

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for February 8, 2015. It was a momentous week for your MOW Team. We finally took possession of the new equipment we've been trying to acquire since June, 2013. There's no time to waste. Let's get this update rolling.

Tuesday, the mighty Weed Team was in action. While Team Captain, Mike Taylor, was negotiating bureaucracy and arranging inspections by various government entities, Weedies Joe Galipeau and Dave Megeath worked on modifying the 65 gallon spray-rig in order to meet new regulatory standards. Rules require an "air-gap" for the rig and they found the solution. Replacing the PVC piping with black iron pipe proved the best solution. Then, they brought in Gene Peck and Cliff Hayes who implemented Dave and Joe's plan by welding up the pipe to the rig's frame. The ingenuity of the MOW/Weed Teams' volunteers is inspiring. What's an "air-gap" you ask? Well, show up at Part 214 Training on Wednesday, February 18th at 6 o'clock or Saturday, February 28th at 9 o'clock a.m. in the East Theater and find out!

Meanwhile back in the Shops, Team Tie-shear Captain, Scott Morrison, along with Gene, Frank Werry, Alan Hardy, Cliff, and Harry Voss continued in the effort to reconstruct the machine. The plan for the evening: fire-up the shear's mighty Detroit Diesel and attempt to engage the hydraulic system in order to set the pressures on the pumps. Like a content kitten, that Detroit was purring. But, the hydraulic system wouldn't pressurize. Compressed-air activates the valves on the hydraulic system and Scott soon figured out that the valves weren't any getting air. The Team began troubleshooting the air system. Suddenly, that purring kitten roared like a lion and the hydraulic gauges practically shot through the roof! The hydraulic pumps kicked-in and the entire system pressurized! It was a momentous moment for your MOW Team. The focus is now on the air systems. But, thanks to Captain Scott, Team Tie-shear is cookin' with Crisco – and hydraulic fluid...

For 17 months the MOW Team had been waiting patiently for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between State Parks and the CSRM Foundation to be executed. This MOU deals with all the legal issues that could arise from Foundation-owned MOW equipment operating on State Parks' property. Until it was signed, we couldn't take possession of the tie-exchanger and ballast regulator that we had agreed to purchase from the Western Railway Museum (WRM) in Rio Vista. Well, last week, the MOU was finally signed so, wasting no time, on Thursday morning, Frank and Alan headed to the WRM to bring the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger to its new home. Joel Cox, who heads-up the WRM's MOW Team and is a great friend to the SSRR MOW Team, had everything in place and ready to go when we got there. In a quiet ceremony, checks and paperwork were exchanged. When the flat-bed truck arrived, Joel first loaded the "track spud liner" (which was on loan to WRM along with our tie-crane), and then the Jackson 125. Back in Sacramento, Alan jumped aboard the 15,000 pound capacity forklift and unloaded the spud liner and tie-exchanger. This was quite an operation as lifting the 14,000 pound 125 was right at the edge of the yellow forklift's capability. Folks, we owe Joel and the WRM MOW Team our gratitude. They were incredibly patient during the MOU waiting game. With this transaction, the SSRR MOW Team has acquired the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger and Canron BEB-17 Ballast Regulator, a.k.a. *USS Sea Tiger*, which has been on loan to us from the WRM for a year. The 125 will help us improve our productivity 10-fold while reducing the amount of back-breaking hard labor of changing out ties. The *Tiger* will allow us to manage the ballast rock around and under our track and provide level, smooth surface on which our trains can run. Yes, Thursday was an historic day for your MOW Team.

In the evening, Cliff joined Alan and Frank. First off, they prepared for "Storm-a-saurus" which TV personalities said would slam into Sacramento over the weekend. They dug out the flangeways on the apron of the Erecting Shop so that water would flow towards the transfer table track rather than into the building. Then, they moved the Jackson 125 into the Erecting Shop which gave them the opportunity to experiment with some of its functions. It doesn't look like much but, the 125 has a practically brand new engine – only 168 hours – as well as a new hydraulic pump and newly refurbished hydraulic cylinders. The MOW Team will take care of the cosmetic issues.

Saturday, Harry, the provider of the Team's doughnuts, arrived with the sacred pink box, the contents of which were thoroughly enjoyed by Pam Tatro, Alan, Michael Florentine, and Steve Nemeth. Because of the predicted severity of "Storm-a-saurus" the Team planned for a "shops-day." Plus, the annual Brakeman Training seminar co-opted many of our regulars. One of the first things that needed replacing on the 125 was the seat. Pam located a replacement, tested it to make sure it would fit, then sanded and painted it. Steve in the front-end loader and Mike F. on the Big Green Machine, with the bucket attachment, headed out into the SP Yards to fill in some rather deep mud holes in the road leading up to the north end of the Boiler Shop. It took them about three hours to fill in these crater-sized holes. They did a great job. Harry and Alan begin making necessary modifications to the 125, including moving the battery switch from the outside to the cab. Following the Brakeman class, Frank and Heather Kearns joined in the MOW Team fun. Harry and Heather identified all the zerk-fittings. Then Steve got the grease gun out and began greasing the moving bits through zerk-fittings. Another good day for your MOW Team.

Speaking of next week, the Weed Team will be working the old SP Yards fighting back the green invasion at the transfer table tracks and 560 interchange on Tuesday. In the afternoon and evening on Tuesday and Thursday, the Erecting Shop will welcome folks at or before 5 o'clock. Saturday, the Jackson may make its first appearance on the SSRR Mainline. Meet at the Shops at 8 o'clock a.m. sharp. The acquisition of our new machines is quite exciting and encouraging. The CSRM Foundation made the procurement of these machines possible. We send our sincere gratitude to CSRM Foundation for its steadfast support of the MOW Team. The further mechanization of our operation will improve productivity while diminishing the hard physical labor. Together, are building a better railroad!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Scott and Frank troubleshooting issues with the Tie Shear



Scott and Alan trying to engage the hydraulic system





As you can see, the tie-shear is a complicated machine...



At the WRM, Joel Cox loads the spare tie-crane boom onto the MOW trailer under Alan's direction





First the "spud-liner" gets loaded onto the flatbed truck.



Frank guides the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger onto the flatbed truck.





Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Alan operates the big yellow forklift to unload the tie-exchanger.



Safe and sound inside the Boiler Shop, the tie-exchanger may not look like much but, it's got a new engine and hydraulic system. It's in better shape than it looks. Most importantly, it will improve our productivity 10 fold.





Cliff and Alan dig out the flange-ways along the apron of the Erecting Shop in preparation for Storm-a-saurus



Mike F. uses compressed air to clean-off the radiator of the front-end loader





Steve nimbly operates the front-end loader

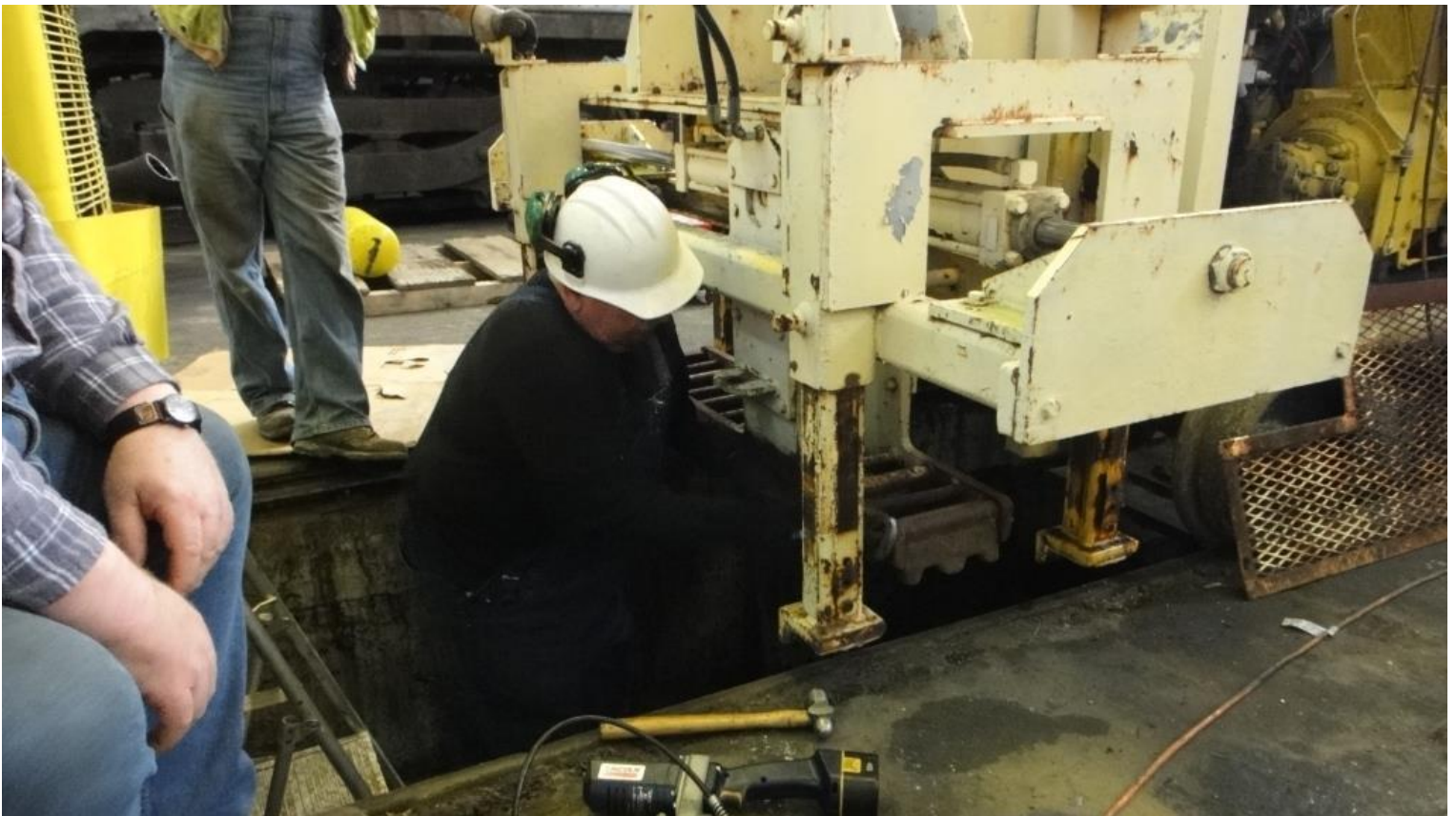


Pam tests the fit of the new chair she's restoring for the Jackson 125





“We’re doing this by the book!” While Steve works at greasing the machine’s zerk-fittings, Alan tells a funny that’s got Frank and Heather laughing



Harry in the pit working on the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger’s scarifer component