

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for April 19, 2015. Lots and lots of good stuff got done this week. But, is there ever a week where the mighty MOW Team doesn't accomplish good stuff? Before pondering that question, let's get this update underway.

On Tuesday, the Weed Team worked extra between Sutterville Road and the RT fence protecting against all other trains. Weed Team captain, Mike Taylor, scheduled a "special" to take on several projects. At Sutterville Road, he, Joe Galipeau, and Carol Nelson used the field-and-brush mower and the string trimmer to take out the insidious Bermuda grass. Then Mike T. and Joe headed south and worked from Cliff's Marina to the first bridge on the Hood Line. The three miles of the SSRR Main are but a fraction of the entire line which runs all the way down to Hood-Franklin Road south of Elk Grove. Mike T. and the Weedies singlehandedly maintain the all of this line thus keeping the Hood dream alive. Trains will run down there someday thanks to the members of the mighty MOW Weed Team.

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, the MOW Team is under a mandate to move all of its track material away from the west side of the Boiler Shop because the environmental mitigation folks are going to start digging-up the area. So, Alan Hardy and Pat Scholzen spent most of Tuesday doing just that. Alan operating the big yellow 7.5 ton forklift and Pat on the three-tonner, managed to move most of the remaining materials to the north side of the Erecting Shop. Mike Harris, Scott Morrison, Frank Werry, and Gene Peck continued the efforts at restoring the A-5 motorcar to operation. This motorcar will become the primary motive power for the Interpretive Handcar Program. Cliff Hayes and Frederick Carr continued designing protective shields for *USS Sea Tiger*, a.k.a. the formerly pink ballast regulator, as well as for the tie-shear, and new-old tamper. Quartermaster Heather Kearns took care of supply and spare-parts issues.

On Thursday, I (Richard) forgot to bring my camera. So, you won't see any pictures of Heather, Alan, Fred, Cliff, Mike H., or Frank doing lots of good stuff. There are no images of Mike H. and Frank getting the A-5's engine back together. The attachment features no photos of Cliff welding more shields or Fred wire brushing bolts. When Alan and Frank installed a new battery in the *Tiger*, or when they lifted its starboard wing to access bolts in the effort to widen the box, no camera recorded the moments. You'll see no pictures of Fred, who went above-and-beyond to take out all the trash that had accumulated in the half-dozen or so trash cans. The number of accumulated pink boxes was almost unbelievable. Really? We've eaten that many doughnuts? Perhaps, then, it was a good thing that no camera was present...

The accumulation of new pink boxes began in earnest on Saturday, thanks to Designated Supervisor of Doughnut Provisions, Harry Voss. Joining Harry were Alan, Pam Tatro, Clem Meier, Ed Moriarty, a quorum of "Mikes" – Willis, Miller, and Florentine – Heather, Frank, and Chris Carlson. Once again, the Team headed out to the area between Capitol Mall and the Circle of Lights to address the wonky joints embedded in asphalt. The goal of this project has been to mitigate the vertical deflection of the rails in these joints – especially on the west rail. Throughout the area, we found that most bolts were loose allowing for the rails to deflect independently of each other under load. Pam, the purveyor of the mattocks, immediately started digging out the south-most joint. Frank and Ed cleared away as much of the dirt as possible. Mike W. deployed a jack-hammer and began cutting-up the asphalt and Clem cleared away the debris. Alan, Ed, and Mike M. got out the ¾" impact wrench to remove the decaying bolts. This was a bit of a task as they were quite rusted and corroded. Frank used a track-wrench to try to free-up the nuts. Finally, they managed to remove the old bolts and replace them. At joints further north, Mike F. and Mike W. acted out the MOW Team's interpretation of "Deliverance" with "dueling jack-hammers." After they cut away the asphalt Chris used the air wand to blow loose dirt and rocks out from around the joint-bars. Pam sprayed the seized nuts with Kroil. Two of the bolts that needed replacing were "spinners" – where the whole bolt would spin when trying to remove the nut. We could not ignore the fact that such a condition constituted a track. Extreme measures were called for. Alan fired up the oxy-acetylene torch and torched the offending nuts off the bolts. Once cut, Mike M. and Chris used sledge hammers and lining bars to break off the cut remnants of the nut and then replace the bolts. Meanwhile, Mike W. and Mike F. loaded Truck 14 with sufficient supplies of crushed-rock to fill in the holes we created. By the time they returned to the job-site, the Team had completed the replacement of bolts and stabilization of the joints. Frank, Heather, Mike M. and Mike F. shoveled rock from the truck into the holes. The crew then packed up and headed back to the Shops pleased with the work completed. Although we cannot access the ties for replacement because the area is completely paved, without doubt, the track is safer now than it was prior to our commencing of this project.

Throughout the day, it was a pleasure to welcome the Granite Rock No. 10 through our working limits. The MOW Team wishes to express its thanks to Train Master Mike Collins, Dispatcher Dianne Tincher, Conductor Stan Wirth, DSLE Jeremy Levis, Engineers Jim Bays and Harry Forni, Firemen Ilias Athanasiou, Steve Meyer, and Steve Blanor, Breakmen Michele White (who kindly supplied us with cold bottles of water in the afternoon), Dave Megeath, and Gary Renfeld for working with us on Saturday. Pursuant to our train order, we had to stop the train for a couple minutes on one run (a very rare occurrence) before it entered our work limits while acetylene torch was deployed. They gave us the time we needed to clear the line. It was a fine SSRR Team effort as we all strive to build a better and safer railroad.

This coming week, the Weed Team will meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Shops for another fine day out on the line. The Tuesday and Thursday crews will gather at or before 5 o'clock in the Erecting Shop. Saturday, we'll be changing things up a bit and heading down to the Miller Park Siding to undertake some necessary repairs. It will be another great week for the mighty fine members of the MOW Team

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Mike H., Frank, and Scott, rebuild the A-5 motorcar.



Fred grinds-off rough edges on a new shield.



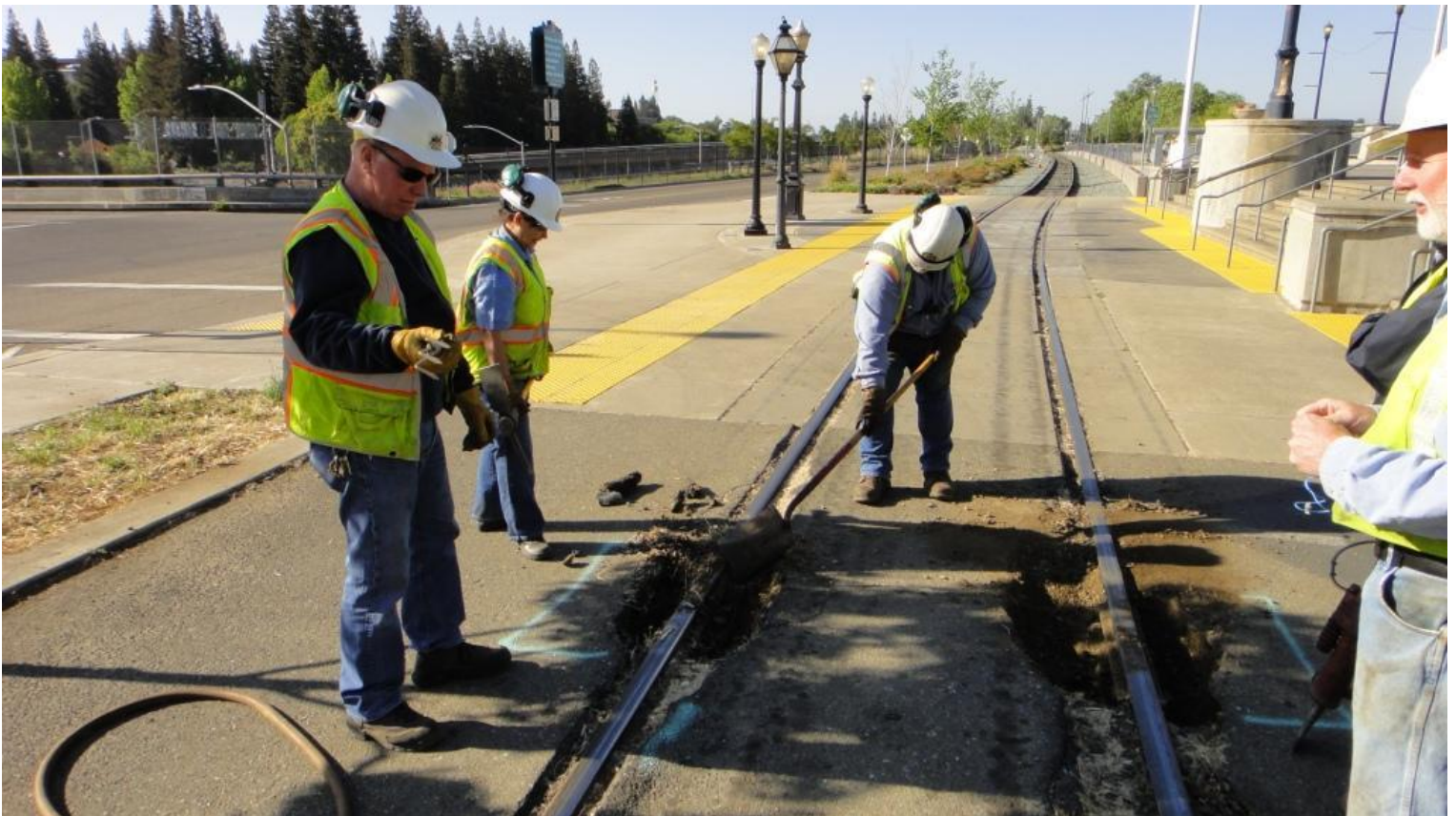
Cliff welds a protective shield together



Alan applies Kroil to the bolts on the ballast regulator's wing. The plan is to expand the width of the box.



Ilias oils key components while the Granite Rock No. 10 is fired up for the first time on the Whisker Track that we built just for this purpose.



Ed, Pam, Frank and Mike M. start digging out a problem joint at the Circle of Lights.



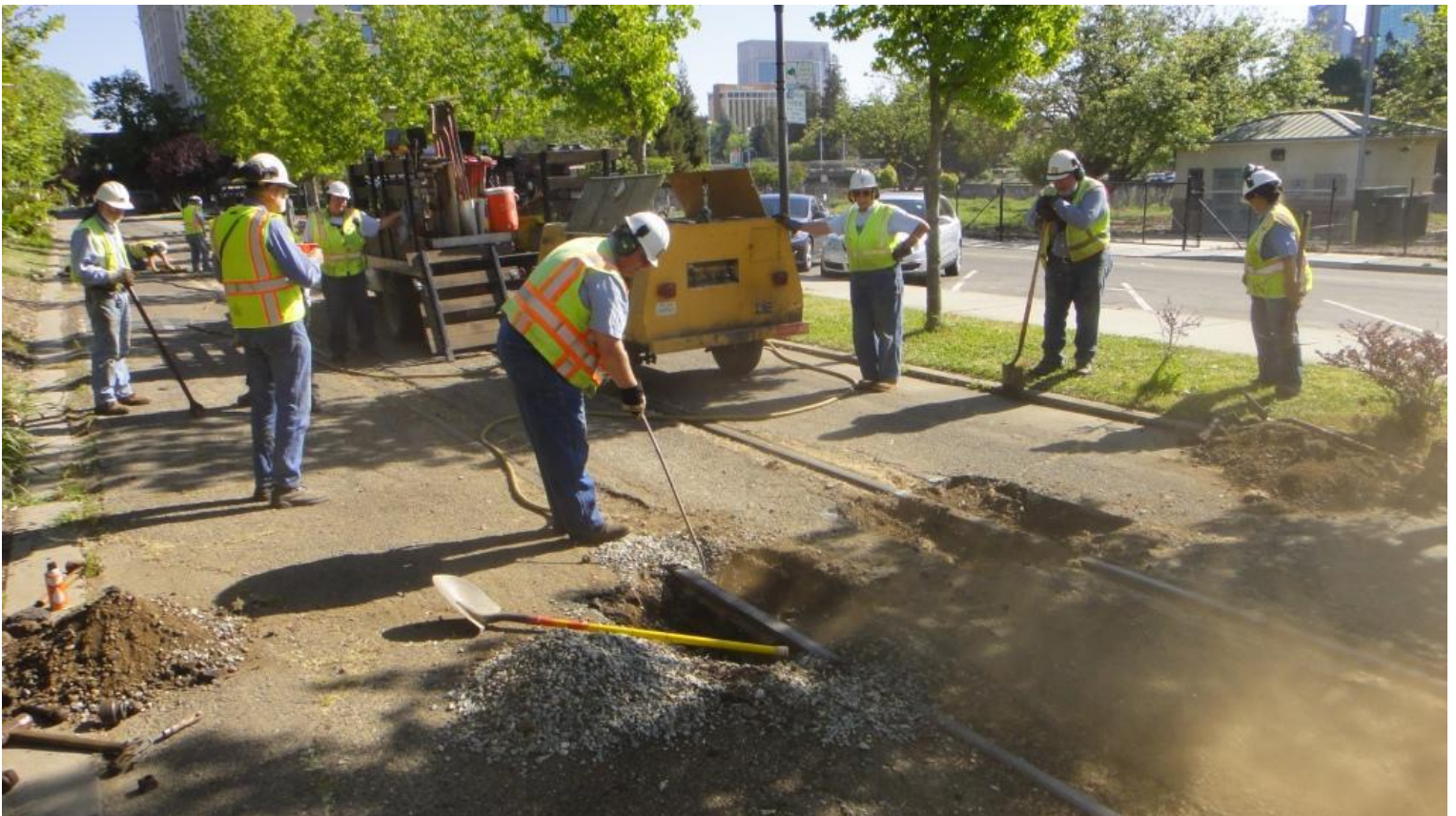
Ed clears away dirt from the west side joint-bar as Alan work with the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " impact-wrench to remove a bolt.



Heather jack-hammers off buckling asphalt on the gauge-side of the east rail.



“Deliverance” MOW style: Mike F. and Mike W. in “dueling jack-hammers” while Frank shovels away the debris.



Chris uses the air-wand to blow debris out of the joint.



Pam sprays Kroil on the bolts.



'Mike M. tries to hold in a spinning bolt as Mike F. uses the 3/4" impact on the nut.

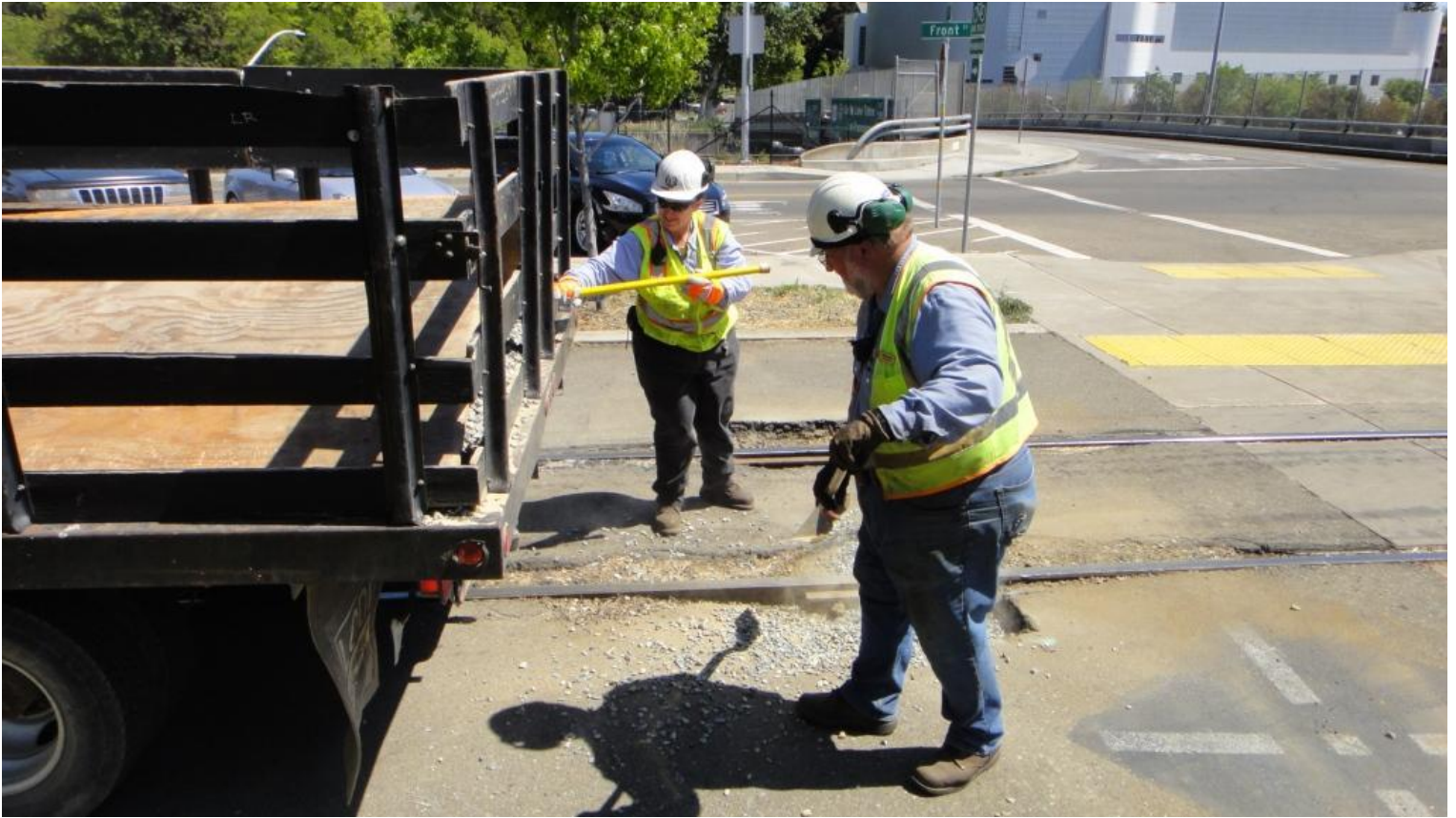


Alan torch-cuts a nut off a spinning bolt.



With the train having stopped-short of the red-flag at Mile Post 0.6, Mike M. and Chris strike at the cut nut with a lining bar and sledgehammer.





Heather and Frank start filling in the holes around the joints.



With the filling in of this joint, Frank, Mike M., and Heather complete phase-one of the Embassy Suites Alley joint servicing project.