway and along the north side of the Erecting Shop.

The Team gathered early in the morning on the Tuesday following Christmas. The temporary track was ready for action and so were Joe, Pat, Cliff, Weston, Anthony, Alan, Alan, Gene, and Chris who worked alongside Al DiPaolo and his crew to extract the rotary. So, here's the day in a nutshell. First, the dynamometer-car was pulled off the North Firing Line track and onto the temporary where it was spotted to the north of the Erecting Shop. Chris, on the forklift, used the panel-track lifter to lift the west end of the track and move the whole thing until it was lined with the South Firing Line track (which the transfer-table can reach). The track-mobile then pulled the dynamometer-car onto the South track. The track then was lifted and scooted back into alignment with the North track. The rotary was then shoved out onto the temporary track and spotted to the north of the Erecting Shop. The track was once again moved over to line-up with the South Firing Line track. The dynamometer-car was then shoved out onto the temporary track where it made a hook with the rotary. Both then were pulled onto the South track. Next, Joe, Anthony, and Weston unbolted the track at a joint near the east side of the transfer-table runway. The track was then shoved out of the way so that the transfer-table could be brought up to the South Firing Line track so that the rotary could be moved to a bay of the Erecting Shop for restoration work. Although it sounds simple, it had been quite an involved process. But both the MOW Team and Shops Team worked exceptionally well together and dealt with all of the obstacles that came up during the day, such as clearance issues. It had been quite an eventful day, indeed.

Thursday was bridge inspection day. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) was on site to review our bridges-inspection protocols with railroad's bridge inspectors, Mike Harris and Harry Gobbler – both of whom are licensed professional engineers and volunteer their considerable skills to keeping our railroad rolling. Federal law considers the transfer-table and turntable to bridges. In addition, there is bridge over I-5 and the pedestrian tunnel between the Museum and Rail Yards (not open to the public – yet). Needless to say, our bridge inspection protocols passed FRA scrutiny with flying colors. Indeed, it was another great job by our talented team of volunteers!

In the evening, Joe, Alan, Anthony, Weston, and Frank gathered to discuss storage issues. The need to build temporary track to the North Firing Line brought to the forefront the lack of storage for rolling stock. The Erecting Shop and Boiler Shop are chalk-a-block full and there is no place to put anything out in the Yards as most of the tracks were ripped-up during the environmental mitigation process. So the Team surveyed the area to the west of the Boiler Shop to investigate several options including building a switch and second track out there. There are solutions to the storage problem and your MOW Team will be working to make them possible.

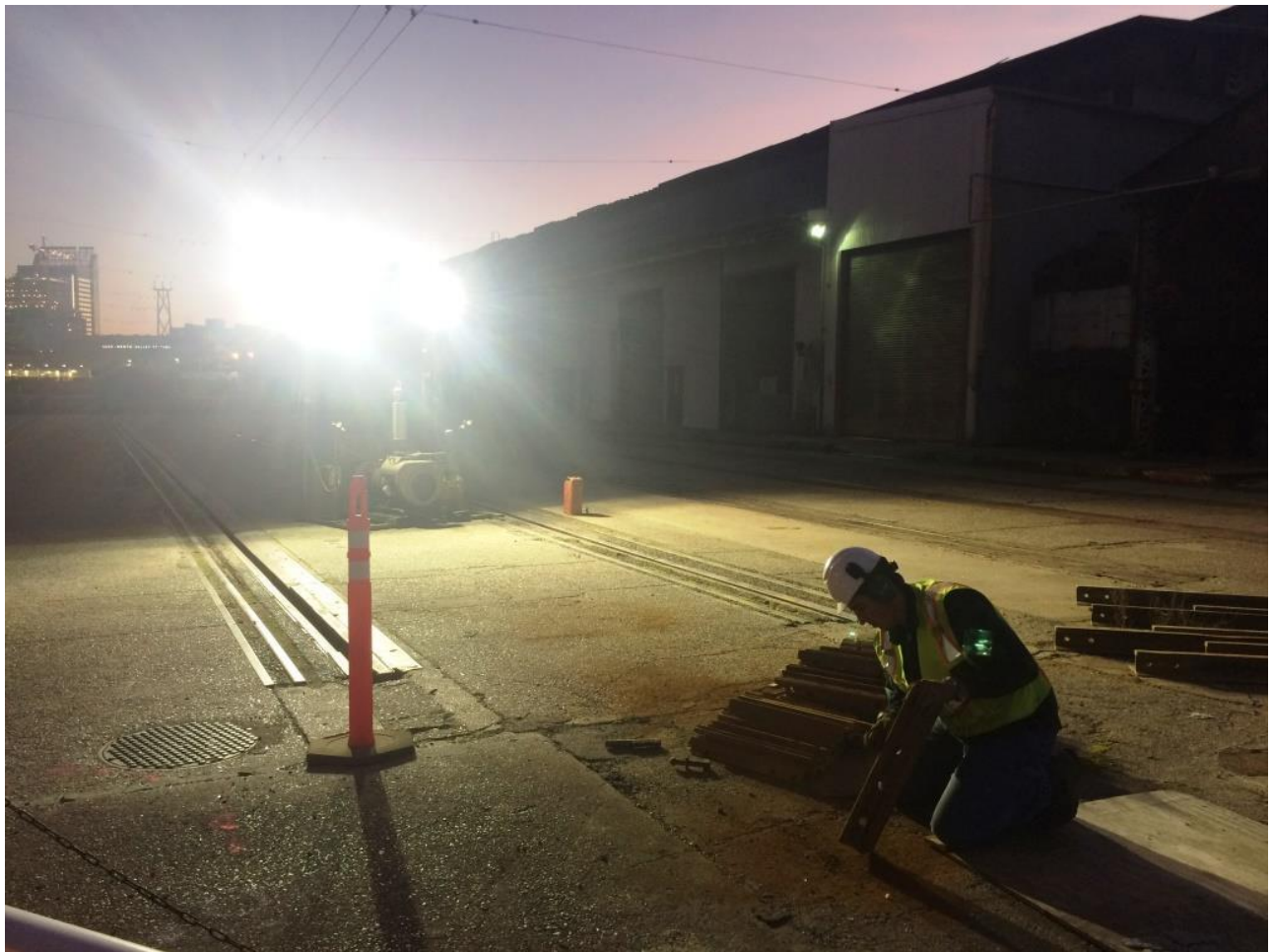
Saturday marked the final appearance of a pink box filled with sugary fried-dough goodness in the Erecting Shop of 2016. There to wave goodbye to 2016 MOW style were Alan, Joe, Pam Tatro, Ed Kottal, Steve Nemeth, Michael Florentine, Frank, Weston, Harry, Anthony, and Chris. The Team would split into two groups. Chris, Alan, Steve, Pam, Weston, and Harry would head down the line with the ballast regulator and ballast-hopper cars to continue ballasting the track in preparation for a track-raise in the Clunie area. Joe, Ed, Mike F., Frank, and Anthony planned on changing out a dozen or so ties in Miller Park – except the fates were not smiling on us. As the Team was preparing the equipment for deployment, Frank noticed that someone or something had hit the switch-stand at Switch 2 – the House Track switch – throwing it out of alignment. The base of the stand was elevated two inches above the head-block which had been shattered as a result of the damage. This switch had just been inspected earlier in the week by our trusty track inspectors who found no issues with it. Therefore, the damage occurred sometime between Wednesday and Saturday. So, an “audible” was called and the Team's focus shifted to getting this critical switch back together. Once the switch stand was removed, the damage to the head-block became apparent. This was a major problem as you can't drive spikes into shattered wood. They won't hold. But, never fear, your MOW Team is here and, with a little scratching of the heads, a solution was conjured. Wooden plugs would be used to fill-in the shattered areas. Then, using large lag-bolts, Team would bind the broken head-block together. With that, there was enough stability to re-spike the switch-stand. Next, the Team needed to make adjustments to the switch, itself, to get it to function properly. By the end of the day, the Team had the switch functioning satisfactorily. Of course, this is only a temporary solution as the entire head-block now has to be replaced.

Meanwhile, down at Clunie, Harry in the back-hoe was filling hopper-cars with ballast-rock, Chris would pull them with the ballast-regulator, Pam, Steve, and Weston would then disgorge the rock between and alongside the rails. Chris, in the regulator, then plowed the rock to even it out so that a four-inch track-raise can be done. They made five passes and managed to ballast the track from Clunie to the Pioneer Bridge. The track-raise will commence early in 2017. With that, they returned to Old Sacramento where they were reunited with the rest of the Team still putting Switch 2 back together. It had been a productive yet unexpected way for the MOW Team to bring a close to 2016.

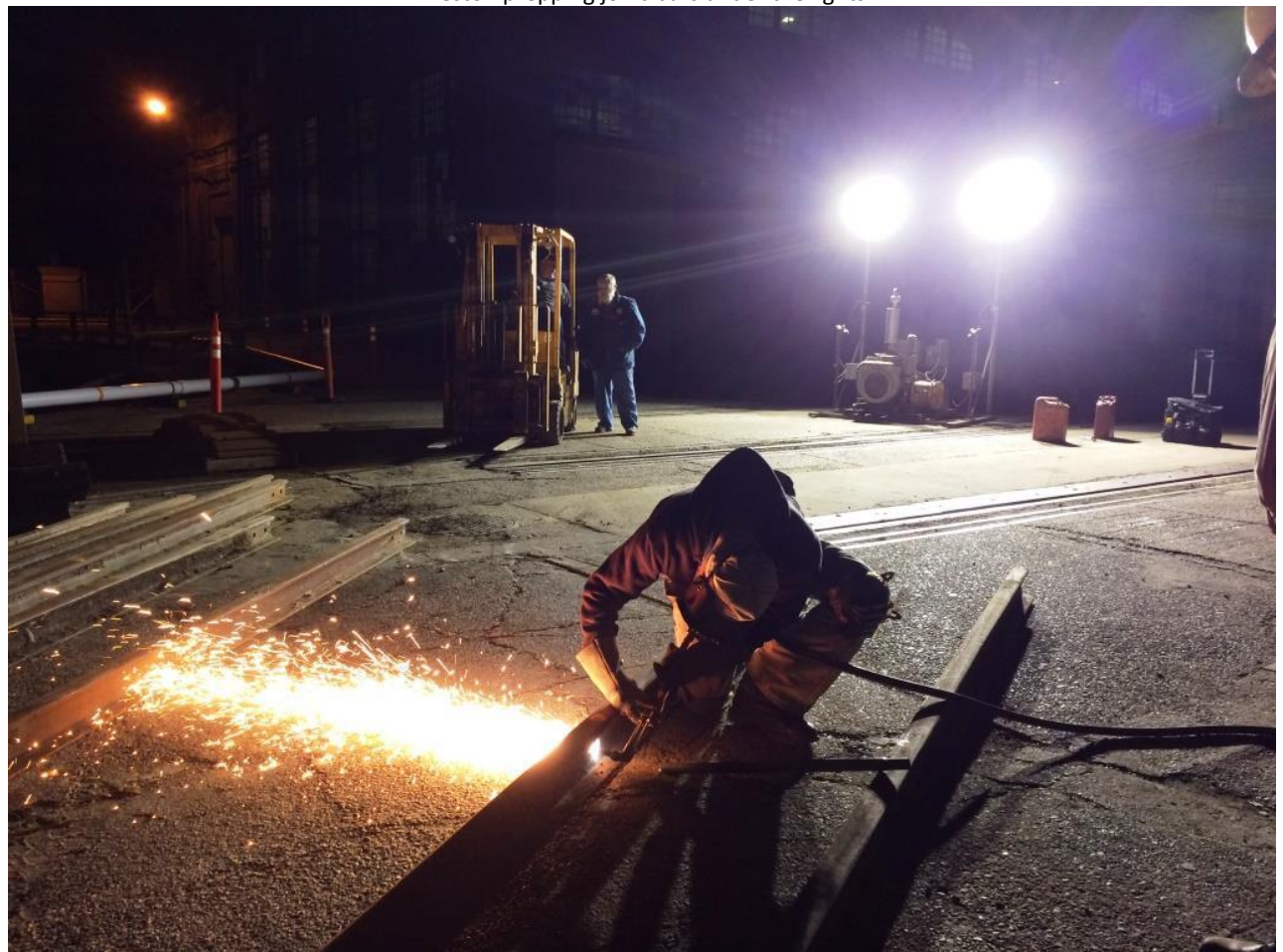
This coming week, everything will be back to normal. The Team will gather for the first time in 2017 on Tuesday evening at or before 5 o'clock. The same holds true for Thursday evening. Saturday, the first doughnuts of the year will make their appearance in the Erecting Shop at 8 a.m. sharp. It promises to be quite a year with lots of big projects planned. Happy New Year and many thanks to all the fantastic volunteers of the MOW Team!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard



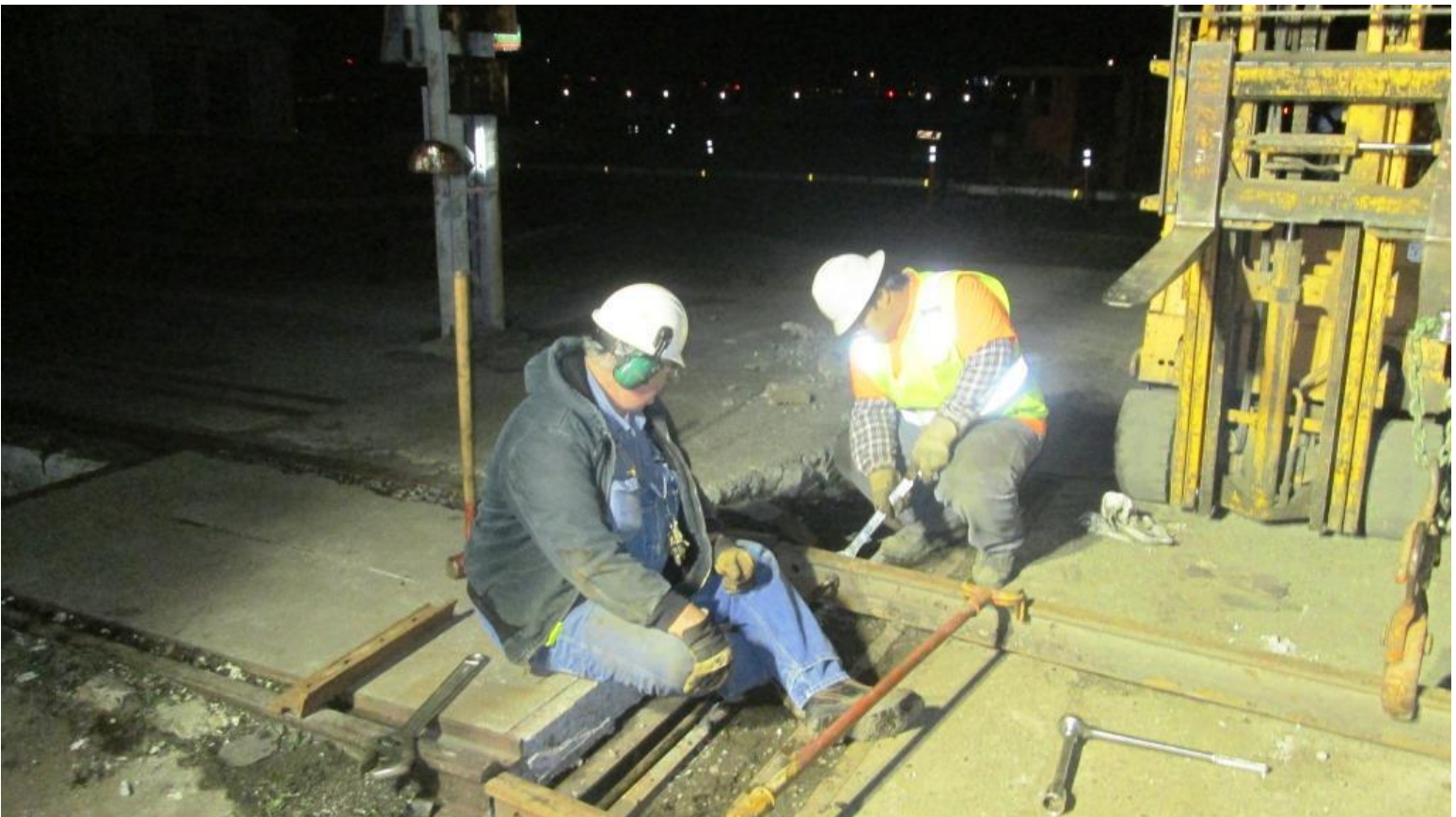
Weston prepping joint-bars under the lights



Cliff blasts bolt-holes through the rails being used for the temporary track



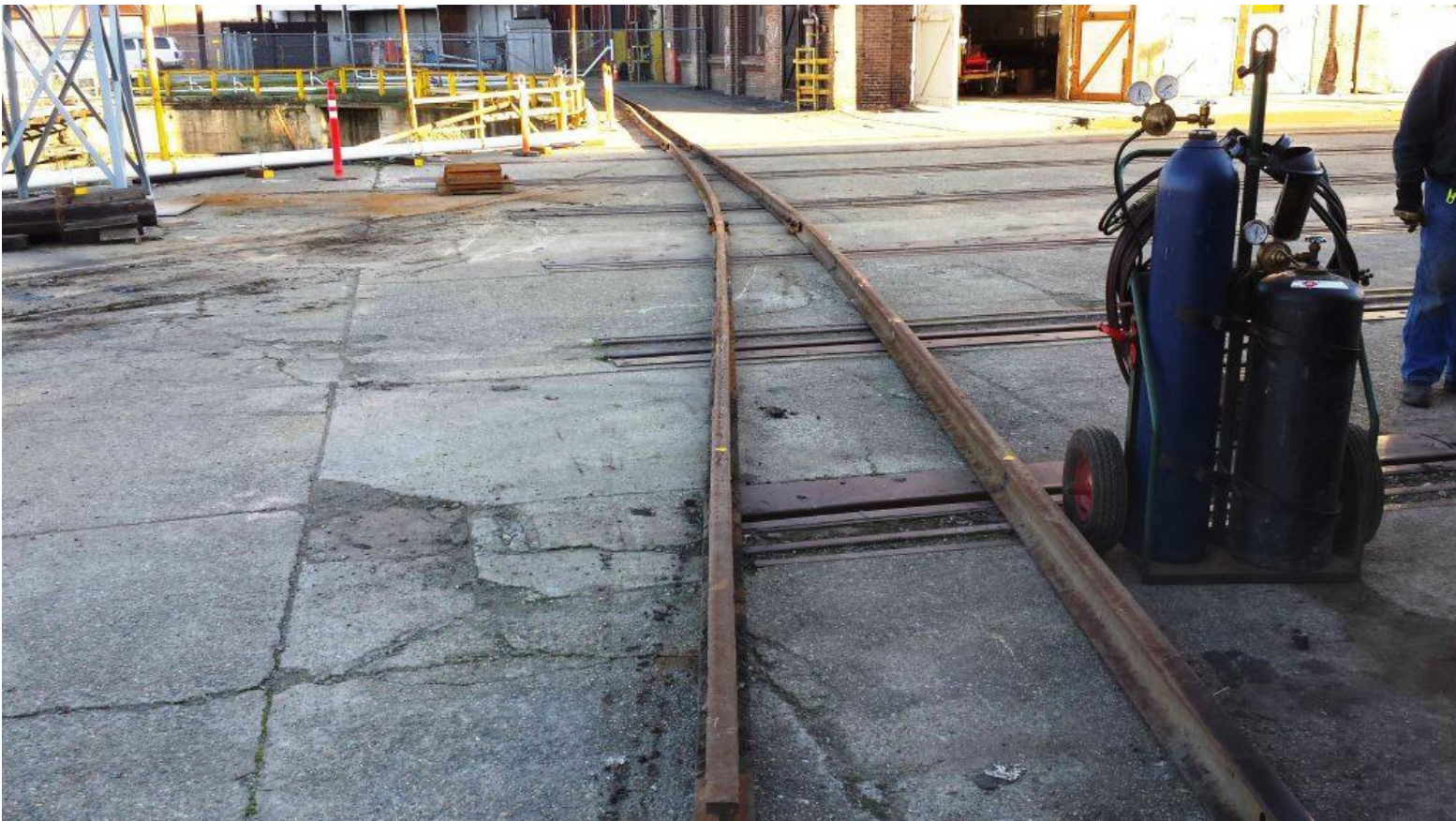
Anthony and Chris position the assembled rails



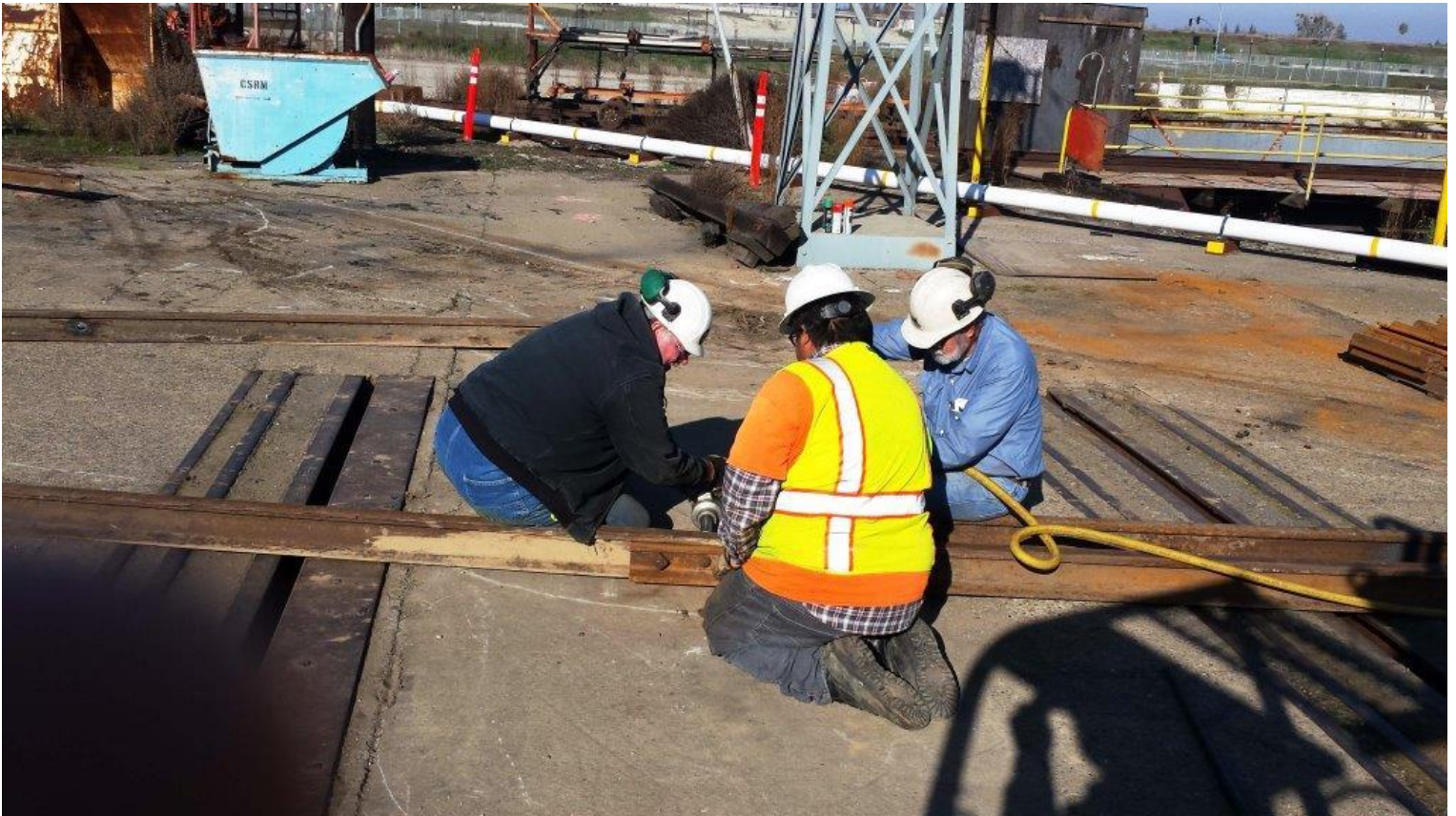
Chris and Anthony use gauge-rods to tie the rails together



Joe tightens down a gauge-rod



It's beginning to look a lot like track...



Chris, Anthony, and Alan use the pneumatic impact-wrench to bolt rails together



Chris uses the rail-saw to cut on the north-most Firing Line rail



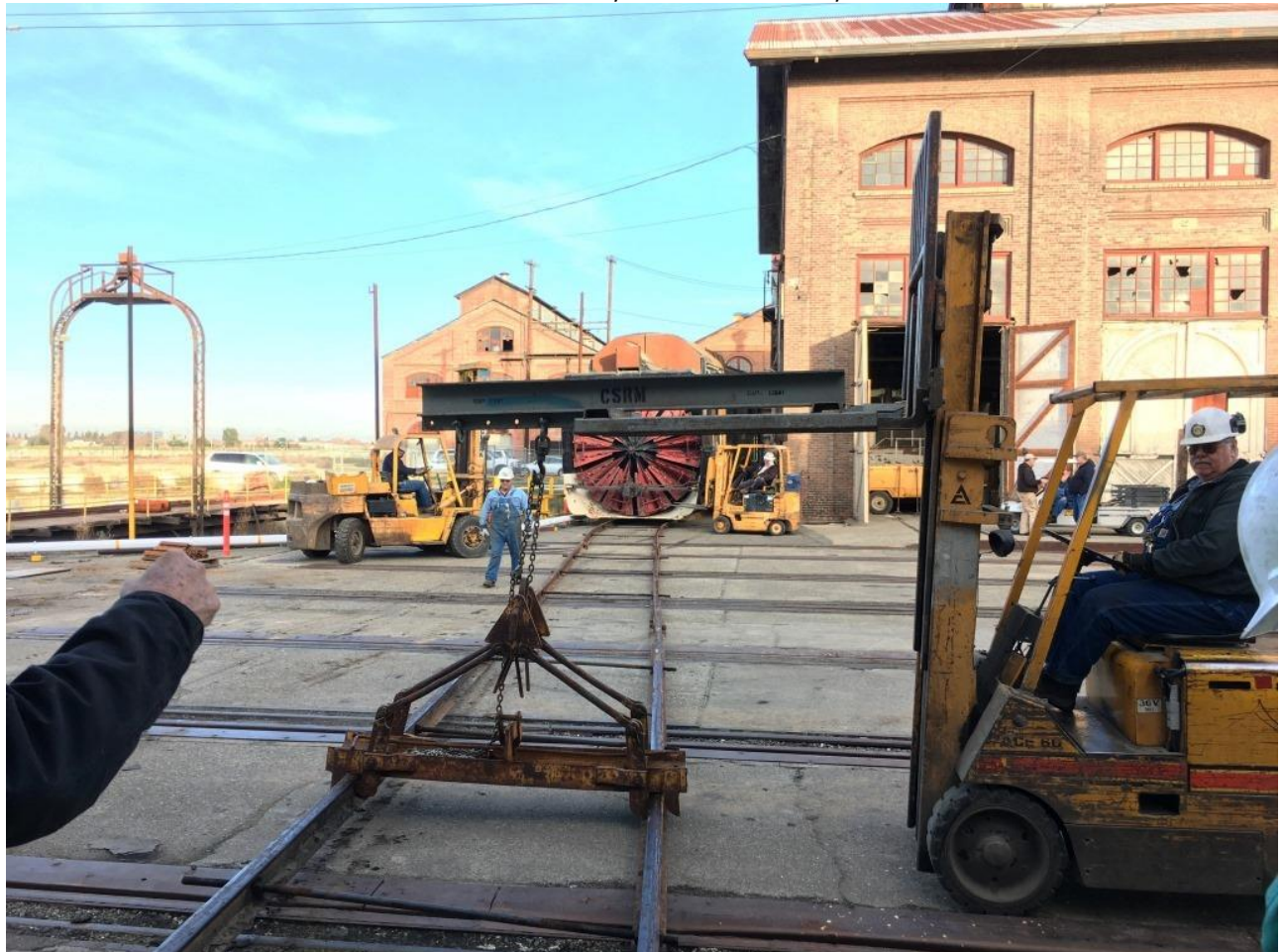
The dynamometer-car sees the light of day!



Chris uses the panel-track lifter to lift the rails and scoot them over



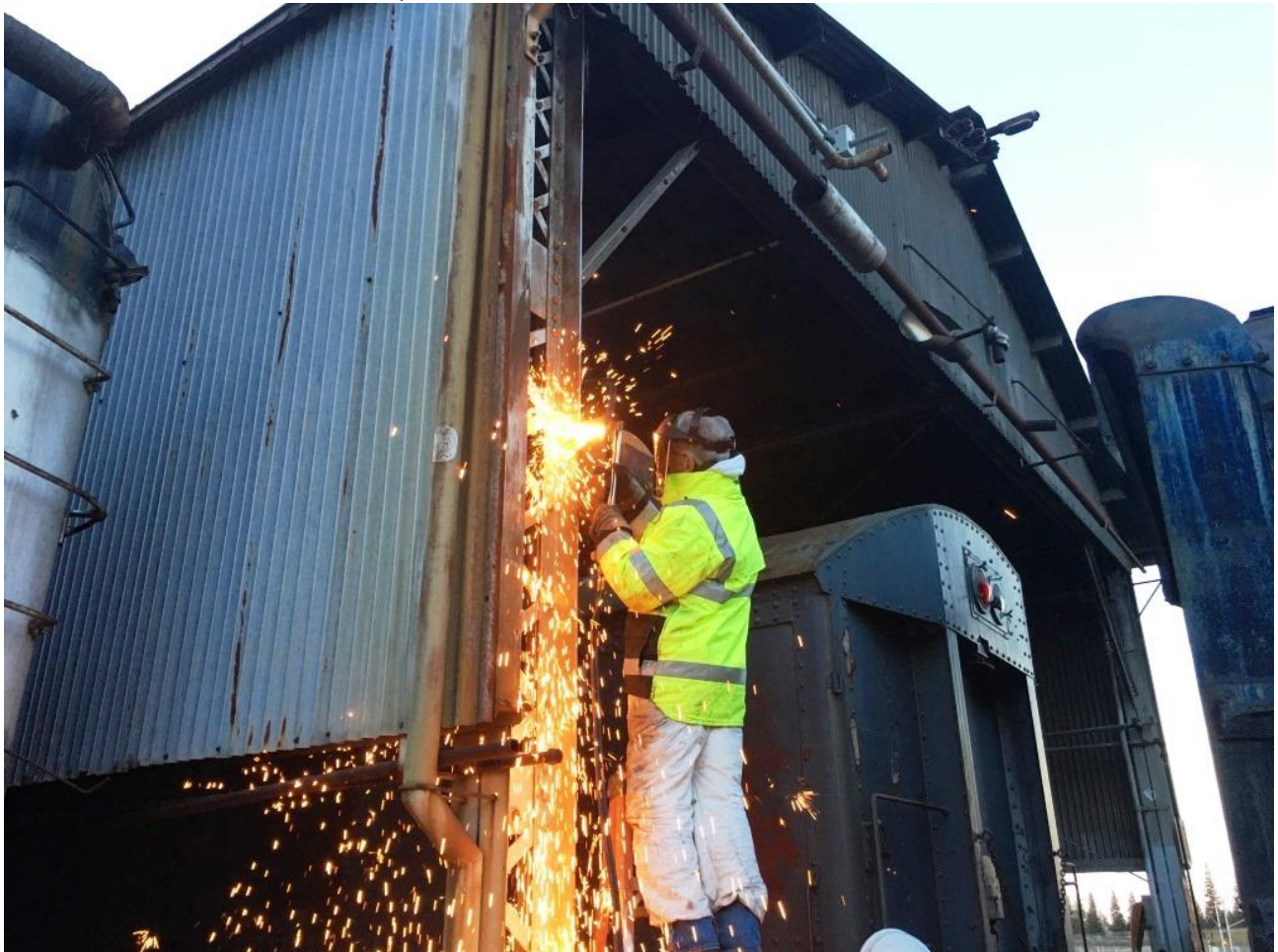
Free at last! The rotary baskets in the noonday sun!



Chris now shifts the rails over to the South Firing Line track



Jim Bays takes care of the clearance issue near the turntable

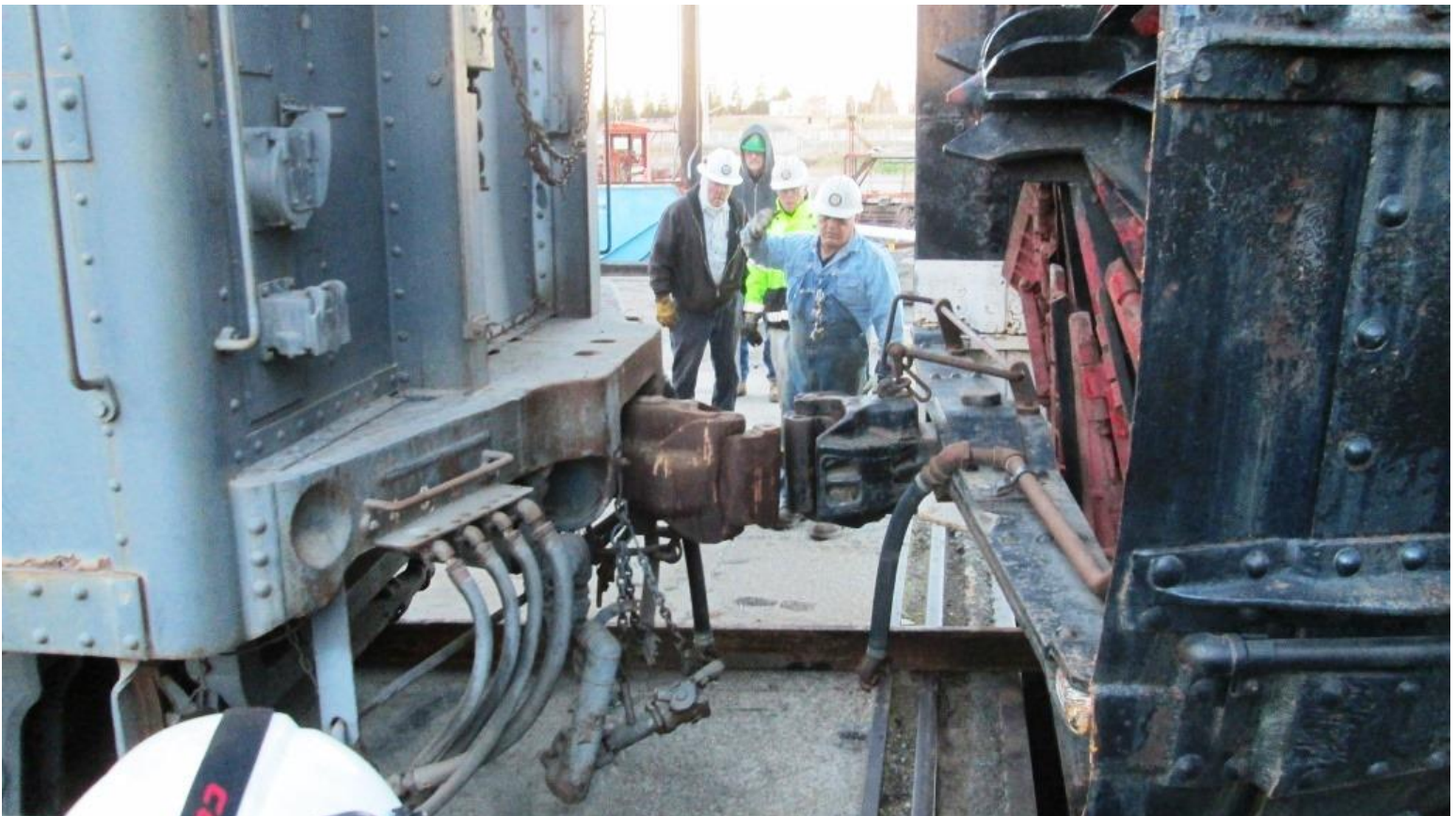


And, again on the Firing Line shed





The dynamometer-car reemerges from the South track to make a hook with the rotary



Al DiPaolo guides the dynamometer-car to a smooth hook with the rotary



Anthony oils the rails as the dynamometer-car moves back onto the South track



Cliff, Pat, and Gene take in all the action from the comfort of their luxury box...



All hooked-up, the rotary moves towards the South Firing Line track



And like, we're done!



Chris pulls the hopper-cars south with the regulator



Frank and Mike F. discover that the switch stand has been hit!



Yikes! The head-block is blown...



The stand is pulled to the side as Joe and Ed fill the shattered end of the head-block with wood-plugs



Joe uses a lining-bar to shove the split-end of the head-block closed as Mike F. and Ed bind the block with lag-screws



The Team makes the necessary adjustments to the switch so that it will operate correctly



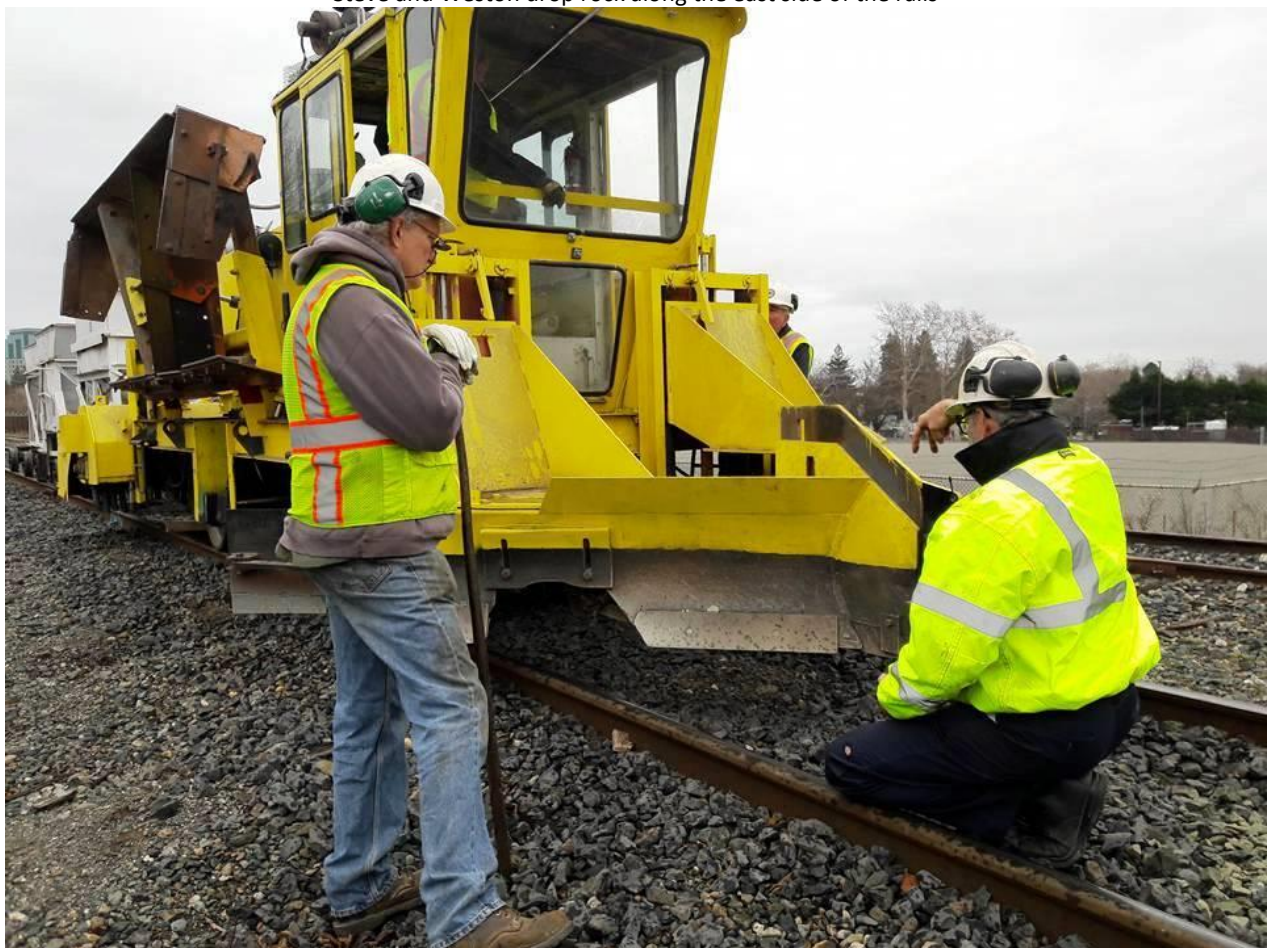
Harry and Steve await the arrival of the hopper cars



With the hoppers on site, Alan, Steve, and Weston prepare to discharge the rock



Steve and Weston drop rock along the east side of the rails



Steve stands-by while Alan measures the height of the raise as Chris adjusts the plows of the regulator