

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for May 1, 2016. The merry month of May is upon us already, and your MOW Team is warming up just like the weather. So, before it gets cold again, let's get this update started.

Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Frederick Carr, Anthony Filamor, Mike Harris, Gene Peck, Steve Nemeth, and Heather Kearns brought tidings of gladness to the Erecting Shop on Tuesday. You will recall that last week, Pat, Gene, and Cliff brought the electrical cabinet over from the Boiler Shop. This week, they got it in place and completely reorganized it. This was a task and a half which will pay great dividends in the future. Heather finished painting the pit in Bay 4. The two inspections pits look so much better and now will reflect light for easier viewing underneath machines. Kudos to Heather! Steve, Mike H. and Fred worked on getting the bolt-machines working. They hadn't been started in a while and the plan was to deploy them on Saturday. Then Steve and Anthony did us a great favor by taking out all the accumulated garbage around both buildings. I'll tell ya, all those pink boxes sure do fill up garbage-cans fast! Following that necessary exercise, Steve gave Anthony his first lesson in Green Machine operation. Anthony did really well. Indeed, it was a good evening amongst good folks.

On Thursday, the Mighty Weed Team gathered for a field-trip to Hood. Mike Taylor, Ed Kottal, and Jeff Allen made significant progress by getting the driveway leading to the Weedies' container at the south end of the Hood line. They greased the container-lead switch then engaged in the eradication of star-thistle fouling the track. Then they headed up the line to take GPS soundings at various locations for an emergency access project. Once complete, the Team headed to the Shops where the last of the *blue-brew* was drawn from the 65-gallon spray-rig and distributed in beneficial places along the 560 track. As Mike T. said, "It was a deep fluorescent aqua blue in color that, when applied to weeds, highlighted leaf margins in Chihuly-fashion." A beautiful sight, indeed. It was another great day for valiant Weed Team.

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Cliff, Anthony, Heather, Mike H., and Fred kept the train running down the track of progress. Cliff and Anthony made modifications to the throttle assembly on the A-4 motorcar. Heather and Fred scurried down into the pits in Bays 4 and 5 to scrape-out decades of accumulated gunk that had on the floors. Then the Team started staging for Saturday. Anthony climbed up on the yellow forklift to move the bolt machines from the north-east corner of the Erecting Shop to the south-west corner of the Boiler Shop where to be loaded on the trailer. Mike H. got the trusty MOW Team Chevy Truck all set up by loading the tool-caddy and Nolan track-cart onto the bed. Other staging work was done including locating spare bolts and the portable torch to cut-off any "spinner" bolts (those that won't tighten down). So, with that, the Team was ready and set to go!

They call the wind Mariah. And was she feisty on Saturday stirring up everyone's allergies. Fortunately, there was a large pink box of fresh doughnuts on site (for medicinal purposes, of course) as Harry Voss, Clem Meier, Michael Florentine, Anthony, Chris Machado, Ed, Jose Gomez, Mike H., Frank Werry, and Heather arrived. The Team would split into two crews: "*Team Bolt-tightening*," consisting of Clem, Ed, Mike H., Harry, and Mike F.; and "*Team Tamper*" made-up of Chris, Jose, Anthony, and Heather. Team Tamper traveled south to Miller Park to re-tamp the new track laid between Front Street and the north switch (14). As expected, the new track had settled a bit. So, Team Tamper raced down the line where they traded-off operating and spotting (good experience for everyone). Also, little further south of the switch, there was a bit of a dip in the track which they tamped up. Fortunately Team Tamper had a direct shot down to Miller Park with crossing gates to stop foot-traffic at Capitol Mall. Unfortunately for Team Bolt-tightening, the route to the job-site was a bit more circuitous. Due to a community-spirit feel-good run thing, Capitol Mall was completely blocked to cross traffic forcing Team Bolt-tightening to take a 32-block detour to get from Old Sacramento to just south of the Embassy Suites Hotel. Once on site, however, Mike F. on the Green Machine deployed the bolt-machines. Harry and Mike H. got them started which began a north-to-south sweep of every joint out on the line. Our trusty track-inspectors have noted an abundance of loose bolt at joints along the track. Clem and Mike F. dug-away rock from around the joints as Ed and Mike H. jostled the machines about to tighten bolts. With our late start (thanks to the community-spirit feel-good run thing blocking our route) the machines needed to be removed from the track before train time. Mike F. on Big Green lifted them off and set them on the trailer. Then he headed to Front Street to relocate dead-ties spotted there to the dead-tie pile Setzer. Meanwhile, Ed and Clem continued down the track with track-wrenches tightening bolts by hand. Although, we weren't able to get quite as far down the line as we had hoped, by train-time, the Team had tightened every bolt between the Circle of Lights and Switch 11 at Clunie.

In the afternoon, the united MOW Team pulled the grates over Switch 1 at the turntable to remove all the organic debris collected therein. They also took the opportunity to service the switch-machine which is showing signs of wear-and-tear. Following that experience, Ed, Jose, Anthony began a survey of switch-ties in Old Sacramento, measuring and marking those that need replacing. We're in the process of procuring switch ties which range in size between nine and 21 feet in length so we need to know exactly how many of each to order. Although progress was impeded slightly in the morning, the Team still managed to accomplish a good amount of progress.

This coming week, the Team will gather as usual on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at the Shops at or before 5 o'clock. Saturday, the MOW Team will embark on a grand adventure to the Western Railway Museum (WRM) in Rio Vista where we will go on a "spike-hunt". The WRM MOW Team is donating several crates of spikes to the SSRR MOW Team. We just have go and get them. It should prove an exciting day. Meet at the Shops at 8 o'clock a.m. and we'll caravan down. Many thanks to everyone for helping build a better railroad!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris C., and Richard.



Steve and Fred work to get one of the bolt-machines started



Heather paints the inspection pit at Bay 4 of the Erecting Shop



Steve on Big Green re-arranging materials in our materials yard for easier access



It's a dirty job but somebody's got to do it: Steve and Anthony take out the garbage



Steve gives Anthony a lesson in Green Machine operation



Anthony and Cliff work on the A-4's throttle assembly



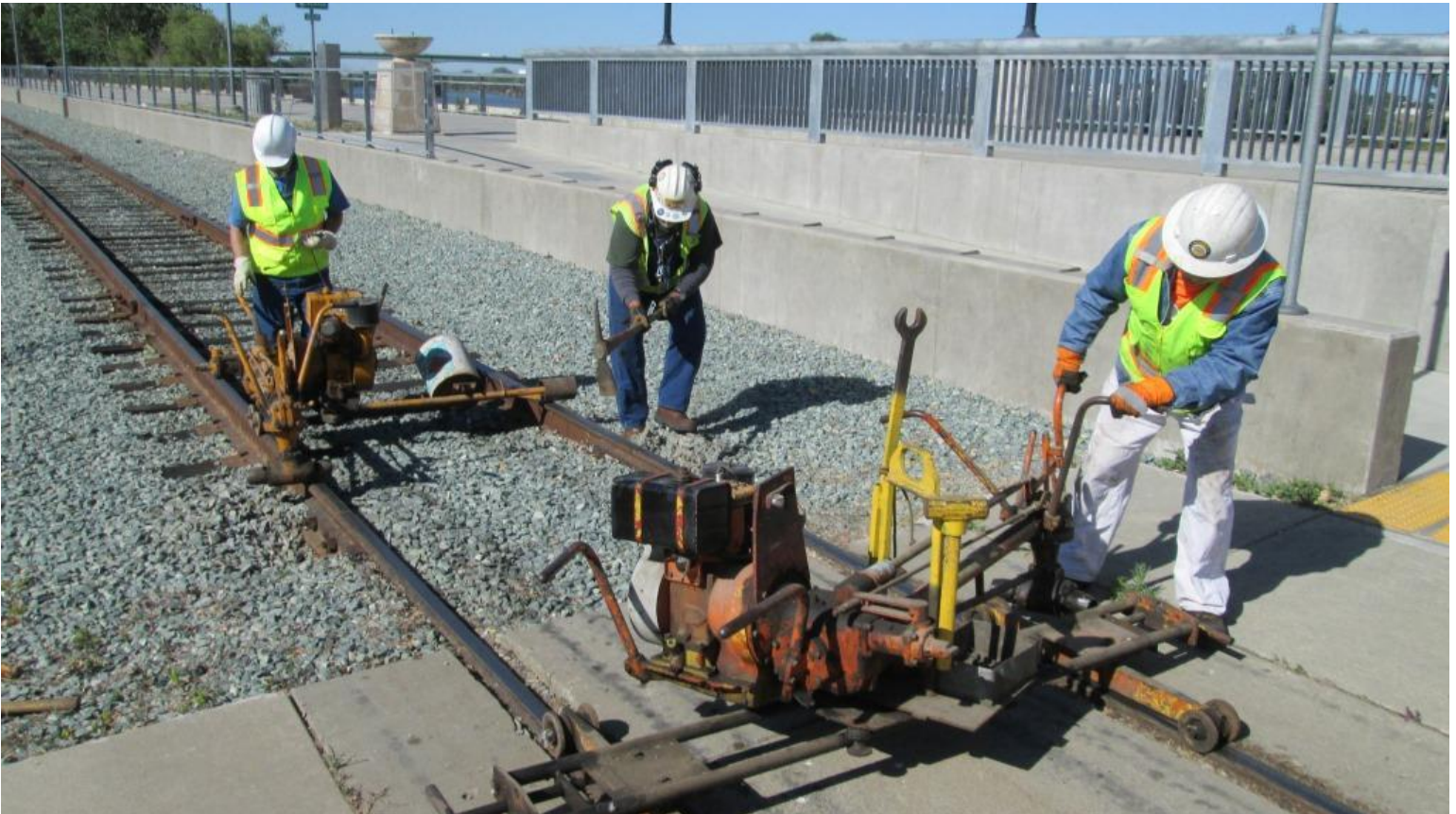
Heather guides Anthony on the forklift carrying a bolt-machine



Like forklifts passing in the night: Anthony and Mike T. moving their respective payloads



After a 32-block detour, the bolt machines finally reach the job-site. Harry and Mike H. get them started



Ed and Mike H. move their machines into position as Mike F. digs out rock around the joints



Mike H. maneuvers the bolt-tightening socket up to a nut



Ed demonstrating good body-mechanics as he tightens a bolt by hand



Mike F. on Big Green rushes past the job-site to collect dead-ties at Miller Park



Clem stops, looks, and listens as the 11 o'clock train passes by





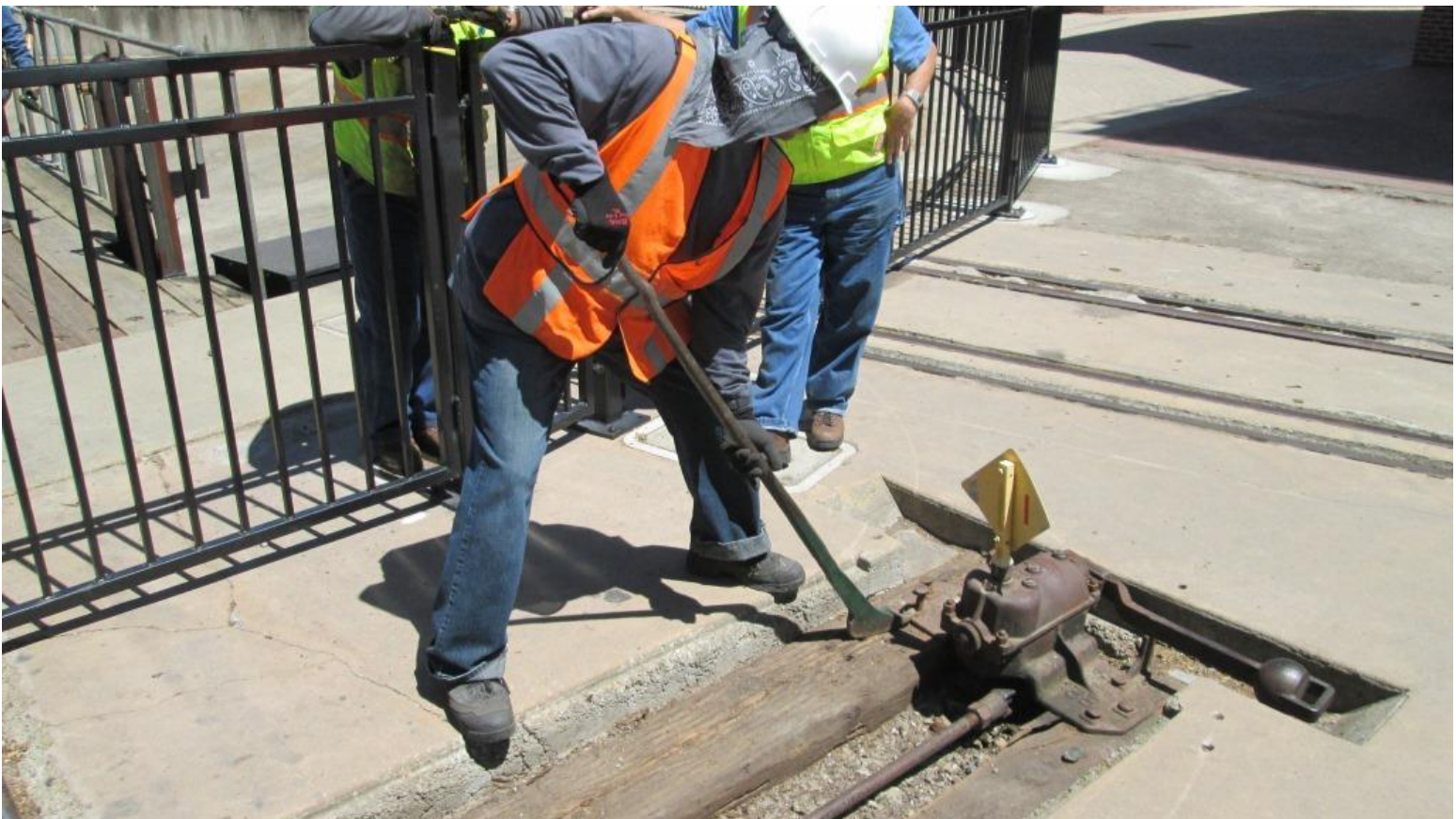
Jose provides guidance from the ground for Chris who is operating the tamper



In the Tamper, Chris gives Anthony a lesson in its operation as Jose guides from the ground



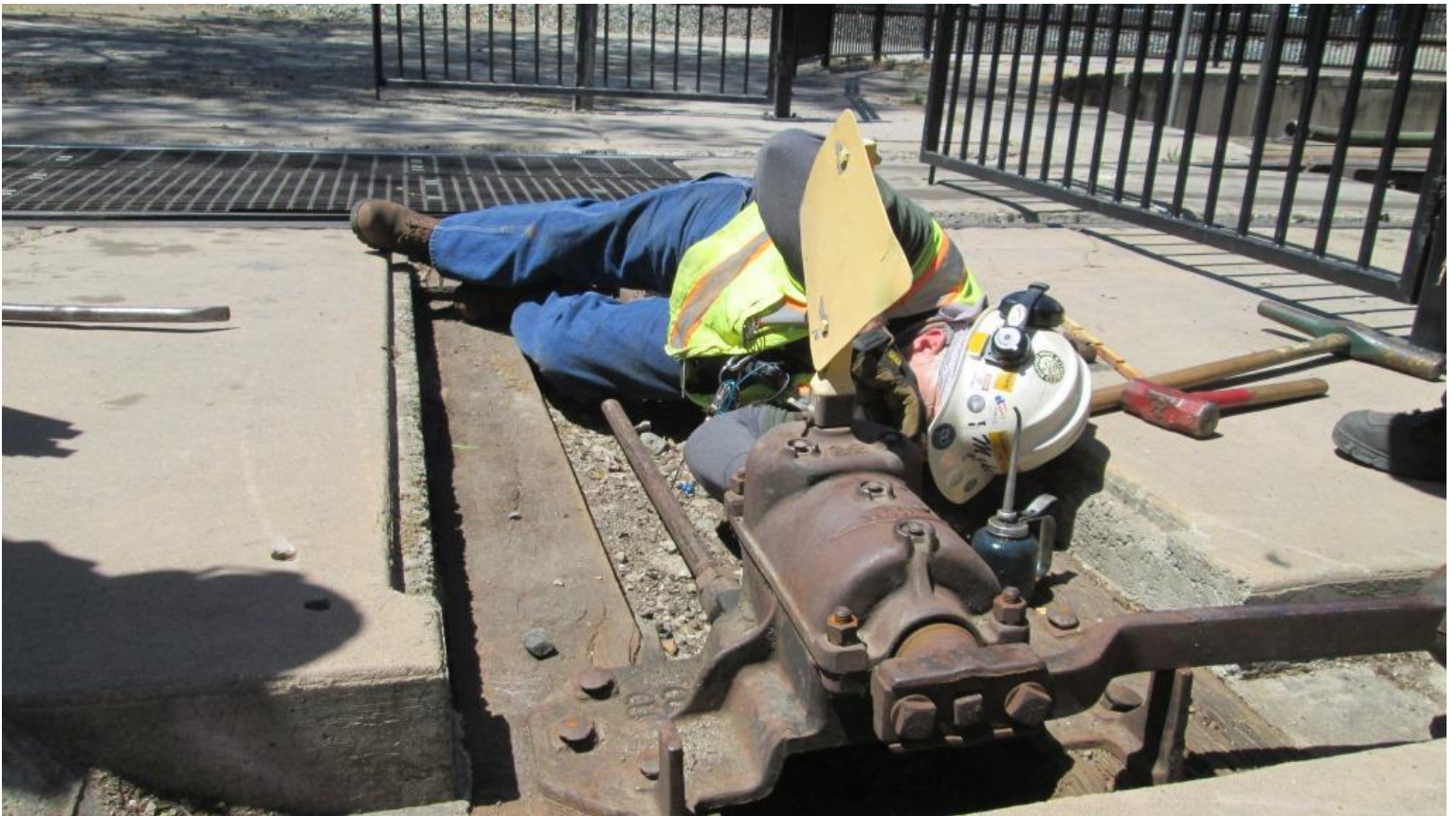
Ed handles the air-wand connected to the rail-mounted air compressor for organic debris removal from Switch 1



Jose removes spikes at the switch machine



Mike H., Jose, and Heather work to adjust the machine's position



Mike F. is not lying down on the job. He's looking for any oil-leaks under the machine



Chris and Jose replace the grating over the switch components



Jose, Anthony, Ed, and Heather measuring switch-ties