

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for February 7, 2016. Hang on to your hardhats! It was a big week for your MOW Team complete with more doughnuts than you can shake a stick at! So, before we come down from that sugar-high, let's get this update started.

The Mighty Weed Team was rolling in high-gear on both Tuesday and Thursday this week. On Tuesday, Mike Taylor and Heather Kearns finished-up work on 65-gallon spray-rig rebuild. They conducted a "hydrostatic" test of the rig to find any leaks in the new plumbing. Once completed, they took it out into the Rail Yards for an operational test (with water). It preformed like a champ! All who worked on the rebuild, Mike T., Heather, Dave Megeath, Cliff Hayes, Mike Harris, and Frederick Carr, deserve a round of applause for this accomplishment. On Thursday, Dave joined Mike T. at Hood where they deployed the big rail-mounted spray-rig. It's prime defoliant season down there. With all the rain, the weeds are on the march. Mike T. and Dave unleashed 185 gallons of de-greener on the weedy foe. Those who have taken Part 214 training know that Mike T. and the Weedies follow strict government regulations and obtain certifications for the application of chemical defoliant. And they do an amazing job. Their hard work keeps the Hood dream alive!

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Gene Peck, Mike H., Fred, and Frank Werry first solved the world's problems around MOW Team's lounge space heater before setting off to solve some of our mechanical problems. Fred removed two faulty hydraulic hoses on the tie-shear for replacement. Then, he scurried under the A-4 motorcar to change the oil. Mike H. took apart the mobile air-compressor's pull-start which was not pulling or starting. Well, after spending some quality-time with Mike H., it now pulls and starts.

Thursday, Mike H., Frank, Fred, Heather, and Alan kept the Erecting Shop's lights on late into the evening. Alan met with Team members to discuss the plan for continuing the rail replacement/upsizing project at Front Street. It's a huge project and requires a well-considered strategy. This included the staging that needed to be done. Mike H. and Frank headed over to the Boiler Shop to load the MOW Team's trusty Chevy Truck with the joint-bars, the rail-saw, and rail-drill. Then, Mike H. on the Big Green Machine brought a 55-gallon drum of red diesel into the building to fuel the back-hoe, front-end loader, and Big Green. All three would be needed on Saturday. Quartermaster-in-Chief, Heather, had procured two new hydraulic hoses for the tie-shear. These were big hoses, one of which came right off the hydraulic pump, which made them bit awkward to install. But, Fred persevered and by evening's end, the shear's Detroit Diesel was revved-up and hydraulic system pressurized. No leaks! Hurrah! We were ready to roll for Saturday. A great evening, indeed.

The miracle of the *Feeding of the Multitude* occurred in the Erecting Shop on Saturday morning. Three small pink boxes put forth dozens of doughnuts for the MOW Team. And the miracle was needed as a near record setting number of Team members showed up for the big rail replacement project. An entire time-sheet was filled up by Alan, Clem Meier, Heather, Steve Nemeth, Mike Willis, Chris Machado, Ed Moriarty, Michael Florentine, Chris Carlson, Pam Tatro, John Rexroth, Frank, Jose Gomez, Mike H., Harry Voss, Al Utzig, and Joe Galipeau – almost too many to keep track of. Also, it was a pleasure to welcome Tom Freeburger back to the MOW Team as well as our newest member, Josh Bailey, Tom's grandson. (If I missed anybody, it's because you didn't sign in.) After feasting on doughnuts, the Team set off to pick-up where we left off two weeks ago on the rail replacement/upsizing project between Front Street and Switch 14 (north switch at Miller Park). It was machine-heavy day with the backhoe, front-end loader, Green Machine, Jackson 125 tie-exchanger, scarifier-inserter, Kalamazoo tug, A-6 motorcar with work-train, and two trucks all out on the line. Tom and Josh started pulling spikes on the ties being pulled. Al on Big Green, Harry on the back-hoe, and Mike H. in the loader lifted the assembled rails so that Chris M., Jose, Steve, and John could remove the ties that were pulled last week. Chris C. brought in the Jackson 125 and pulled more ties. Ed, Clem, Steve, Pam, and Frank began removing bolts and taking and disconnecting the old east-rail at each end. Heather rolled the scarifier in and began digging out the cribs of the removed ties. The mechanical spike-puller was deployed but, the throttle would not stay open. It had to be operated manually which delayed thing. In the meantime, Clem pulled spikes by hand and got the job done before mechanical puller was working – a testament to man over machine. With the east rail now detached, Mike H. in the loader grabbed it and pulled it out of the way. Then, under Alan's direction, Al on Big Green, Harry on the back-hoe, and Mike H. in the loader lifted the new east rail (weighing 4,500 pounds) and set it in place. A fourth stick of rail was needed to complete the string but, first, it had to be cut. So, the "measure twice and cut once" rule was implemented and the rail-saw brought in. Jose fired-up the saw. The rail-saw throws out a fountain of sparks towards the operator as it cuts. So Steve used a shovel as a spark-shield to deflect the sparks away from Jose. Once cut, Mike F., Chris C., and Josh hooked the rail-drill onto the newly cut rail to cut new bolt-holes. Mike H., Mike W., and Mike F. then bolted it together and Steve tightened it all down. At this point, the Team packed-up and returned to Old Sacramento and the Shops. Phew! So much was going on that it was tough to keep track of everything. There are lots of extra pictures of all the action this week (below) which tell a more complete story than allowed for in the limited space here. It was a great day punctuated by many accomplishments by this incredible Team of volunteers. We're right on schedule.

Mark your calendars. **Part 214 "Roadway Worker Safety Training"** will be offered twice this year: **Wednesday, February 17th at 6 o'clock p.m. and Saturday, February 27th at 9 o'clock a.m. in the Museum's East Theater.** This training is required by federal law those working with MOW, the Signal Department, amongst others. This coming week, the Weed Team will be working on the SSRR Mainline Tuesday using the 65-gallon spray-rig. Meet at the Shops at 8:30 a.m. The Tuesday and Thursday Shops crews will gather at or before 5 o'clock. Saturday, the Team will continue the rail replacement project. We'll change out west rail. More rail-saw action is promised. You won't want to miss it!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris C., and Richard.



Fred opens the plug on the oil pan of the A-4



Mike H. rebuilds the mobile air-compressor's pull-start



Fred installs the new hydraulic hoses on the tie-shear



Frank fuels the back-hoe



Mike H. grabs the "stinger (for lifting rail) with Big Green



Ties at the north end being removed in order to lower the road-bed. The existing 75 lb. rail is 1¼ inches shorter than 110 lb. rail replacing it



Al on Big Green lifts the assembled replacement rail so that Chris C. on the Jackson 125 can remove ties



Spinning the 125: Chris C. and Chris M. spin the 125 so that it can start pulling ties to the west



Mike F. admires the line-up of rail-lifting machines: Harry on the back-hoe, Al on Big Green, and Mike H. in the loader



John and Steve move more dead ties out of the way



Chris C. on the 125 pulls ties out from under the track while Chris M. clears them out of the way



Then, Chris M. takes a turn on the 125



Heather in the scarifier digs out the tie-cribs under Alan's direction



Tom and Josh get the dead-ties out of the way as they are pulled



Deploying the spike-puller entails attaching the spike-pulling ram. It's a four-man job to move this awkward and heavy beast – a simple task for Chris C., Steve, Mike F., Chris M.



Uh oh. That looks like trouble. Heather and Joe conspire...



Mike F. gets the spike puller working but, Chris M. has to operate the throttle manually



Meanwhile, Clem proves that man is mightier than machine and gets the spikes along the east-rail pulled...



Because the joint has been taken apart and the rails out of alignment, Steve uses a lining bar to hold the rail in place so that Mike W. and Chris M. can move the spike-puller to a place where it can be removed from the track



Chris M. guides the spike puller as Al on Big Green comes in to grab it off the track



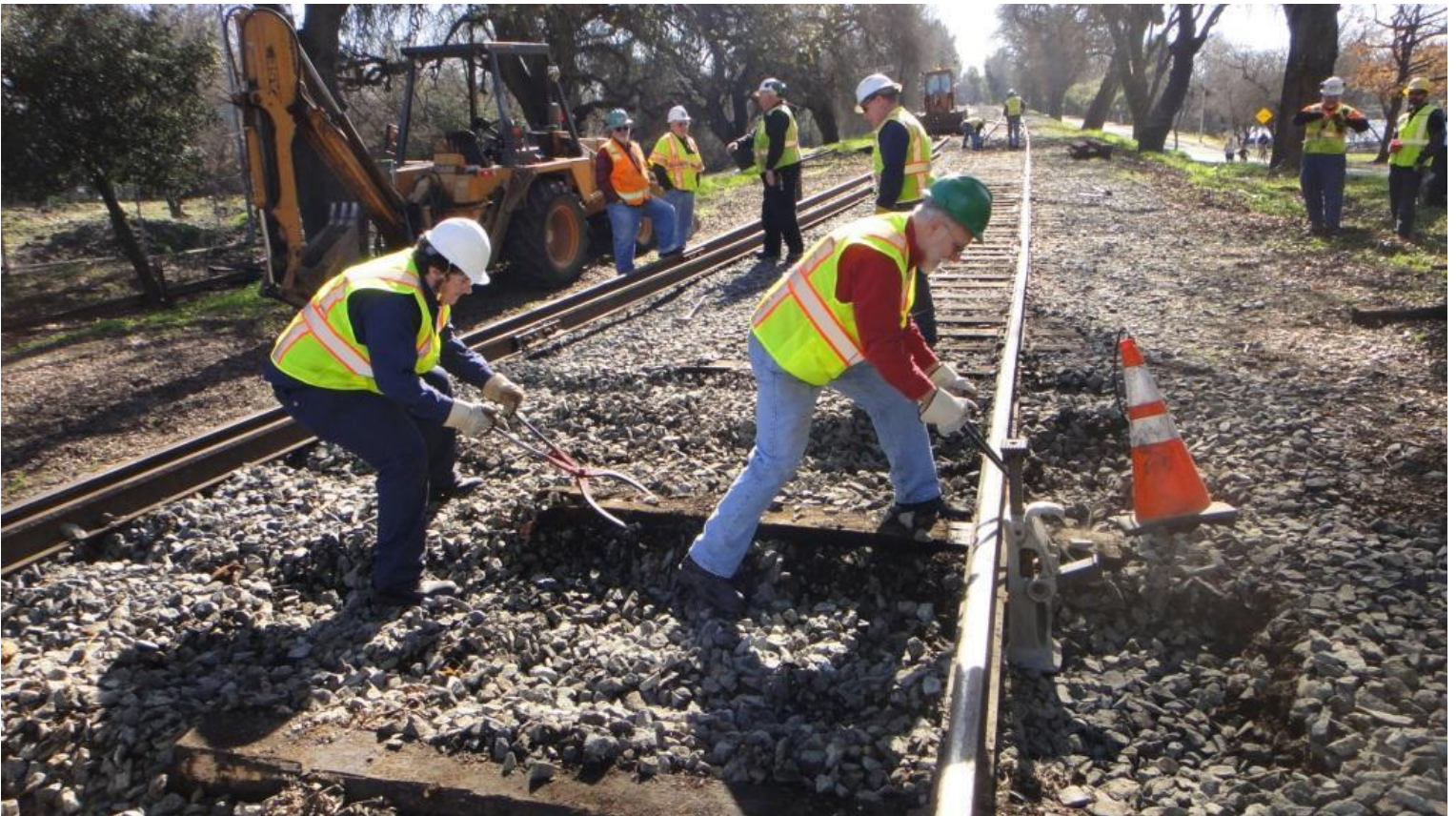
Mike H. in the loader removes the old east-rail



Mile Post 1.65 on the move!



Well, it looks like we're committed...



Josh and Tom remove the final ties at the north end of the work by hand



Ready? Set. 1, 2, 3 – GO! Alan directs Al on Big Green, Harry on the back-hoe, and Mike H. in the loader as they lift, in unison, the new east-rail into place



Steve, Ed, and Mike F. prepare joint-bars to attach the new rails up to the track



The "stinger" Big Green supports the new east rail as Mike F., Steve, and Ed line the rails up in order to bolt together



As the track heats up, it expands. So, Steve slathers grease on the rail-ends which will help the with thermal expansion within the joint



Chris guides the last stick of rail into place. Jose stands ready with the rail-saw as it needed to be cut in order to fit



It's a MOW Team tradition for the "newbie" to experience the grease bucket. Josh steps right up to the challenge of this rite-of-passage...



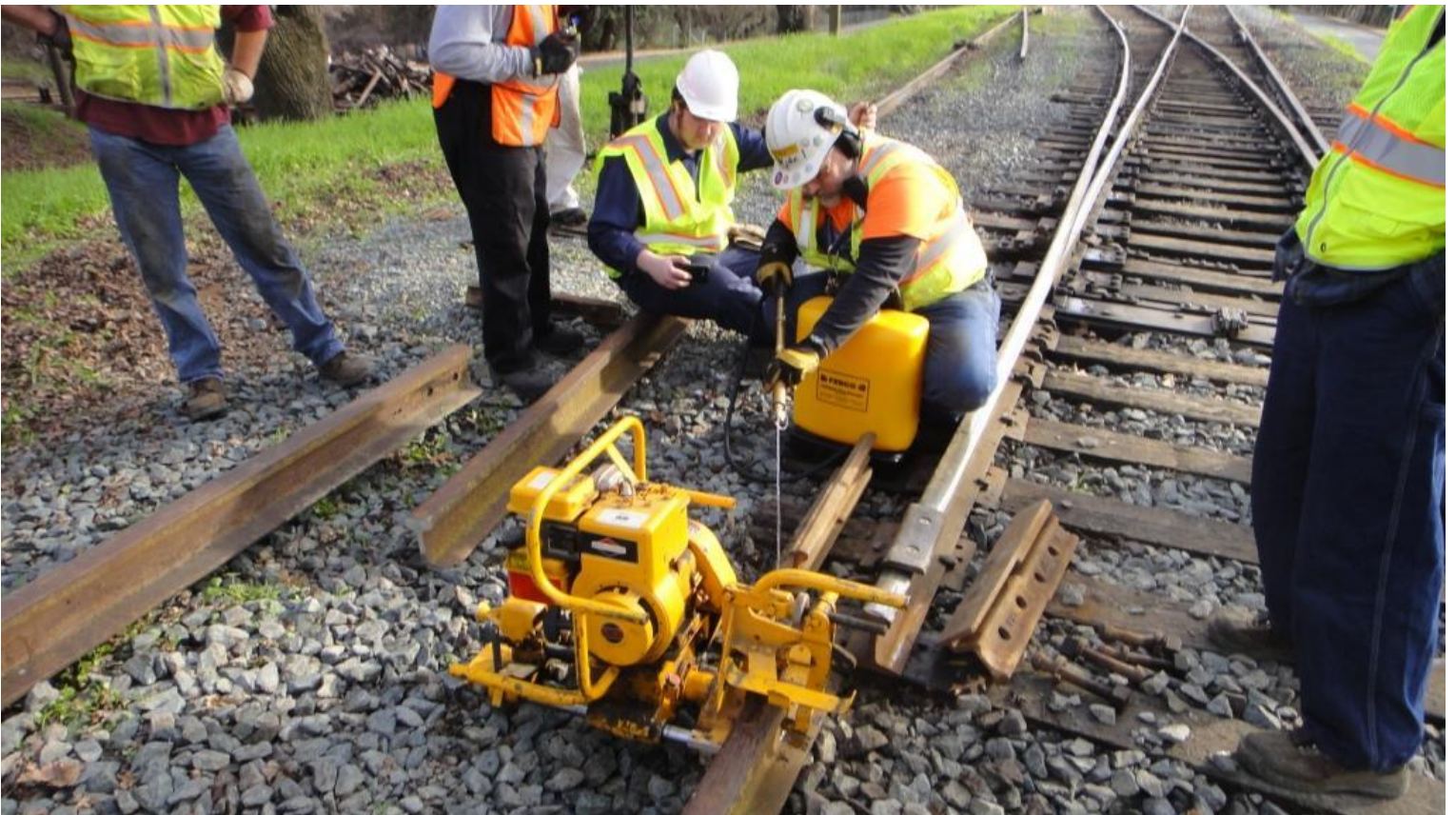
Jose deploys the rail-saw and Steve uses a shovel as a spark-shield



With the saw is deployed, Jose draws quite a crowd...



Mike H., Mike F., and Mike W. bolt the last stick into place



Mike F. spray water onto the rail-drill bit to keep it cool as it cuts new bolt holes in the web of the rail. The 110-90 comp-joint stands ready for the final connection to be made



Al on Big Green lowers the spike-puller onto the MOW Team's work-train as Frank and Josh secure it



Steve tightens the last bolt at the comp-joint as the new east rail is attached to the south end



Behold, Alan and Chris C. look upon the day's work and they saw that it was good...



The last task of the day: Joe and Tom plant the **RED-FLAG** at Mile Post 1.5 and declare it "MOW Team Territory!"