

Greetings!

This is your “Movers” of Way Update for February 16, 2014. A day late and a dollar short, perhaps. But, doesn't mean that your MOW Team wasn't movin' and shakin' last week. Why, we could have put the “Starving Students” out of business with the stuff we moved this last weekend. So, let's move right into it and get this update underway.

Tuesday, the fog descended on the Mighty Mow Weed Team at Hood. The team was there to take-on the blackberry vines infesting our right of way. They was joined by the official State Parks Ornithologist/Environmental Specialist who was there to inspect the work they do and make sure that no bird habitats were being damaged. It goes without saying that Mike Taylor, Dave Megeath, Joe Galipeau, Pat Scholzen, Heather Kearns, and everyone else who works with the Weedies are top-notch professionals in the field despite being only volunteers. The bird-man surveyed their spraying techniques for the elimination of vines, thistles, and other pesky plants and, of course, found no fault. After the evaluation and inspection, the Weedies continued on their blackberry eradication program. All in all, it was a good day down at Hood.

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Heather, Pat, Cliff Hayes, Alan Hardy, Mike Harris, Frank Werry, Gene Peck, and Chris Carlson brought order to chaos. Frank and Mike H. scavenged bolts necessary for the building of the new Whisker Track and then cleaned them up using the wire brush. Pat and Gene installed work-lights on the new-old tamper. Cliff continued his marathon effort at building shields to protect the lights and whistles on our machines from the pillage and plunder of passing roughians in Old Sacramento. Heather fixed a weed-eater. Chris and Alan enjoyed the lengthy monthly meeting on Shops activities. Later, Mike H. and Alan managed to take apart a malfunctioning vibrator-motor on the work-head of the new-old tamper. At the end of the evening, there was much rejoicing and all went home happy.

Thursday, Gene and Cliff installed some of the shields Cliff has made onto the new-old tamper. Then Heather and Gene worked on repairing a wayward hedge trimmer. Frank and Mike H. disassembled a frozen wheel on one of the buggies that will be part of the light-reference system for the new-old tamper to inspect the bearings. Lots of good work by a great crew!

Saturday, the MOW Team became movers. Alan, Clem Meier, Heather, Steve Nemeth, Taka Blackburn, Chris, Michael Florentine, Frederick Carr, Frank, and Harry Voss gathered their strength with a healthy dose of doughnuts prior to all the moving activity. In its quest to find all the toxic nastiness under the Rail Yards, the company handling the environmental remediation suddenly wanted to use ground penetrating radar under the areas where we keep all of our equipment. So, with Steve on Big Green, Frank in the Loader with the fork-attachment on the bucket, and Mike F. and Chris running the yellow electric forklifts, we set out to move all the stuff that the enviro-company asked us to move. Massive bundles of hard-wood ties that had been salvaged from the Amtrak station, including 10, 11, 12 and 13 footers, had to be moved and organized. All the “OTM” (other track materials) positioned along the west side of the Boiler Shop needed relocating. Many of the ties were loose which meant they had to be organized and moved by hand. This may sound like easy work but, folks, believe me. It was hard labor. Taka and Fred did an incredible job of keeping us organized. As all this stuff will have to be moved several times, it made no sense to leave everything loose. Meanwhile, Heather took the opportunity to order to the defiant plant life around the building.

By the end of the day, we were wiped-out. But, we got so much more done than we expected. In fact, we got the job done. Now the enviro-company can come in and do what it does. Fortunately for the Museum and State Parks, we've got an incredible dedicated crew of volunteers who are willing to spend their free time handling these tasks. Can you imagine how much it would cost if a crew had to be hired to do this work? Your “Movers” of Way Team is saving the Museum, State Parks, and the Foundation countless thousands of dollars week in and week out. They deserve the gratitude of all.

This week, we'll be movin' and shakin' again. Tuesday, the crew will be meeting at the normal times in the afternoon and evening. Parking along the west side of the building may be an issue as the enviro-company will be penetrating the ground with its radar. Just use common sense and stay out of their way. Thursday, we'll be meeting at the Shops as usual at around 5 o'clock p.m. Saturday appears to be shaping up into another day of moving stuff back from where we just moved it. But, not to worry, there will be doughnuts. Again, many thanks to all the fantastic folks who keep our operation moving!

We'll see you in the Shops,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Bird-man, Mike T., and our trusty Chevy Truck in the fog at Hood



Mike H. and Frank working on bolts for the Whisker Track





Gene and Pat installing work-lights on the new-old tamper



Mike H. using the press to press-out the bearing from the vibrator motor on the work-head of the new-old tamper





Gene and Cliff installing protective shields over the lights and horn on the new-old tamper



Gene and Heather fixing a hedge trimmer





Alan, with tie-tongs in hand, works with Frank in the loader with the forks attachment moving loose ties



Fred and Taka clean up an area from which we moved out OTM





You can take Heather out of the Weed Team but you can't take the Weed Team out of Heather



Mike F. stacking 10-foot ties by hand





The exchange of ties: Chris on the yellow forklift hands over a bundle of ties to Steve in Big Green



Forklift traffic jam