

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for February 25, 2018. This week, your MOW Team made progress on a variety of fronts. So, let's get this update fired-up before all progress is brought to a halt.

Tuesday started early for Alan Hardy and Kyle Blackburn. One of the four bridges down on the Hood Line was in danger of collapsing. So, State Parks hired a contractor to take it down. But first, we wanted to salvage the rail and joint-bars in particular on the bridge. Alan and Kyle headed down there to remove the joint-bars and load them into the truck. The rails, then, were free to be removed easily by the contractor. In the evening, Heather Kearns, Chris Howard, Joe Margucci, Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Dave Wolf, Frank Werry, Gene Peck, Mike Harris, and Chris Carlson joined Alan and Kyle in the Shops. Chris C. led the crew over to Old Sacramento with the goal of retrieving the tie-shear. You may recall that, some weeks ago, we removed the shear's "kicker" hydraulic cylinder to send it out for repair. Well, it's been fixed and is ready to be reinstalled on the machine. But, the tie-shear was buried up on the 150 Track behind the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger, tie-crane, ballast regulator, and several ballast hopper-cars. The Team would spend the evening opening up, moving, and switching around all these machines and cars. Soon, Chris C. had the shear positioned on the 560 Interchange Track. Conductor Heather contacted the UP dispatcher in Omaha and negotiated a quick transit for Chris in the shear over the UP Main. The Team then put all the other machines away and headed back to the Shops to take on the important work of the evening: assemble binders for Part 214 Training which was being held on Wednesday night.

Speaking of Part 214, the federally required annual Roadway Worker Safety Training took place on Wednesday evening in the Museum's East Theater. Fifty-eight of the theater's seats were taken by representatives from MOW, Signal Department, and Interpretive Handcar Program. Code of Federal Regulations Title 49 Chapter II Part 214.343(b) requires all roadway workers to undergo initial or recurrent training once every calendar year on the on-track safety rules and procedures that they must follow. Luckily, there was lots of caffeine and sugar on hand...

Thursday, while Chris C. represented MOW at the SSRR Management Committee meeting, Heather, Chris H., Joe, Ed Kottal, Frank, Kyle, and Mike H. spent the evening setting the stage for Saturday's outing on the line. All our machines were thirsty for fuel so, the Team loaded up two 55-gallon drums of red-diesel into the truck and headed to Old Sacramento. Many machines were moved and pumped full of fuel. Then, the Team headed up to the scarifier-inserter which, on Tuesday night, would not start. After a thorough investigation, the mechanically inclined MOW Team figured out what was going on and were able to address the problem. Indeed, these folks are particularly talented to be able to make these determinations and repairs long after the sun had set in the dark! With the tasks in Old Sac. complete, the Team headed back to the Shops to continue staging for Saturday. No question, Thursday was another successful evening for your MOW Team!

Alan, Joe, Clem Meier, Bill Hastings, Steve Nemeth, Michael Florentine, Mike Taylor, Heather, Matt Blackburn, Chris C., and Weston Snyder gave their Saturday to Maintenance of Way. Whether it was the camaraderie, the fun of changing out rotten old ties, or the doughnuts that brought them out, we'll never know. Well, we kind of do – it's the doughnuts. Anyway, Heather was EIC for the day. She briefed the Team on the plan of the day – back to Baths for more tie-replacement. But first, the Team would head to Old Sacramento to secure the "grade-crossing" of the 560 Track we built a couple weeks ago. Alan, Steve, Clem, Joe, Bill, Matt and Weston used boat-spikes to bolt-down the ties used as the crossing. Then, Mike F. on Green Machine 2 (GM2), grabbed a bundle of ties being stored up behind the Museum and loaded them on a flatcar spotted at I Street. Heather, Joe, Bill, Steve, Weston, and Matt all headed to Baths to begin the day's main task. Alan and Clem remained in Old Sac. where they worked with Mike F. on GM2 to move a dozen sticks of rail behind the Museum. The MOW Team's two rough-terrain forklifts are remarkable machines. Big Green and GM2 are our most valuable road machines. Without them, we couldn't do our job and, in the able hands of an expert operator like Mike F., these huge, powerful machines are able to make the most delicate of moves. GM2 would be used throughout the day. At Baths, Steve started by pulling spikes with the hydraulic spike-puller. Joe came in with the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger and nimbly pulled marked old rotten ties. Weston, Bill, and Matt deployed new ties for insertion. Heather and Bill used shovels and mattocks to dig-out the tie-cribs. Weston, Steve, Bill, and Matt then lined up the new ties for insertion. Meanwhile, Mike T. joined the Team at Baths after having spent the morning at Hood surveying the area sprayed by the Weed Team a few weeks ago. Steve climbed on the 125 and began inserting the new ties into the empty cribs. Joe and Heather would place tie-plates as Steve nipped-up the rails using the 125's rail-jacks.

Following lunch, the tie-insertion effort continued. As the new ties were pulled in, plates were placed. Mike F. arrived at Baths with the mighty GM2 following his morning efforts in Old Sac. moving rail to load-up the dead ties removed in the morning which Matt had lined up ready for removal. Next, Bill, Matt, Mike T., and Joe set spikes. As spikes are hammered in, it's necessary to nip-up the tie against the base of the rail. Steve fired up the hydraulic power unit and began driving the set spikes with the hydraulic spike-driver. While Bill skillfully moved the Kalamazoo shoving the hydraulic unit as spikes were driven, Joe and Mike F. traded off using the hydraulic spike-drive with Steve. It was time to return to Old Sac. First, Mike F. on GM2, took the dead ties to Setzer to add to our dead tie pile. In Old Sac., Mike F. consolidated the remaining new ties onto one flatcar again proving the versatility of the Green Machines. The equipment was stowed, and the Team headed back to the Shops. Heather did a fantastic job as EIC. It was an excellent day with an amazing, talented crew who do so much to build a better railroad.

This coming week, the MOW Team will meet as usual on Tuesday and Thursday evenings starting at or before 5 o'clock p.m. Saturday, the second iteration of **Part 214 training will occur at 9 o'clock a.m. in the Museum's East Theater.** Please remember to bring your 214 binders. Those already trained will meet at the Shops at 8 o'clock for more doughnuts and MOW fun out on the line. Again, thanks to everyone!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris C., and Richard.



The Team assembles in Old Sacramento to unbury the tie-shear and move it over to the Shops



Chris C. in the tie-shear awaits a green signal indication to cross the UP Main



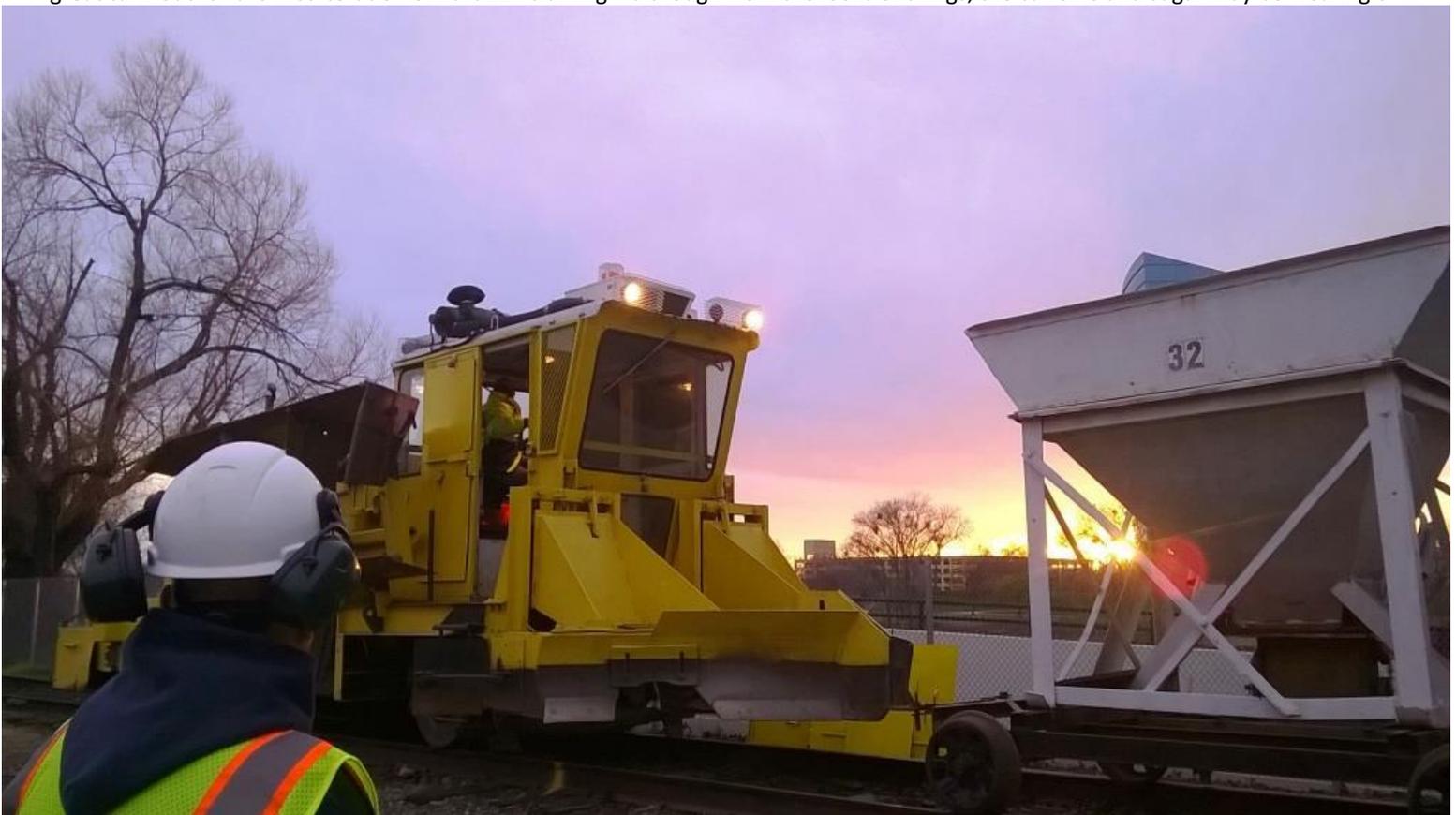
Joe, Frank, Chris C., Dave, and Chris H assemble Part 214 binders



At Part 214 training, Weed Team Captain Mike T. presents a seminar on Pesticide Hazard Communication (with a little Arctic geology thrown in)



A great turn-out for the first iteration of Part 214 training – although from the looks of things, the caffeine and sugar may be wearing off...



Joe moves the ballast regulator for fueling



As darkness descends, the Team swarms the scarifier-inserter to figure out why the darned thing wouldn't start



If it's Saturday, it must mean doughnuts – Mike F. and Weston undertake the ceremonial exchange of the sacred pink box



Up on the 560 Interchange Track, the Team secures the grade-crossing with boat-spikes



Alan guides Mike F. on GM2 to grab a pile of ties stored in the difficult to access area between the 560 and 150 Tracks



Weston, Clem, Matt, and Bill continue spiking down the grade-crossing



Mike brings GM2 down the steep, dirt ramp carrying while carrying a heavy load of ties ready to load them on a flat car at I Street



Matt guides Mike F. on GM2 into position to set the ties on the flatcar



At Baths, Steve employs the hydraulic spike-puller to remove spikes on ties being replaced as Bill help by handling the hydraulic hose



Joe brings in the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger and gets the tie-exchanging underway



Action shot: Bill, Matt, and Weston drop new ties off the flatcar for insertion



Weston and Steve then line the new ties up with the empty cribs for the 125 to pull in



Steve on the 125 pulls a brand new tie under the rails



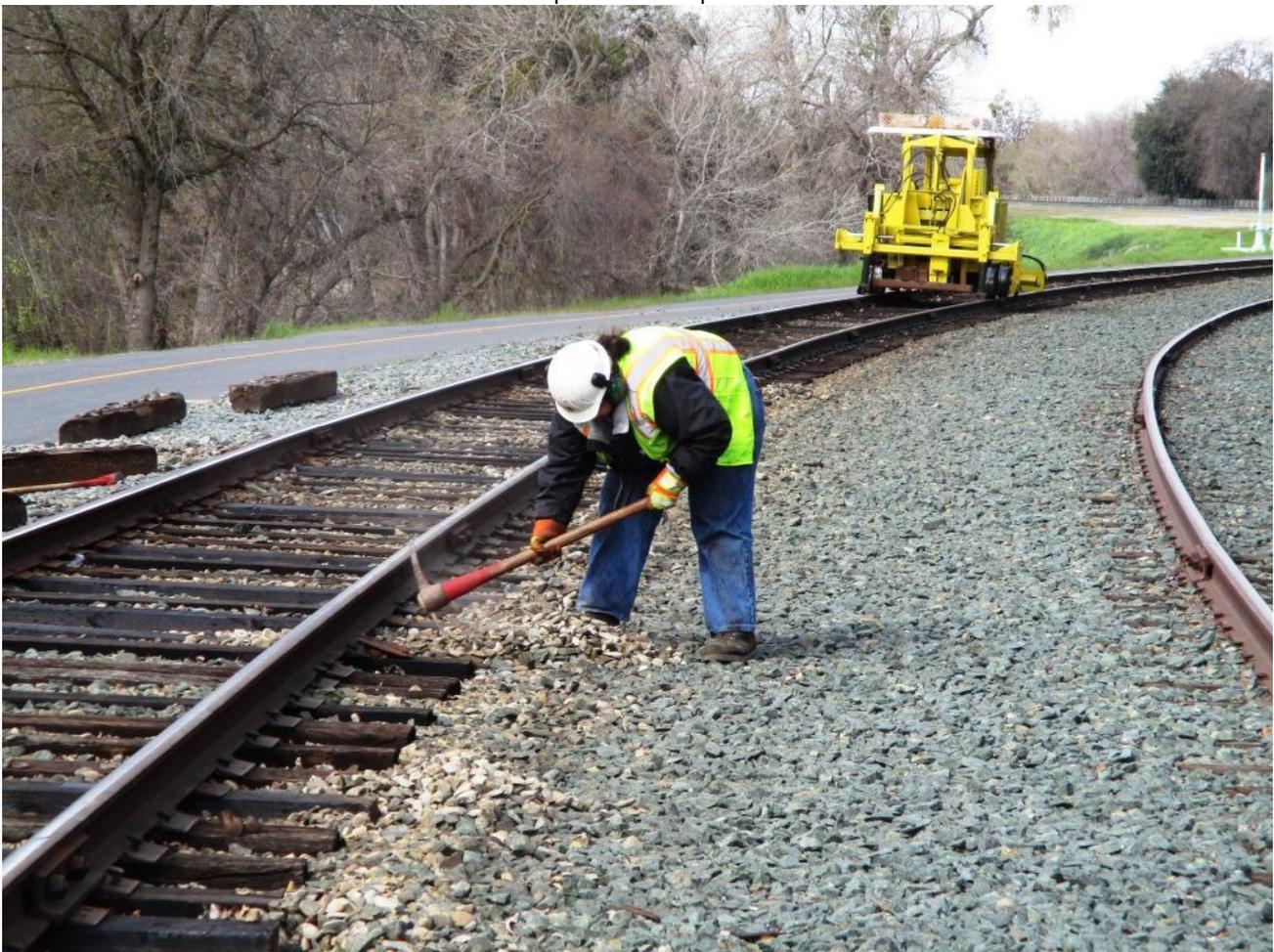
With the 125's track-jacking system lifting the rails slightly, Joe is able to squeeze a tie-plate between the tie and base of the rail



Heather inserts a tie-plate as the 125 jacks-up the rail slightly



Joe sets spikes as Bill nips-u the tie



Heather spreads out the mounds of ballast rock which formed as a result of pushing the new ties under the rails



Steve deploys the hydraulic spike-driver as Bill maneuvers the hydraulic hose



As spiking work progress north, Bill moves the Kalamazoo which was shoving the flatcar with the hydraulic power unit



Joe is next to get his hands on the hydraulic spike-driver



Everyone cheers as Mike F. and GM2 arrive on site!



Matt lines up old rotten dead ties for Mike F. on GM2 to pick up for disposal



Matt and Bill give a slight lift to the dead tie so that Mike F. on GM2 can get the forks under it



With dead-ties loaded on GM2, Mike F. works with Steve to nip-up the tie for spiking



Matt works as a human ballast regulator to fill in holes that may be trip hazards



Back in Old Sac., Mike F. on GM2 removes the remaining ties on one flatcar to consolidate them with the ties on the other



Green Machine 2 consolidates ties on one flatcar. It's hard to imagine how the MOW program could survive without this amazing machine