

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for May 31, 2015. This week the MOW Team experimented with its new productivity – and it was a success. So, let's not stand in the way of progress by delaying this update any further.

Tuesday, Weed Team Commander in Chief, Mike Taylor, met with State Parks officials at Hood to review the projects completed and planned as well as protocols employed by the Team. Of course, all was approved and the Team can now continue its efforts pushing back encroaching green things from the Hood Line which will recommence this Tuesday. This all-volunteer Team does an incredible job and are the only folks who maintain the right-of-way at Hood thus keeping the "one day closer..." dream alive.

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Frederick Carr, Mike Harris, Heather Kearns, Harry Voss, Gene Peck, and Frank Werry kept the home-fires burning. Projects were worked on all over the Shops but a good deal of the evening was spent preparing for our big adventure for Saturday. Work on rebuilding the Mainline through Miller Park would begin and, as you can imagine, such a project requires significant strategic planning. We also decided to "test" the new productivity that the Team has achieved with the restoration and acquisition of several track machines – the tie-shear being most significant. So, the goal was set: remove and replace 98 ties. There were a few raised-eyebrows around the room at such an ambitious goal. But, we figured, let's aim-high and see what we can do.

Thursday, the staging for Saturday began. Frank, Mike H., Joe Rivera, Alan, and Heather headed over to Old Sacramento with a couple 55-gallon drums of diesel to make sure that none of our equipment would go hungry out on the line. Then Mike H. and Joe brought the Kalamazoo tug on line pulling three flatcars onto which ties would be loaded. Conductor Frank made the arrangements with Omaha for the tug to cross the UP Main at RV988 and off they went. Back at the Shops, Alan brought over three bundles of ties to tie-down onto the flatcars. Now we were set for Saturday. The equipment was in the right order and loaded for bear. Saturday would start out right.

Speaking of Saturday, as word got out that we planned to pull and replace 98 ties, we were peppered with cynical statements such as, "You mean nine or eight ties..." Well, that cynicism only fueled our resolve. And, speaking of fuel, Harry brought the doughnuts which helped Alan, Mike H., Scott Morrison, Mike Miller, Fred, Joe, Frank, Heather, and Chris Carlson get everything lined up and ready to roll over in the Shops. Conductor Frank worked his magic with the dispatcher folks in Omaha and sent the Mike H. in the Kalamazoo tie-train, as well as the tie-shear, over to Old Sac. where the rest of the equipment had been set up earlier in the morning and was ready to roll. Our operation required the assistance of our good friends from the Signals Department who manually operated the grade-crossing warning systems at Front Street. As we would be working within the "circuit" on the Mainline, the system needed to be deactivated. So, Al Utzig and Dale Parker from Team Signals manually operated the signaling system all day. On the Miller Park Siding, on final tie needed to be installed, which Heather in the Scarifier, Mike M., and Joe handled rather quickly. Then, it was on to the Mainline. Scott and Fred deployed the spike-puller. Frank and Chris came in with the tie-shear. This is where the fun began as that massive machine sliced and diced its way through ties like a Ginsu Knife through a tomato. What a show! Harry, Heather, and Mike M. cleared the line of sheared ties. Mike H. rolled in the Kalamazoo and new ties were dropped for placement in the cribs. Heather churned-up the rock with the scarifier and Joe pulled the ties in with the inserter function. By lunch time, Frank in the tie-shear managed to make quite a mess slicing up **100 ties**.

Luncheon was hosted at the job-site by Judy Hardy who brought pizza, sodas, and cookies for the Team. Three cheers for Judy! It was a nice way to spend lunch with a group of great folks watching and saluting the train as it would pass by our lunch-site. Following lunch, Heather and Alan headed to Old Sac. to represent the MOW Team at the Prospective Docent Open House in the Stanford Gallery. Some other members of the Team needed to take-off, as well. So, Mike H., Mike M., Scott, Joe, and Frank were on point for getting the new ties into the ground. We had quite a production line going out there. Mike M., Frank, and Scott were removing tie debris working ahead of Mike H. in the scarifier/inserter and Joe who were pulling in the new ties. By 3:30, however, we were bushed. It was a small crew at this point and man-handling all those ties to get them in place wore us out (ergo, why we are working to bring the tie-crane back on-line). So, we fell a bit short of the over-all goal. In the end, 100 ties were removed and 71 new ones installed. Not bad, actually. This represents a significant improvement in our productivity. It was a good test to see what we could do with our improved mechanization.

Important announcement! A make-up session of Part 214 "Roadway Worker Safety Training" will be offered on **Saturday, June 13th, at 10 o'clock a.m. in the Stanford Gallery**. Anyone interested in working out on the line is required, by federal law, to be trained in roadway worker safety. If you're interested or weren't able to make the previous sessions, this is your chance to join the MOW Team or Signals Team. Please let me know your interest by replying to this message. Thanks very much!

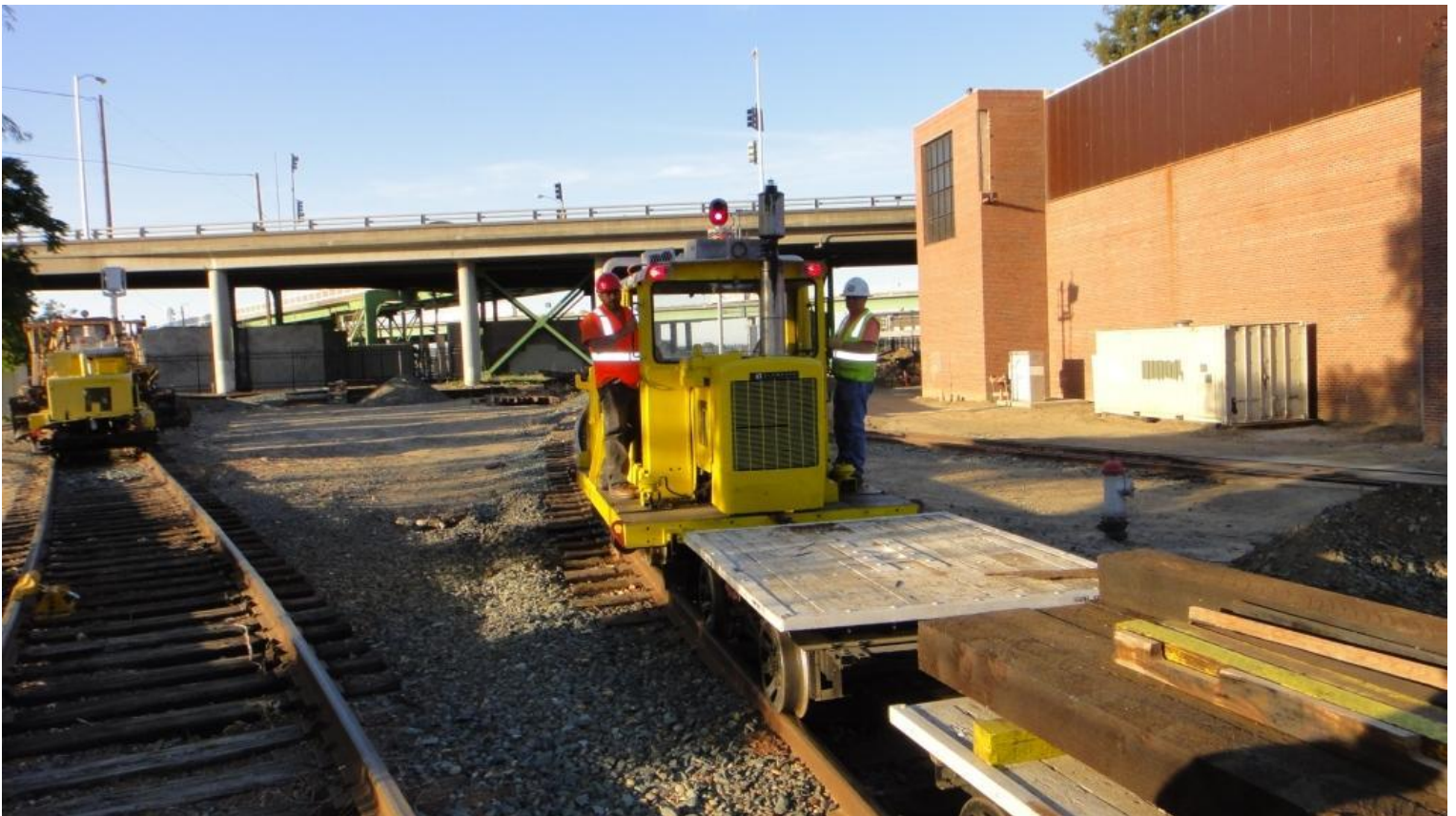
This coming week should prove interesting. The Mighty Weed Team is headed to Hood for a big day of weed eradication. Meet at the Shops at 8:30 a.m. The Tuesday and Thursday crews will meet at or before 5 o'clock in the Erecting Shop. Saturday, we intend to have more fun at Miller Park. Doughnut time is 8 o'clock a.m. in the Shops. As an Amtrak train will be on display in Old Sacramento, deployment of our equipment may prove bit tricky. But, as always, we're up to the challenge. We'll continue to press-on with our productivity come what may. Many thanks, indeed, to the volunteers of the MOW Team who dedicate such effort in maintaining our line.

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Mike H., Joe, Frank, and Heather fuel the equipment in Old Sacramento



Joe and Mike H. wait for a green indication when taking the Kalamazoo and three flatcars back to the Shops



One final tie to install on the Miller Park Siding – Mike M., Joe, and Heather in the scarifier/insertor make quick work of it



Meanwhile, on the Main, Scott fires-up the spike-puller. Fred and Alan assist.



Frank operating the tie-shear slices and dices through ties like the Ginsu Knife slices and dices through a tomato!



Harry and Heather follow behind the tie-shear dropping new ties for insertion



Harry guides Frank in the tie-shear as it cuts its way up the Mainline



The tie-shear's "kickers" kick-out sliced tie-ends



Look at this mess that Frank made – and, it's before lunch!



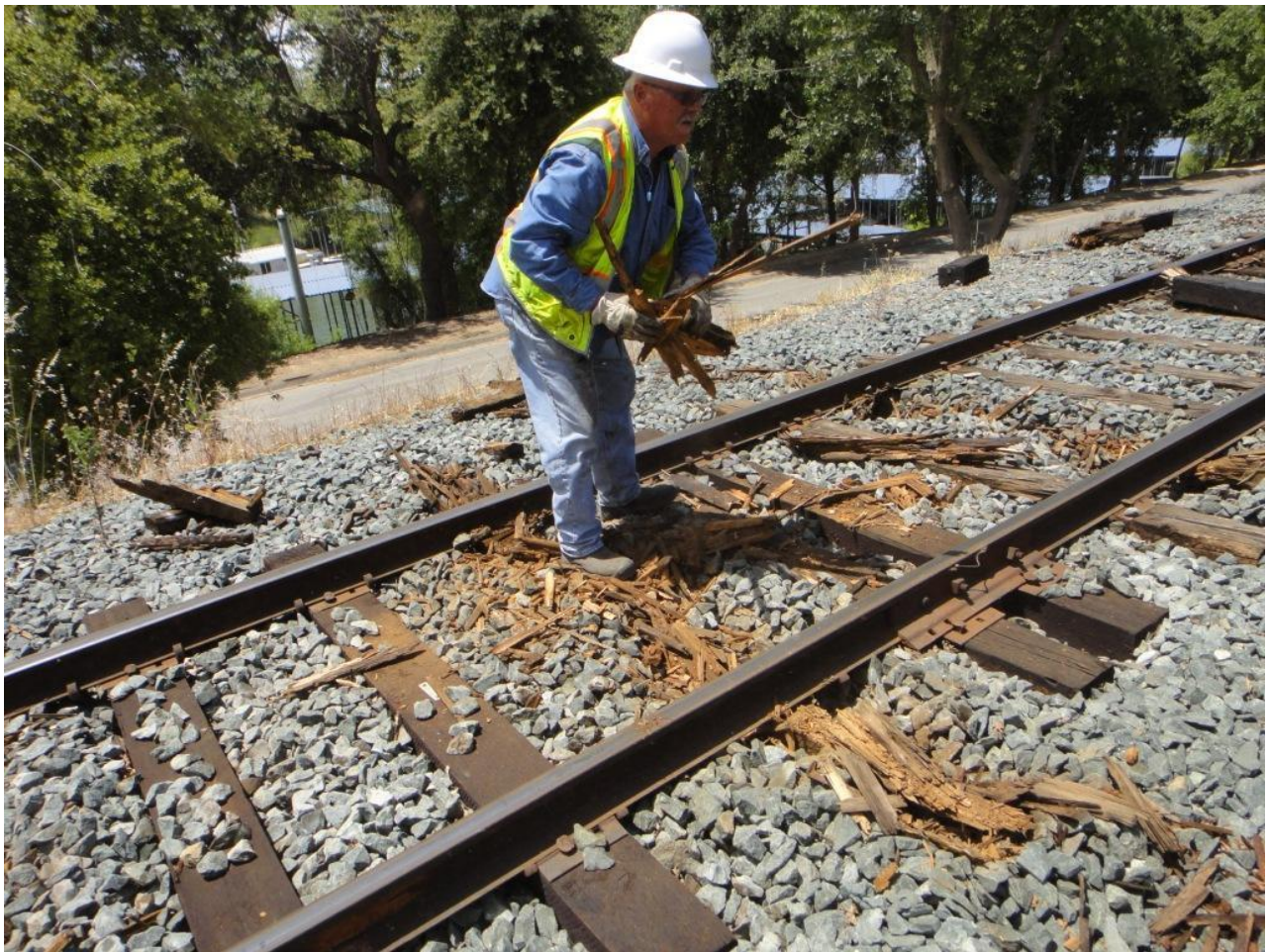
The Granite Rock No. 10 travels north on the Miller Park Siding past our working limits on the Main



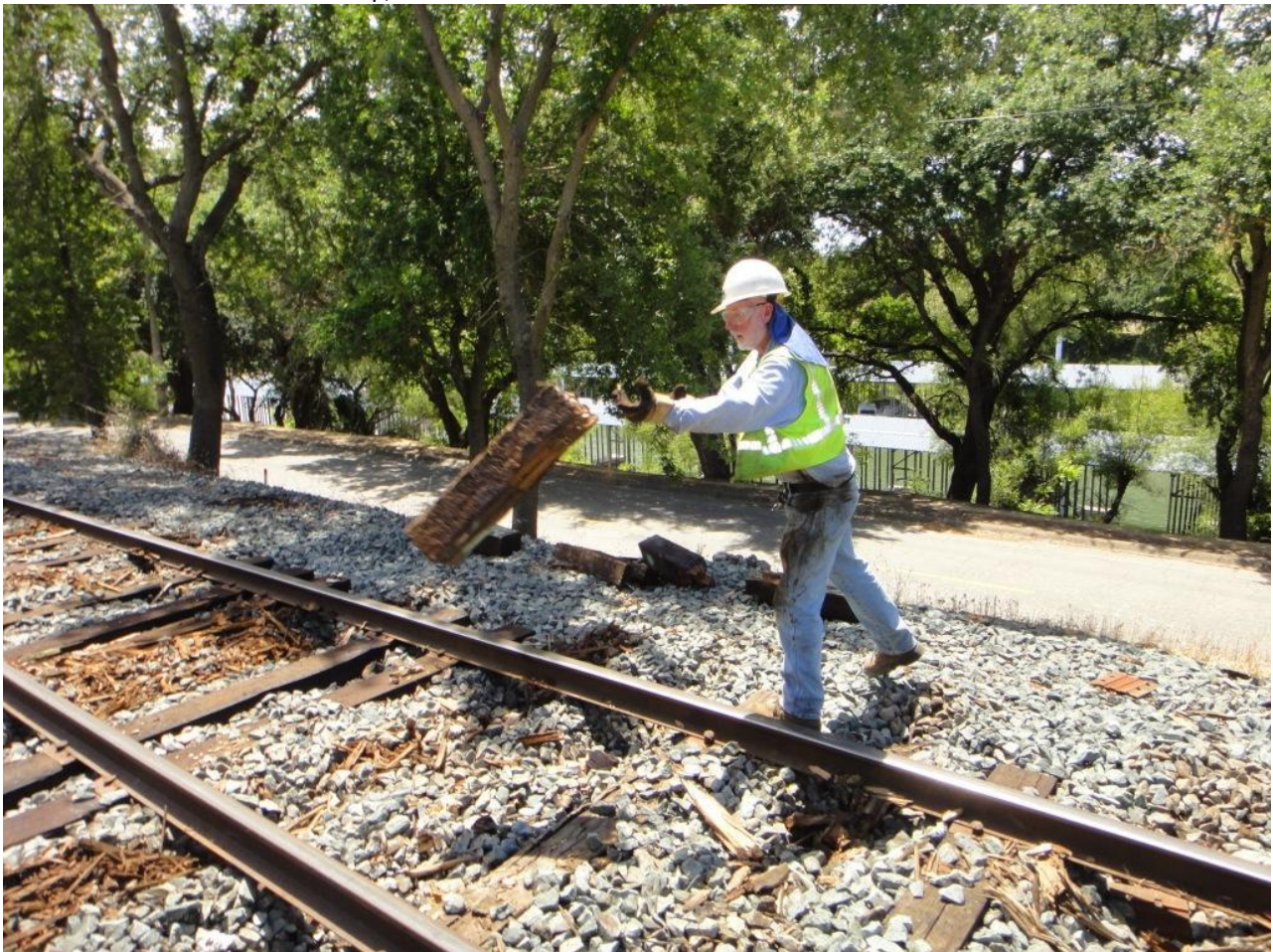
Three cheers for Judy! Joe, Alan, Al, Dale, Mike M., and the whole MOW Team enjoy pizza lunch thanks to Judy! Hip-hip, hurrah!



Signals Al and Dale guarantee a safe passage of the train across Front Street by manually deploying the grade-crossing warning system



That was a tie? Yep, Scott tosses what remains of a tie under the Miller Park Mainline



Mike M. clears the line of ties sheared in three by the tie-shear



Mike H. in the scarifier/inserter and Joe insert the new ties



New ties ready to pull-in