

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way update for November 10, 2013. Hold on to your hard-hats because it was one mega week for your MOW Team. So, let's get this train a-rolling right now!

Tuesday, Mike Taylor and the Mighty MOW Weed Team, Heather Kearns and Dave Megeath, set off on a great adventure south of the I-5 bridge. Pole-saws, hand-saws, chain-saws, and the chipper (as well as chocolate chip cookies and cake) were all part of their arsenal for the battle to come. Their target: a rather aggressive oak tree impeding movement on our line. Dave climbed in his flying bucket with pole saw in hand and began slicing away (in a very arborist-friendly way) at the wayward tree. On the ground, Mike and Heather force-fed the chipper all it could handle. Folks, grooming this tree was a major undertaking but, in the end, the tree succumbed to the might of the Weedies! They have a good time doing an incredible job and deserve all our thanks. It's folks like the Weed Team that make it possible for us to run our trains.

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Bart Pruett, Frank Werry, Harry Voss, Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Gene Peck, and Cliff Hayes, were on hand for an evening of MOW fun. Pat, Gene, and Cliff managed to rebuild the fuel system on the A-6 motorcar by "digging" out the old line which had multiple clogged fuel pumps attached – strange setup. Alan and small crew set off for the Erecting Shop in an attempt to fix the overhead lighting. Frank repaired a malfunctioning generator, while Harry and Bart worked on a number of mechanical issues at our end of the building. It was a good day, indeed!

Thursday afternoon, the State Parks Commission, along with State Parks Director, General Anthony Jackson, and District Superintendent, Dana Jones, were touring our facilities as part of the process for reviewing the Old Sacramento State Historic Park's proposed new General Plan. As the MOW Team is widely recognized as the most dynamic department of the railroad, the Parks folks requested a demonstration of what we do. So, despite there being no doughnuts, Clem Meier, Harry, Frank, Michael Florentine, Heather, and Chris Carlson fired up the MOW Team's repertoire of machines and headed down the line. First, we had to finish some work plating and spiking the ties we changed the previous Saturday. Then, we moved onto the Miller Park Siding where we changed out a particularly bad tie as the train carrying the State Parks folks passed by. The demonstration went very well and all were quite pleased, indeed. Five gold stars for your MOW Team!

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Cliff and Mike Harris were busy finishing up work on the A-6. Then the Team proceeded to pull the right inner tire of the dump truck's dully axel which was flat. Heather and Frank worked on getting our fire truck ready for its big move over to the Museum for display inside during Polar Express.

Saturday, there *were* doughnuts, and plenty of them, to greet Harry, Michael Seachrist, Heather, Frank, Mike Miller, Steve Nemeth, John Rexroth, Chris, Mike F, and newest member of the team, Frederick Carr. This was a day of many tasks starting with running our fire truck over to the Museum. Conductor Frank was in charge of that operation which, of course, went without a hitch. Our fire truck is now displayed on Track 4 inside the History Museum. Then we split into two crews with the goal of cleaning up the line of old dead ties and removing the accumulated organic debris from the track. Chris ran the front-end loader, Harry the dump truck, John operated the man lift consist, and Frank the A-4 motorcar train. Harry, Chris, Michael S., Mike M., and Mike F. worked north of Broadway while Heather, Frank, Steve, John, and Frederick headed south. Team North filled up the dump truck with several loads of dead while Team South used the man lift to tow the flat cars onto which we loaded dead ties from Front Street to Baths. Both teams made several journeys our Setzer Yard adding to our growing pile of dead-tie pile. In the afternoon, Steve was EIC of the rail-mounted air compressor. We used it, along with our wind machines, to blow away masses of organic debris covering our line. Those matted pine needles literally form rugs over our rails. It was an incredibly productive day, indeed. Many thanks to our MOW volunteers for their dedicated service!

This week, we will gather as usual in the afternoon and evening on Tuesday. Thursday evening, we will start operations at 5 o'clock. Saturday, fresh pink boxes will greet the crew at 8 o'clock a.m. It is likely that we will continue with the tie-changing operation especially in the area of MP 1.9 near Switch 16. The Sacramento Southern Railroad is one of the most valuable interpretive programs of our Museum and everyone, from the Director of State Parks down, knows how important the MOW Team is to keeping our railroad running all year long. The MOW Team's efforts are greatly appreciated.

We'll see you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Dave in his flying bucket "grooms" the offending oak



Heather, Mike, and Dave clean up the clippings



Mike and Dave feed the machine...



Chris pull-starts the section gang machine while Clem digs out the tie-ends



Mike F., Heather, Frank, Harry, and Chris pull our "demonstration" tie



The special State Parks Commission train alongside our working area watching our demonstration



Cliff and Mike H. finish up work on the A-6 motorcar



Heather finalizes repairs to our fire truck's gas cut-off valve



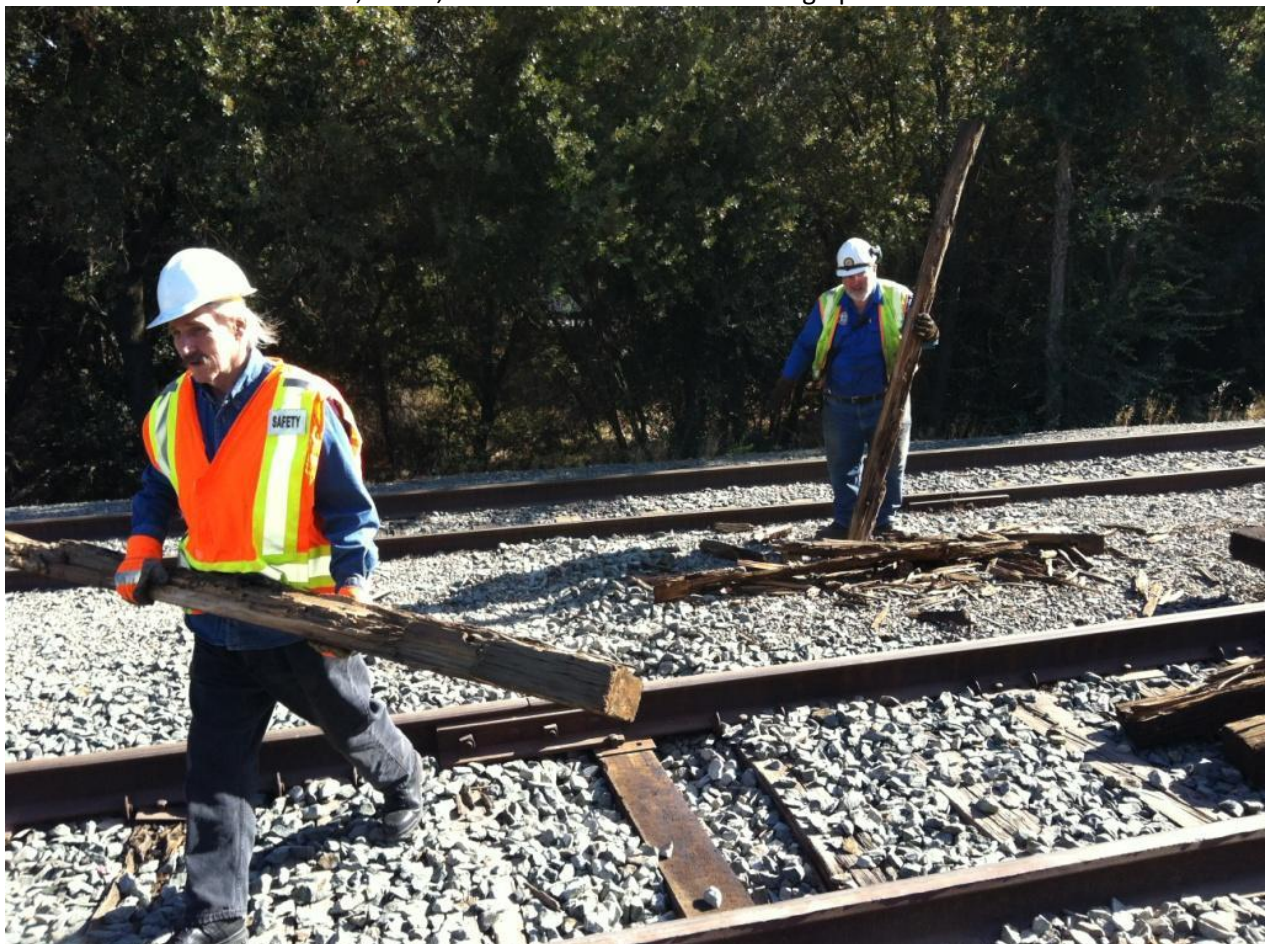
Chris works on changing the tire on the dump truck



Conductor Frank contacting Omaha Dispatch requesting authority to move our fire truck over the diamond



John, Frank, and Frederick work at cleaning up dead ties



This is what our trains were running on? Fred and Frank clean up the splinters that were ties



Steve, Mike M., Mike F., and engineer John back from dumping ties at Setzer



Steve and Chris blow away organic debris from the track