

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for October 20, 2013. It was a “Witches and Switches” (with a few “gnomes” thrown in) week for your MOW Team which worked to correct some defects identified by our trusty track inspectors at some of our turnouts. Also, the SSRR “Spook-o-motive” rolled into week two. So, before any goblins or gremlins infect our machines, let’s get this update rolling!

The mighty Weed Team reconvened from Summer Recess on Tuesday. Mike Taylor, Heather Kearns, and Dave Megeath headed south to survey the Hood Line to see how the lined fared over the summer. Although the garden gnomes had been busy with their green mischief, there was nary a purple martin anywhere in site. In the weeks ahead, the Weedies will wrestle back control of the line from the green menace. It’s important to note that the MOW Weed Team is the lone group that maintains the integrity of this valuable State Parks property. Should the longstanding dream of a train to Hood ever come to fruition, it will be in large part due to the diligence of the dedicate folks of the MOW Weed Team.

Meanwhile, back at the shops, Gene Peck, Pat Scholzen, Mike Harris, Michael Matsumura, Alan Hardy, Frank Werry, and Heather worked on Shops projects. We continued our efforts at organizing our materials inside the building. Michael helped with preparing the new wing-rails that will be machined and fitted for the frog at Switch 19. Frank and Pat worked on getting the rail-rod’s engine to start. A plan was formulated for the repair of the A-6 motorcar and work proceeded on the “new-old” tamper.

Thursday, was another shops day as Heather, Frank and Mike H. gathered for an evening of MOW fun. Two box cars loaded with steam engine parts were sent over to the Shops for use on the Granite Rock 10 project. Also, the fire truck needed to be moved out of the Erecting Shop to clear Track 25 for the WP 913. After that fun, they proceeded with their efforts on rebuilding the hydraulic system “new-old” tamper by snaking a 12 hose for the jacking system out from under the brake mechanism. This was a job and a half as the hose took a very circuitous route through the machine.

Saturday was a busy day for your MOW Team. Chris Carlson, Harry Voss, John Rexroth, Mike Florentine, Clem Meier, Mike T., Frank, Heather, and Alan greeted the rising sun over the Rail Yards with two pink boxes (thanks to Harry and Chris). Fixing switches was the order of the day. So, we gathered up our big bag of tricks and headed down the line. First stop was Switch 13, the ground-throw at the south Clunie crossover. Our trusty track inspectors found that the switch points were not meeting up with the stock-rail properly. We diagnosed the problem and determined that the switch machine needed to be moved by about half an inch to the east. With Switch 13 fixed, Chris, Harry, and Mike F. took the tamper to the area between Broadway and Front Streets to straighten quite a few catawampus ties. Clem, John, Mike T., Frank and Heather headed down the line to work on the switches at Baths – all of which needed adjusting.

In the afternoon, Frank, Heather, John, and Chris went to work trying to clear the defect on Switch 14 (north Miller Park siding). There’s a bit of an issue with the slurry-wall under the levy which has created a “dip” north of the switch. This causes the rails to rise and fall unevenly in that area making it a challenge to match everything up. In addition to making several adjustments to the switch components we tamped the devil out of the area making four passes with the tamper while dodging the Spook-o-motive. We even brought out the pneumatic hand-tampers (which play havoc on your hands) to tamp the head-block and tight spaces around switch parts. We pulled just about everything out of our bag of tricks for this switch but, in the end were unable to get it to function properly. The ultimate solution will require us to shut the line down for a while which can’t be done while Spook-o-motive is running. In the meantime, the switch will remain locked-out for a couple more weeks. With that, we headed back to the Shops to unload the truck and call it a day.

This week, we’ll be meeting as usual on Tuesday in the afternoon and evening, and Thursday at 5 o’clock p.m. in the Shops. Saturday, we’ll serve-up doughnuts at sunrise starting at 8 o’clock a.m. before heading out on the line.

Oh, and by the way, congratulations to MOW Team stalwart and trusty track inspector, Frank Werry for achieving 4,000 hours with the Museum. It’s thanks to all the fantastic volunteers, like Frank, that make this railroad possible!

We’ll see you out on the line!

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Dave watches while Mike T. employs his vegetation surveying skills on the Hood Line



Heather, Frank, and Pat get the rail-rod running



Michael M. moves materials with the yellow forklift



Mike F. and Clem set and re-spike the ground-throw switch at Clunie



Mike F., Clem, John, and Frank make adjustments to the ground throw switch at Clunie



Heather and Mike F. work on resetting the gauge plate of Switch 13 at Clunie



Once a Weedie, always a Weedie. There's no getting away from it...



Clem re-spikes switch plates



At Switch 14, North Miller, Frank and Mike T. shovel rock into the “dip”



Chris uses the pneumatic hand-tamper while Frank shovels in rock