

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for March 30, 2014. Our railroad family lost one of our most valuable members last week. Red Hadler, a founding member of the Sacramento Southern Railroad, Road Foreman of Engines, and all around good guy succumbed to leukemia after a long battle. Red's passing is an irreplaceable loss to our railroad. Working on the railroad will never be the same without Red. He will be greatly missed. A Celebration of Life in Red's memory will take place on Friday, April 4, 2014, at 6PM in the California State Railroad Museum Roundhouse. Please RSVP to Susannah Rominger at srominger@parks.ca.gov, or (916) 445-7373 by on Thursday, April 3, 2014 if you plan on attending.

And now, the update. Tuesday, the Mighty MOW Weed Team, Mike Taylor, Dave Megeath & Joe Galipeau, resumed their chemical assault on vegetation. The Weedies sprayed Roundup and a pre-emergent to prevent future germination of weed seeds at the two ends of the Hood line and in the materials yard at Setzer. They used up their remaining goop on the tracks leading to the Central Pacific Passenger Station in Old Sacramento. But, it's not all vege-cide with the Weed Team. The lupins are in bloom, so they took time to stop and smell the flowers. Another great job by our Tyvek-coverall Crusaders!

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Heather Kerns, Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Mike Harris, Frederick Carr, Harry Voss, Frank Werry, and Gene Peck spent the evening fighting fires and crime. Cliff, Gene, Pat, and Fred accomplished the amazing feat of removing the malfunctioning component of the man-lift's engine which was deep under the machine. Cliff had to cut away part of the frame which he did with artistic flare. They replaced the broken part without having to pull the engine which was our initial fear. In other news, Harry, Heather, Mike H. and Frank were fighting crime on Tuesday. Yes, we were hit again by metal thieves – this time in broad-daylight in Old Sacramento. So, the evening crew headed out to collect the rest of the track materials stored over there. We loaded the materials onto flat-cars then pulled them over to the Shops with the tamper. Conductor Frank conducted us across the UP Main. By all measures, it was a successful evening, indeed.

Thursday, Chris Carlson, Mike H., Frank, and Heather began staging for the ballasting of the new Whisker Track behind the Museum. Mike H. loaded rock into the dump-truck using the front-end loader. Frank handled the dump-truck (which is always an adventure). Four loads of ballast rock were taken to Old Sac. so that we'd be able to start first thing Saturday.

Speaking of Saturday, it was a dark and stormy day inside the Boiler Shop – and it rained outside, as well. Clem Meier, Harry, Alan, Dave, Frank, Fred, Heather, the "Three Mikes" –Florentine, Miller, and Taylor – Pam Tatro, and Chris braved the strange wet stuff falling from the sky, lured by Sirens' call of fresh doughnuts– and, of course, to continue their efforts on building the Whisker Track to the north of the Turntable. The first task was getting the ballast hopper cars over to the work-site from the Rail Yards. Once again, Conductor Frank led this operation. Once on site, the ballast cars were spotted on the dual-gauge track so that Harry in the back-how could load them with the rock we brought over on Thursday. The Three Mikes, Fred, Pam, Clem, Alan, and Frank set up the track-jacks for raising the track to a more level position. Then, Chris in the tamper slowly shoved the hoppers onto the Whisker Track where they were relieved of their contents. With each pass of hoppers, everyone on the crew began digging, shoving, scraping, shifting, and hand-tamping ballast order to compact it and get it underneath the ties for support. After sufficient rock was laid, the tamper was spun around on the turntable where it began its work of tamping and compacting the rock under the track. As this would progress, the jacks would be removed. Folks, this was very heavy labor being done in unfavorable conditions. The rain was constant and became quite an impediment to our efforts. As the ground became saturated, we were slip-slidin' around all over the place in the mud.

In the afternoon, we attended the "Job Fair" at the Docent Class seeking to recruit new MOW volunteers. We were a bit wet and muddy but it provided a good show for the new docents. As it was still raining, we suspended work on the Whisker Track. But Harry and Mike F. transported another four loads of rock over to Old Sac. The remaining crew handled a few tasks around the Shops. We didn't quite get as much done as we had hoped but, that's why there's always next Saturday.

Speaking of which, the schedule for this coming week is pretty much the same as every week. The MOW "Spring Fling" will take place come rain or shine. Meet in the Shops on Tuesday afternoon and evening. Thursday, the door rolls up at 5 o'clock. Saturday, the pink boxes arrive at 8 o'clock a.m. sharp. As always, many thanks to incredible volunteers!

We'll see you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Weed Team at work! Mike T. and Joe “deploy the weapon”...



“Stand and deliver! Your life or your lupins!” Mike T. stops to smell the flowers...



Cliff cuts away a part of the frame of the man-lift with Gene's assistance



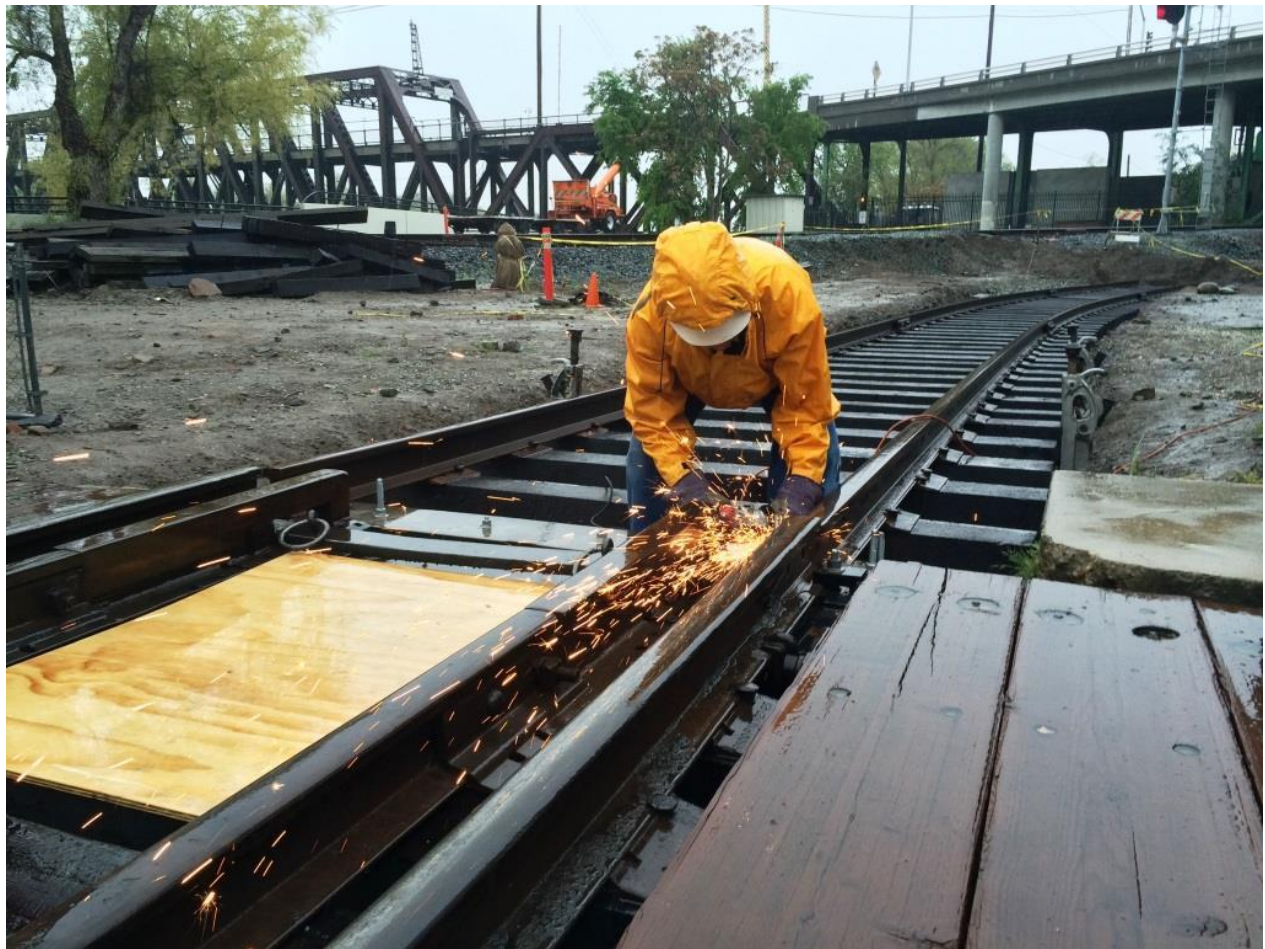
Frank driving the dump-truck while Chris and Mike H. give direction



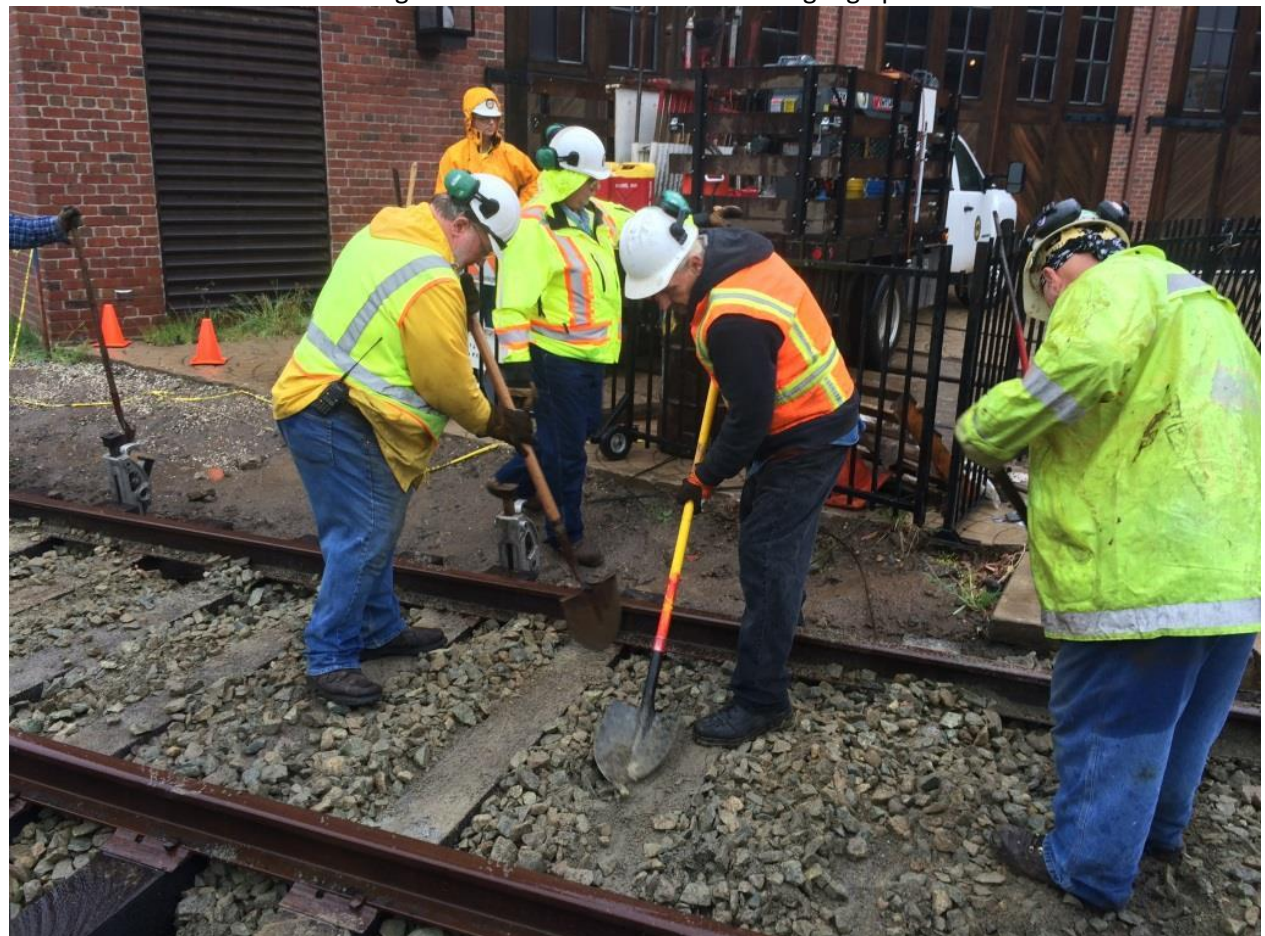
Conductor Frank and Mike M. gather the ballast hoppers using the tamper to run them over to Old Sac.



Now spotted on the dual-gauge track, Harry in the back-hoe loads the hoppers with rock



Dave grinds off excess bolt-ends on the gauge plate



Frank, Fred, and Mike F. shift ballast



Mike F. and Alan ballast the track using the side-dump ballast hopper. Chris skillfully controls the motion in the tamper



Let the tamping begin. Chris in the tamper tamps the first ties under Alan's direction