

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for January 14, 2018. It was full steam ahead for your MOW Team this last week with many accomplishments both in the Shops and out on the line. So, before we lose any of that steam, let's get this update started right now.

The MOW week commenced on Tuesday with Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Chris Howard, Matt McCracken, Heather Kearns, Joe Margucci, Mike Harris, Gene Peck, and Alan Hardy forming a team. The priority for the evening was removing the wonky vibrator motor and leaky hydraulic squeeze cylinder from the tamper for repair. Mike H. and Joe took on that task. They separated the components from their hydraulic plumbing and then got them removed from the machine. Up in the cab, Matt set out to replace the broken headlight switch. In doing so, Matt discovered another electrical problem. Neither the dome light and flashing amber warning light on top of the machine were working. So, he began an investigation and found a burned-out wire running from battery to the misbehaving lights. Excellent find, Matt! Chris H. started work on a retractable red-flag that can be installed at Mile Post 0.3 that can be set up when the Team or our trusty track inspectors are occupying the SSRR Mainline. As part of this, a locking mechanism had to be added so that it couldn't be "accidentally" retracted when in use. Chris H. designed it and Cliff welded to the flag structure. No one can doubt that Tuesday was an evening of good progress.

Thursday, Alan, Heather, Chris H., Joe, Frank Werry, and Mike H. spent the evening at the Shops. Upon reflection, it was decided that the retractable red-flag Chris H. was making needed to be lockable in the down position, as well. So, Joe and Mike H. cut several pieces of angle-iron to use as lock hasps. Chris H. drilled holes in the hasps through which the lock can be placed and welded them onto the base of the red-flag. Then he painted the stand and post black and the "target" red. Joe and Frank worked on replacing the burned-out wire Matt found Tuesday on the tamper. It's a bit tricky to replace because the wire snakes its way through the machine. Mike H. made repairs to one of our "Porta-Power" manual hydraulic rams. Heather used a fancy new rolling magnetic "picker-upper" to pick up small pieces of metal, screws, and other objects that might threaten tires. It's quite a nifty tool. In addition, a bucket was filled with switch-grease to use on Saturday for servicing switches. Man, that was an icky job. Yes, Thursday was a productive evening, as well.

On a cold, dark, damp, gray, foggy morning like Saturday, there's nothing better to bolster the spirits of your MOW Team than a lovely, bright, colorful, pink box of yummy doughnut goodness. This, of course, made Alan, Chris H., Clem Meier, Harry Voss, Weston Snyder, Chris Carlson, Heather, Kyle Blackburn, Pam Tatro, and Steve Nemeth quite spirited when they arrived at the Shops. Saturday would be a general track-maintenance day. We're still unable to access equipment in the container. Also, the tamper and two tie-changing machines remain out of service. So, the Team began the annual servicing of switches. Also, the ballast regulator and tie-crane would be deployed to finish spreading rock and remove dead ties on the Sutterville/Zoo line. In Old Sac., Heather, Steve, and Mike F. donned "huff-'n'-puff" machines to clear organic debris from the switches. As greasing of switches is a job primarily reserved for a "newbie" on the Team as a sort of initiation, Chris H. had the pleasure of managing the grease bucket. Chris C., Harry, and Alan got the regulator and crane ready to roll. The tie-crane was buried behind the tie-shear and two hopper cars. So Harry moved the shear with Pam relaying signals from the brakeman guiding the move from the ground. Clem oiled the switch machines while Pam and Weston scrapped dried-up old grease mixed with sand from the switch plates. Soon, Chris C., Harry, and Chris H. in regulator and Alan in the tie-crane were heading out of town while the rest of the Team continued working on switches. Weston took over grease-bucket duty (he still hasn't gotten any grease on him!) while Clem, Pam, Kyle, and Heather removed debris. On the Sutterville/Zoo Line, Chris C. deployed the regulator's wings and pulled rock up from the shoulders of the track and spread it to where it would be more useful. Then, he dropped the plows and spread the rock between the rails. Alan in the crane, along with Steve and Mike F. on the ground, picked up the remaining dead-ties strewn about the line, dropped them on a flatcar, and hauled them off to Setzer where they were added to the growing dead-tie pile. While at Setzer, Mike F. and Steve noticed smoke coming from the train tunnel that runs under I-5. So, they decided to investigate this mystery. They soon discovered a tie was on fire right at the mouth of the tunnel. The alarm-bells were sent out. While waiting for reinforcements, Steve and Mike F. attempted to smother the fire with rock and dirt. Soon, Kyle, Weston, and Heather arrived with proper firefighting tools and, in no time, had the flames extinguished. Once again, your MOW Team saves the day!

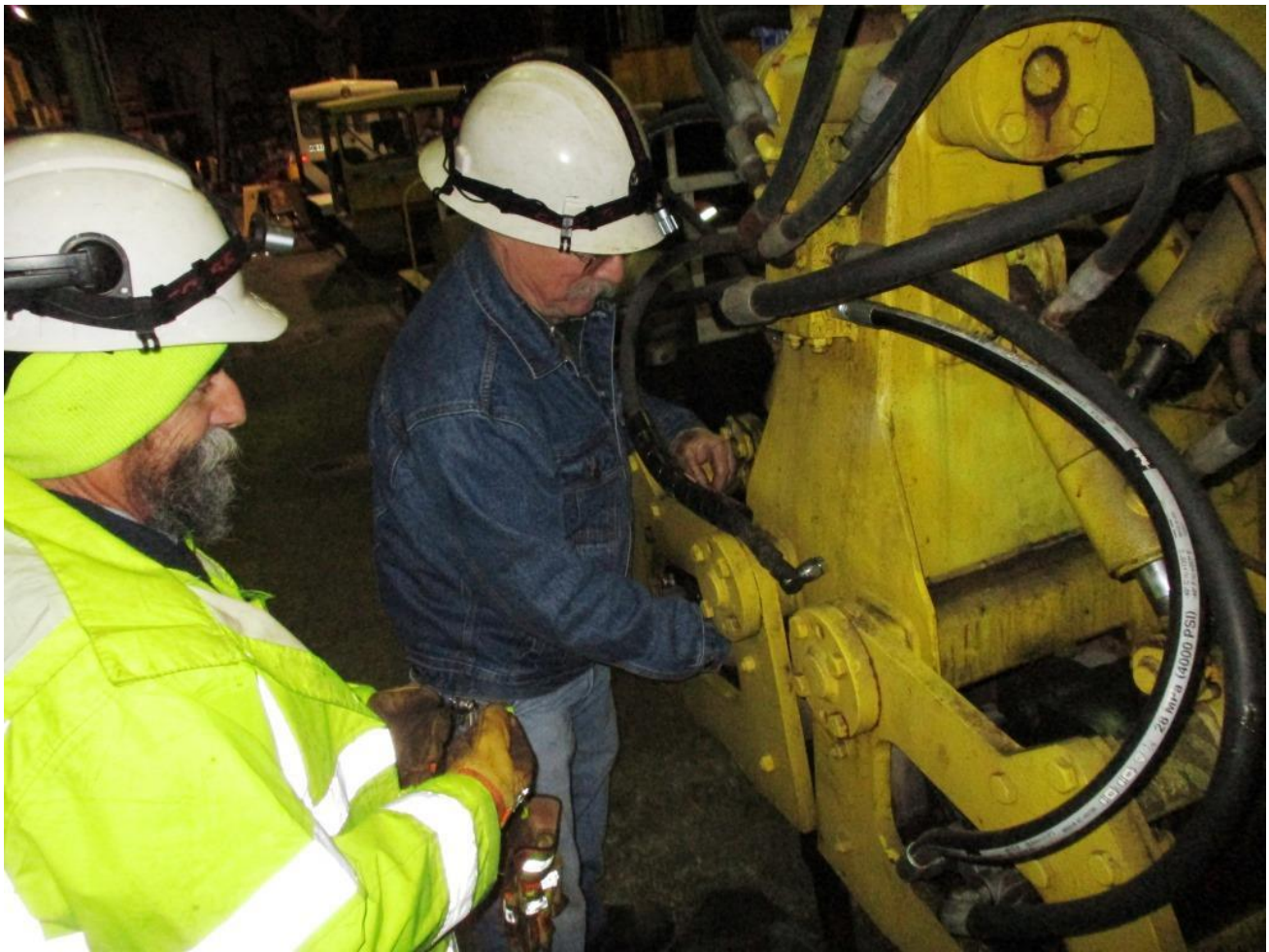
Next, the Team headed to the bridge over I-5 south of Baths to engage in some triage on ties. Steve, Weston, Kyle, and Mike F. plugged and re-spiked several ties missing spikes. Further south, Team Regulator was finishing up its numerous passes over the line with the wings, plows, and boom. It looks fantastic and is ready to receive its first passenger trains. The Team then packed up and headed back to Old Sacramento. The last duty of the day was to install the retractable red-flag that Chris H. worked on. Heather, Mike F., Kyle, Steve, and Weston got it placed and spiked-down. This will prove a great convenience for the Team and our trusty track inspectors as they head out on the line. It was a good day where everything seemed to go right (for a change).

Our good friend Ramsay at the All Aboard Desk has released this month's hour-bar recipients and several members of your MOW Team are amongst them: Chris H. with 250 Hours; Ed Kottal and Steve Wilson with 1,500 Hours; Gene with 4,500 Hours; and Dave Megeath with a whoppin' 9,000 Hours. Many thanks for all your dedication to building a better railroad!

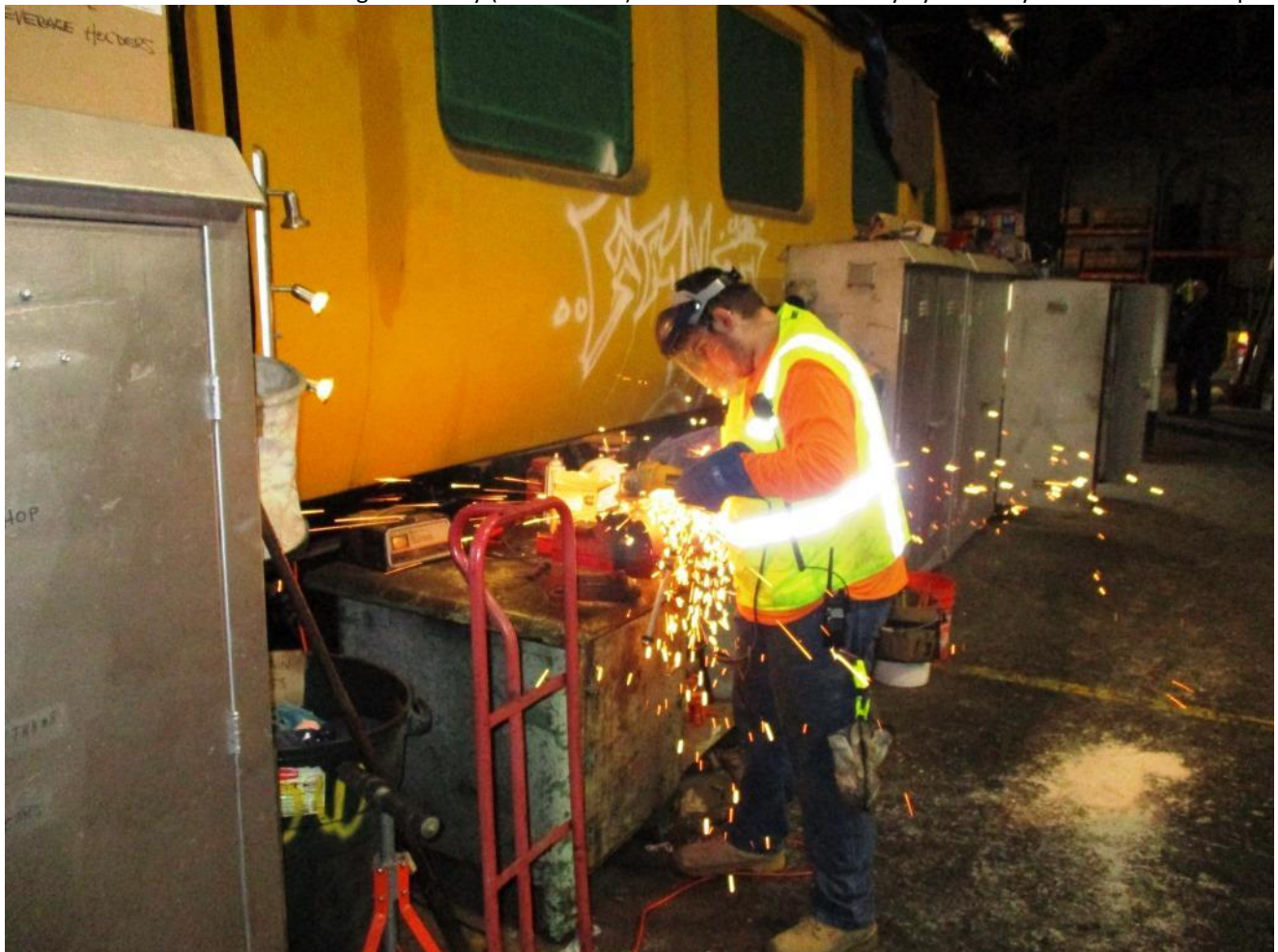
This coming week, at or before 5 o'clock is the call time for Tuesday and Thursday. Saturday, will be another exciting day for your MOW Team starting at 8 o'clock a.m. We're attempting to organize a light-locomotive move down the Sutterville/Zoo line on Saturday (if we can get it all arranged). Thanks to all the dedicated volunteers of the MOW Team and at the CSRM in general for all you do to keep our Museum going!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris C., and Richard.



Joe and Mike H. work on removing the wonky (official term) vibrator-motor and leaky hydraulic cylinder from the tamper



Chris grinding the new locking hasp on the retractable red-flag





Cliff welding the locking hasp onto the retractable red-flag



Detective Matt investigating the mystery of the malfunctioning lights on the tamper



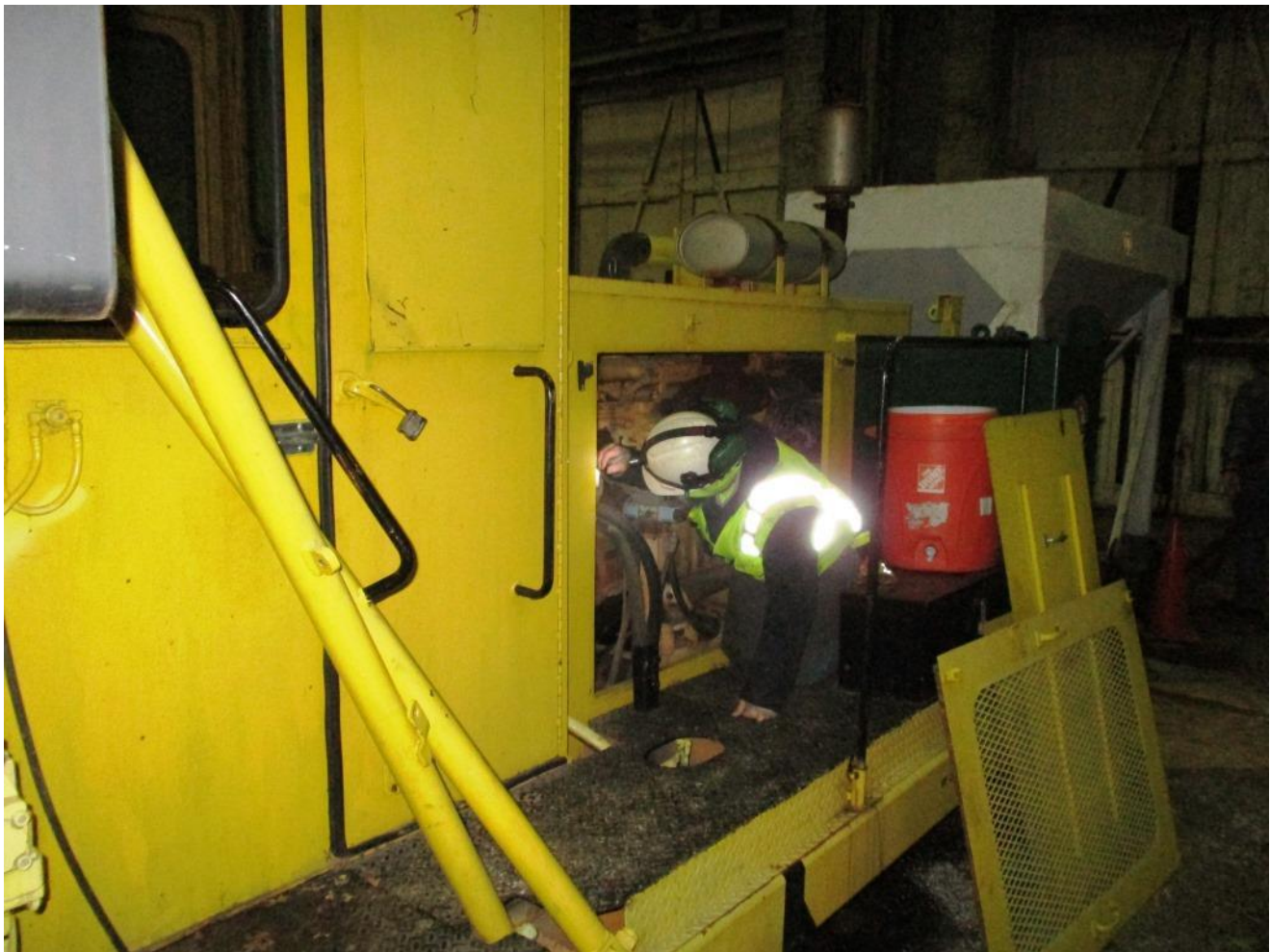


Mike H. making repairs to the Porta-Power unit



Mike H. and Joe cutting angle-iron to use as hasps to lock the red-flag in the retracted position





Joe working on rewiring the malfunctioning lights on the tamper

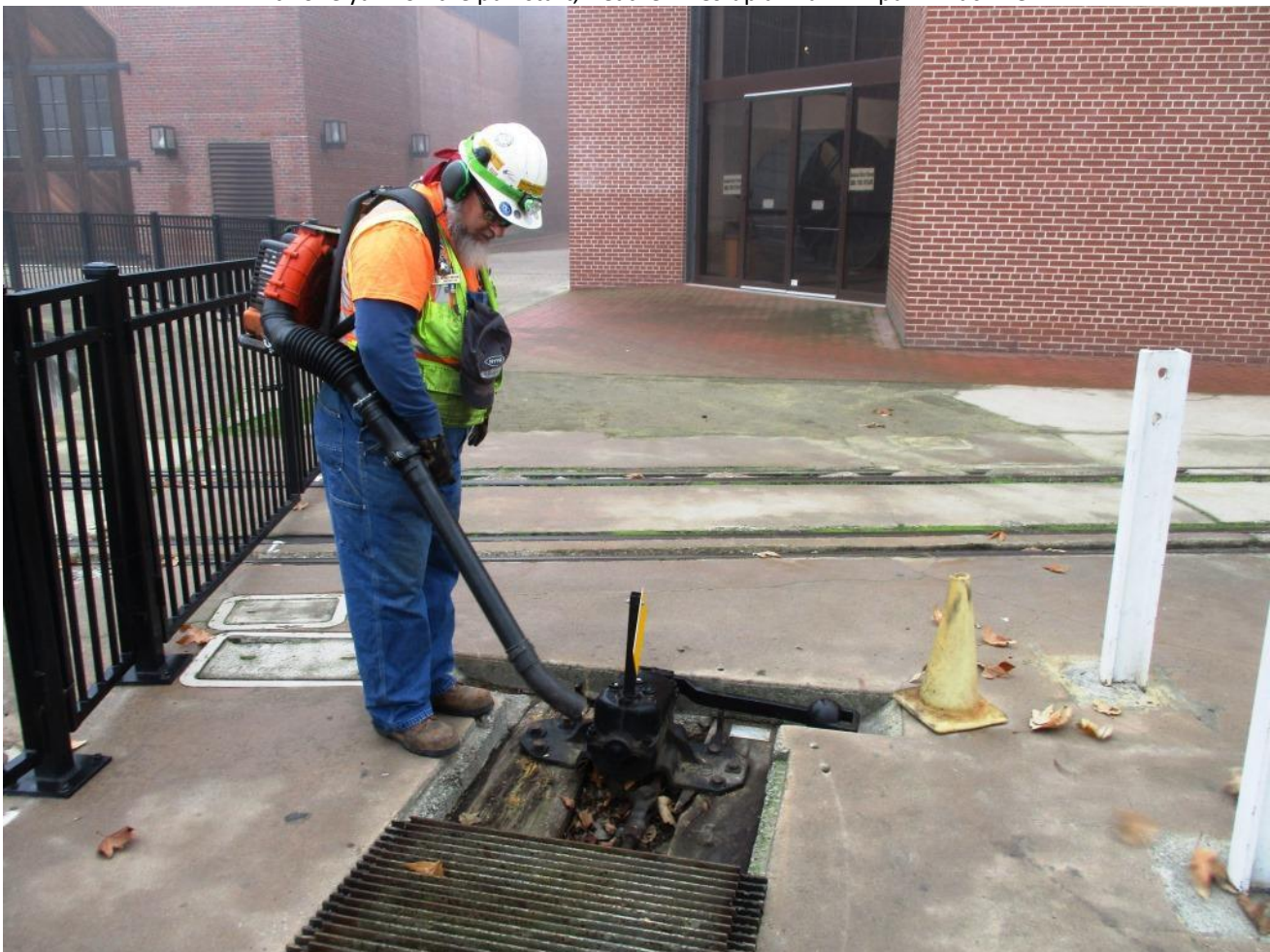


Heather with the handy-dandy magnetic picker-upper tool





With one yank on the pull-start, Heather fires-up a “huff-’n’-puff” machine



Mike F. sends organic debris flying away from Switch 1





Weston scrapes old dried-up grease and sand from the switch components as Chris H. prepares for his inaugural run with the grease bucket



At Switch 2, Steve blows organic debris to kingdom come





Clem oils the switch machine at Switch 1



Chris H. takes Chris C. in the regulator for a spin on the turntable



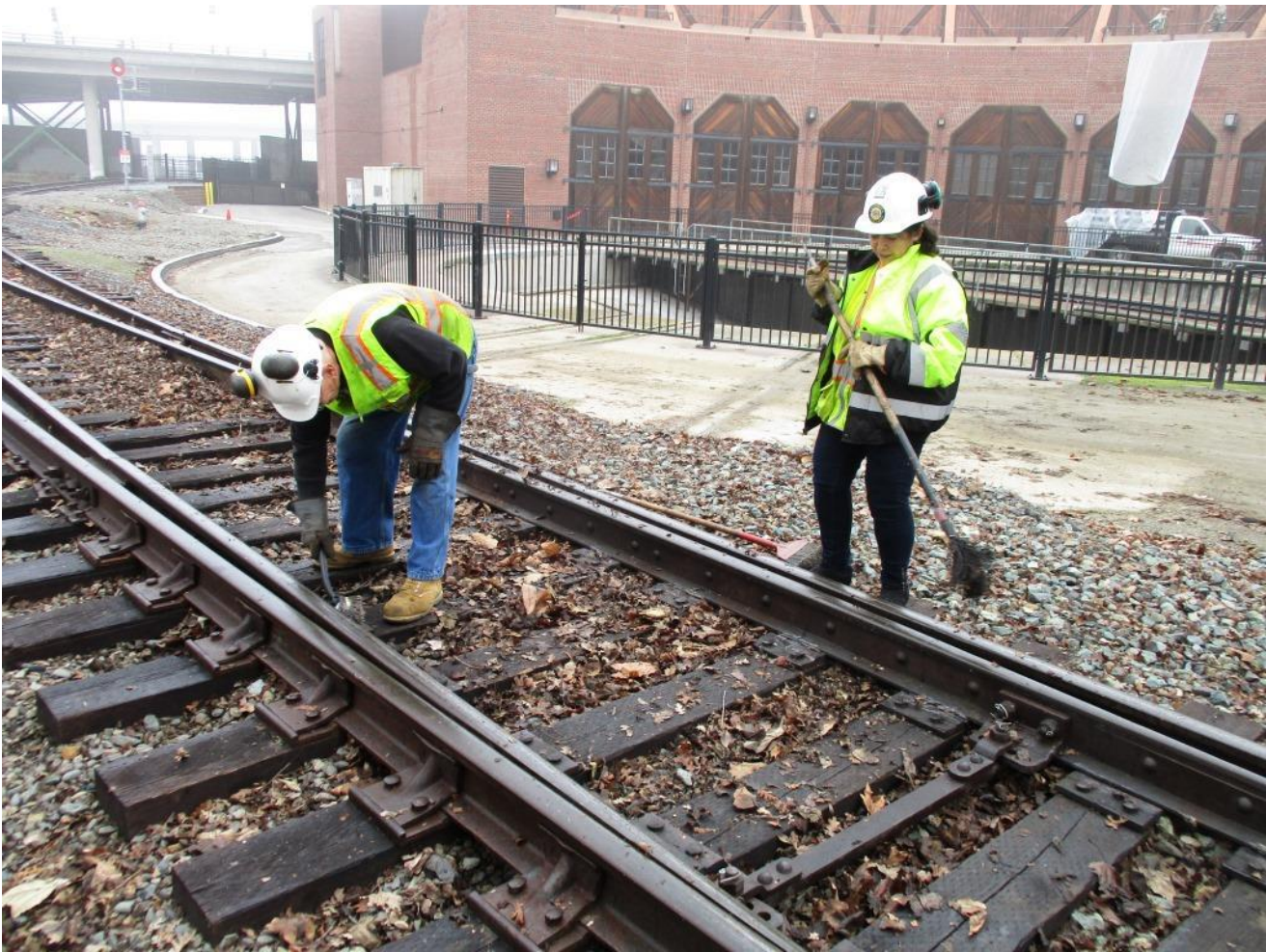


That magic moment has arrived: Chris H. greases the plates at Switch 1



Pam relays signals from the brakeman for Harry in the tie-shear whose vision is obstructed by hopper cars





Clem and Pam clean up Switch 101



With the switch serviced and greased, Clem exercises the switch machine





Alan in the tie-crane stretches out the boom to grab a dead-tie



Excellent train handling by an experienced crew: the regulator and crane working on the same stretch of track





Chris C. in the ballast regulator uses the wing to pull rock up towards the track from the shoulder



Chris C. then drops the plows and spreads the rock





Mike F. grabs some tie-fragments from along the Sutterville/Zoo Line



Mike F. and Steve balance the load on the flatcar





Who is that lurking in the shadows behind you, Mike?



Steve and Mike F. find a fire in the tunnel at Setzer and work to smother the flames



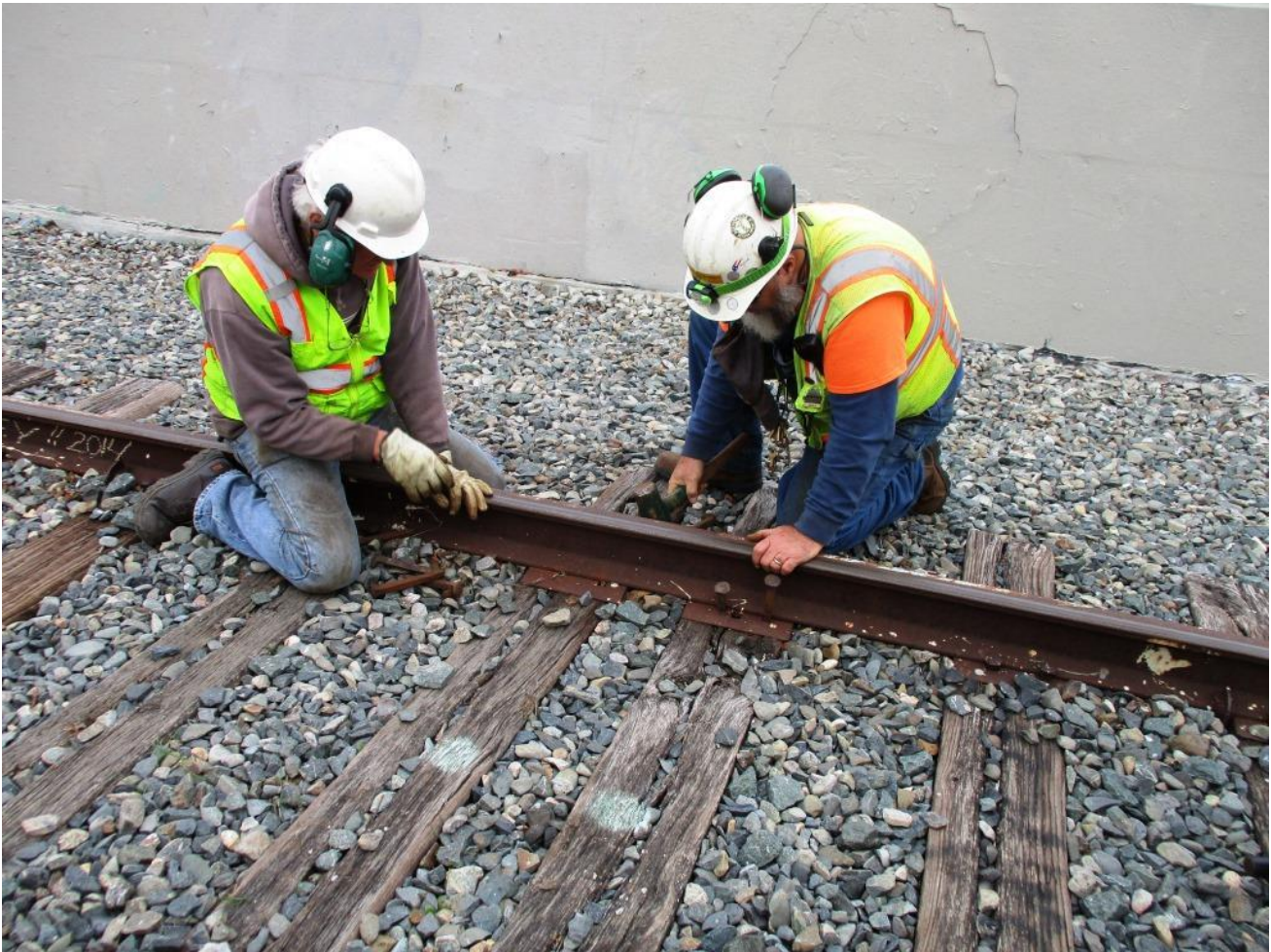


Reinforcements arrive with Weston demonstrating his fire-extinguisher skills



Kyle blasts the flames out of existence





On the I-5 Bridge, Steve and Mike F. plug spike-holes and set spikes



Kyle sets spikes...





...Then Weston drives them home



After numerous passes up and down the line using all the regulator's components, Chris C. declares, "The track is DONE!"





At Mile Post 3.0 in Old Sac., Mike F. holds the retractable red-flag as Kyle attempts to spike it to the tie



Now it's time to bring in the professional: Steve again demonstrates his world-famous as seen on TV windmill spike driving technique





Mike F. drives in the other spike



And, with that, Kyle, Mike F., Steve, Weston, and Heather declare another good job done!