

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for June 10, 2018. Your MOW Team was humming right along all week continuing its never-ending quest to build a better railroad. So let's keep the humming going by getting this update started right now.

The MOW fun started Tuesday with Pat Scholzen, Jack Shrive, Cliff Hayes, Mike Harris, Joe Margucci, Steve Nemeth, Gene Peck, Heather Kearns, and Alan Hardy. Our miracle workers, Mike H. and Joe, took on the malfunctioning Kalamazoo. For some unbeknownst reason, it started belching hydraulic fluid out the transmission. Not good – especially for such a valuable machine. So, Joe and Mike H. delved into the problem, removed the floorboards to access the transmission, waved their magic socket-wrenches and, bibbidi-bobbidi-boo, it was fixed. What a relief! The MOW Team is so fortunate to have mechanical miracle workers like Mike H. and Joe volunteering their considerable skills. With all motorcars and the Kalamazoo tug out of service, our ability to get down the line has been impaired. So, Gene and Jack found the "Rail-Rod," a, rail-mounted, self-propelled rail-cart, and spent the evening getting it working again. It took a little coaxing to get started as it hasn't been used in a while. But soon, with a few pulls on the pull-start, it took-off! Gene and Jack had the Rail-Rod flying! Now, we have an alternative means to get down the line. While everyone else was working in the Shops, Steve commandeered the Interpretive Handcar Program's (IHP) MT-14 motorcar, stored in the Central Pacific Passenger Station (CPPS), as it was the only available means for getting down to the Suttersville Line to take care of a minor issue down there. It was a successful evening, indeed. Everything went right thanks to our dedicated MOW Team!

Thursday morning, Mike Taylor, Dave Wolf, and Ed Kottal convened the mighty Weed Team for a return trip to Hood. The Weedies mowed the driveway to the container, cut overhanging limbs that brushed-up against motorcar out on the line, and cleared the dead weed stalks from spraying to the south end of the fourth trestle. Mike T. declared it a very satisfactory day. After returning to the Shops, Ed and Mike T. renewed work restoring one of the old DR field-and-brush mowers to service. Yes, it was another exceptional effort for the keepers of the Hood dream!

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Heather, Joe, Mike H., and Jack had lots to do. Now miraculously repaired thanks to Mike H. and Joe, the Kalamazoo could return to Old Sacramento and be pressed into service once again. Joe, Mike H., and Jack got it, along with a couple flatcars containing switch materials, all hooked up and ready to roll. Conductor Heather arranged a super-speedy crossing of the UP Main. In Old Sac., the Kalamazoo and cars were stowed in the CPPS. Then, once again, the Team requisitioned the IHP motorcar, which pulls a passenger trailer and could accommodate everyone, to replace the stolen switch-target at Switch 20. While down there, the Team assessed a few other issues including a stiff switch-stand at Switch 17. Back at the Shops, the Team got some things ready for Saturday's operation.

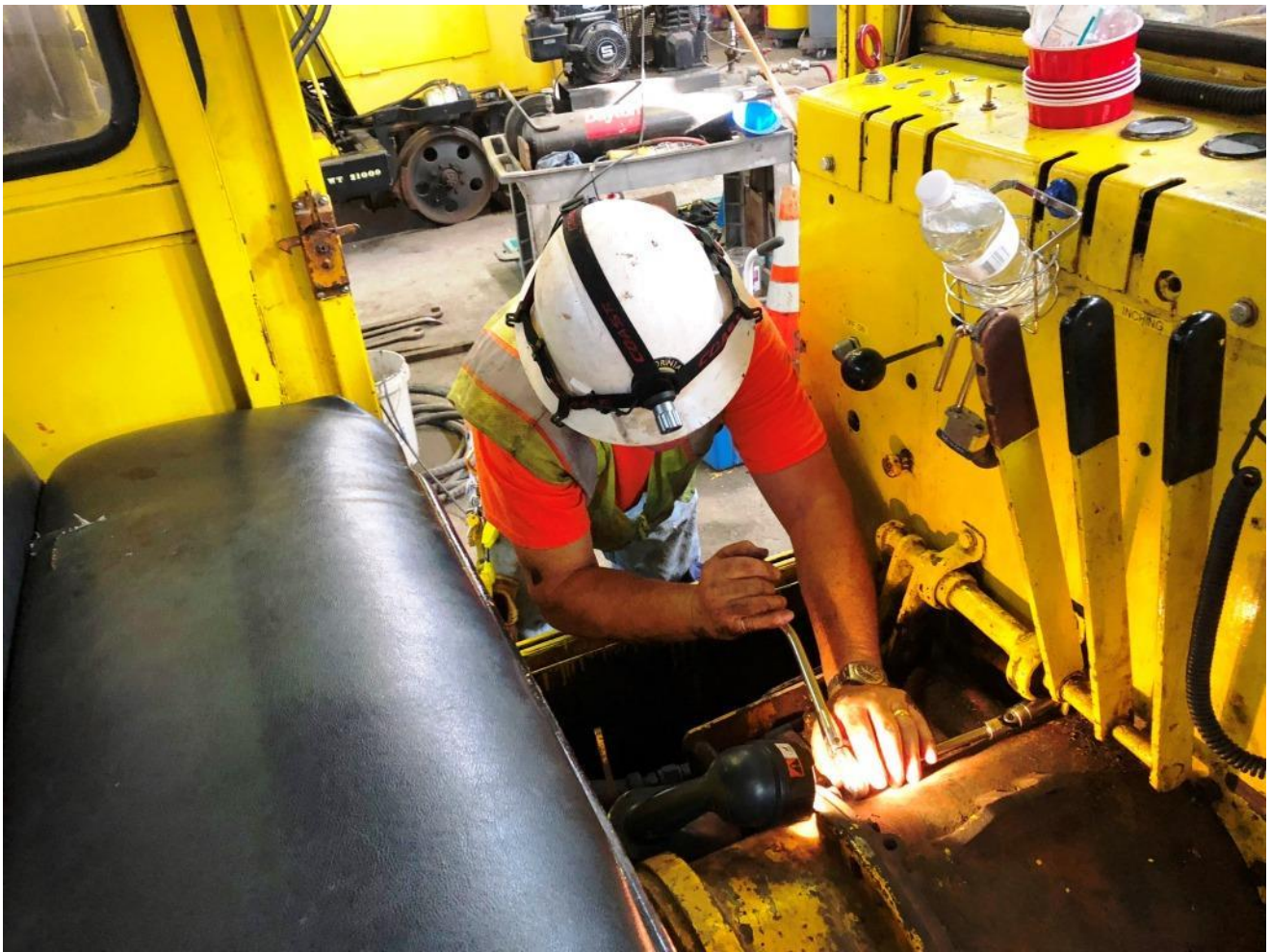
Joe, Clem Meier, Bill Hastings, Michael Florentine, Mike H., Harry Voss, Ed, Pam Tatro, John Rexroth, Heather, and Kyle Blackburn were not disappointed when they arrived at the Shops on Saturday morning because doughnuts were on scene, already. The day's plan was to reconnect the 150-Track behind the Museum. Because the switch we're building for the new storage track is a 110-pound switch, the existing 113-pound rail needs to be replaced. We've tried to have the track in-service at the end of each work day. But, as you may recall from last week, a discontinuity in the rails remained after Green Machine 2 suffered a catastrophic breakdown which impeded the reconnection of the track. However, as our hearts are pure and cause is just, we put that unpleasantness behind us and picked up where we left off. Ed climbed aboard the back-hoe. Clem and Mike H. attached the rail-tongs to grab the disconnected sticks of 113-pound rail. Interpreting "Gandy-Dancing," Joe, Kyle, and Bill used lining bars to shimmy the 110-rail into place. Bill bolted-up the south rail at both ends while Pam, Ed, and Mike H. deployed the rail-drill to drill bolt-holes at the north end. Clem, Harry, Mike F., and Mike H. used the joint-bar as a template to "mark the spots" of where to drill. MOW Team regular, Chris Machado, stopped by on his break as Saturday's Granite Rock 10 fireman and exclaimed, "Give me shovel, I'm ready to work!" After aggressively seeking a job-briefing, Chris went right to work. Four bolt-holes needed drilling so Chris, Clem, Joe, Mike F. got the drill attached to the rail and lined-up. Kyle and Pam kept the drill-bit cool by spraying it with a constant stream of water from the hand-pump. Then, Chris, Mike F., Kyle, Mike H., and John got the joint-bars attached and tightened the bolts. Yea! The track was reconnected.

After lunch, Frank Werry joined us to help with the remaining tasks. First, the head-blocks were high on the west side near the bike-lane fence. They had to undercut to level out. Mike F. and Joe moved the ground-throw switch machine and scooted head-blocks over. Then Bill, Kyle, Mike F., Joe, Ed, John, and Heather all got to digging. Next, it was time to gauge and spike down the track. The 150-Track has an "S" curve in it and, at this point, was "kinked" rather than curved at the joints. First, track-jacks were deployed horizontally back-to-back and used to spread the rail to the proper gauge. But then Heather brought out the proper tools – the rail-spreaders which are much easier to use and designed for this purpose. As the line was re-gauged, it was plated and spiked. Although Joe, who demonstrated his credentials as a human machine, would have hand-spiked the entire line by himself, the EIC, or "micro-manager-in-chief," insisted the Team use the hydraulic spike-driver which Bill and Kyle deployed. Bill, John, and Frank all got in on the spiking action as Ed, Mike F., Joe, Heather, Harry, and Mike F. set spikes and nipped ties. With the track re-gauged and last spike driven, the Team took a good look at the track and saw a beautiful "S" curve with no kinks, just as it should be. Clearly, this incredible Team does the kind of quality work that professional mainline railroads can only envy.

This coming week, the MOW Team will congregate in the Erecting Shops on Tuesday and Thursday evening starting at or before 5 o'clock p.m. Thursday, the mighty Weed Team will also marshal forces on Tuesday to spray weeds around the container at Hood and then again on Thursday to continue mowing at Hood. Meet at the Shops both days at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, the Team will work on the next stages of switch construction starting at 8 o'clock a.m. Many, many thanks to all the hard working volunteers of the MOW Team!

See you out on the line,

Alan and Richard.



Miracle worker Mike H. waves the magic socket-wrench and, bibbidi-bobbidi-boo, the Kalamazoo lives!



Steve, with the IHP MT-14 motorcar, on the Sutterville Line



Ed and Mike T. make repairs to the old DR brush mower



Jack and Mike H. take the Kalamazoo and switch-tie laden flatcar out of the Erecting Shop



With a green signal indication from Omaha, Jack in the Kalamazoo pulls the flatcars over the UP Main



Jack and Mike H. with the IHP motorcar and passenger trailer



Joe gets the new target at Switch 20 installed (to replace that stolen by miscreants and malcontents)



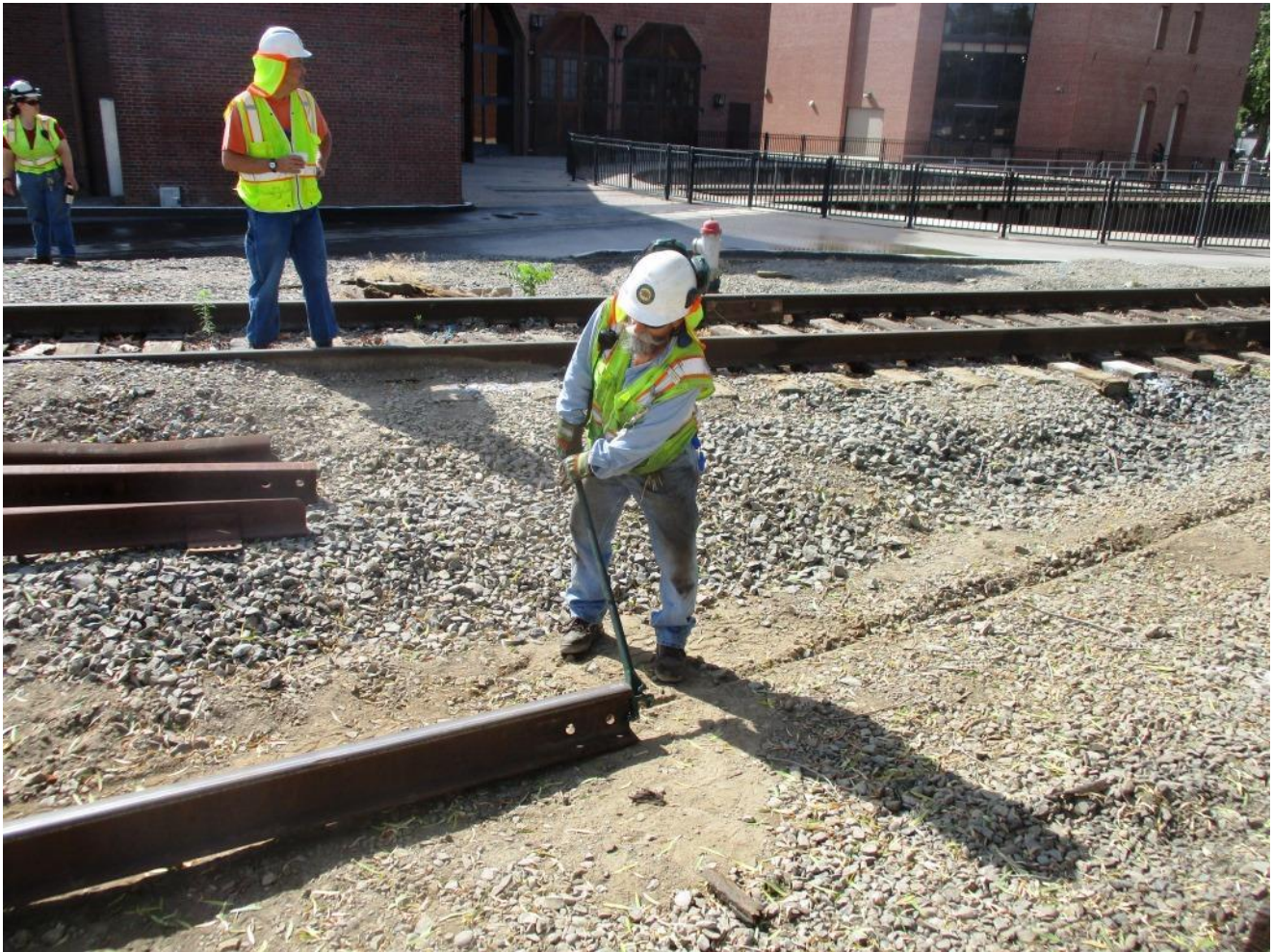
Jack and Mike H. in the MT-14 pass the newly restored switch target at Switch 20



As is becoming a bit of a tradition, the Granite Rock 10 puts on a show for the Saturday morning MOW Team



Ed on the back-hoe pulls a stick of 113-pound rail out of the way



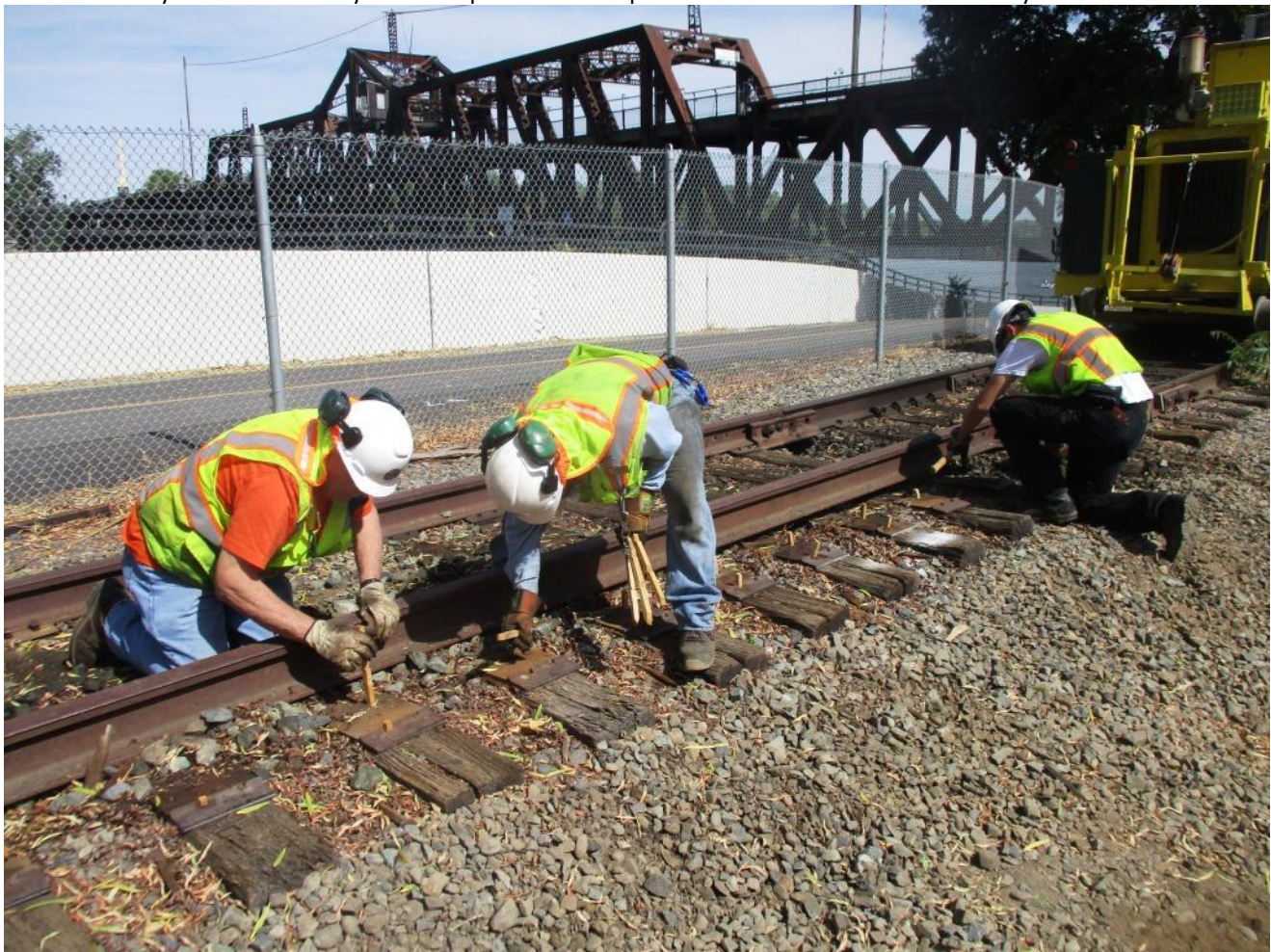
Joe uses the rail-fork to spin an unturned rail upright



Mike F. guides another stick of 113-pound rail as it is hauled away

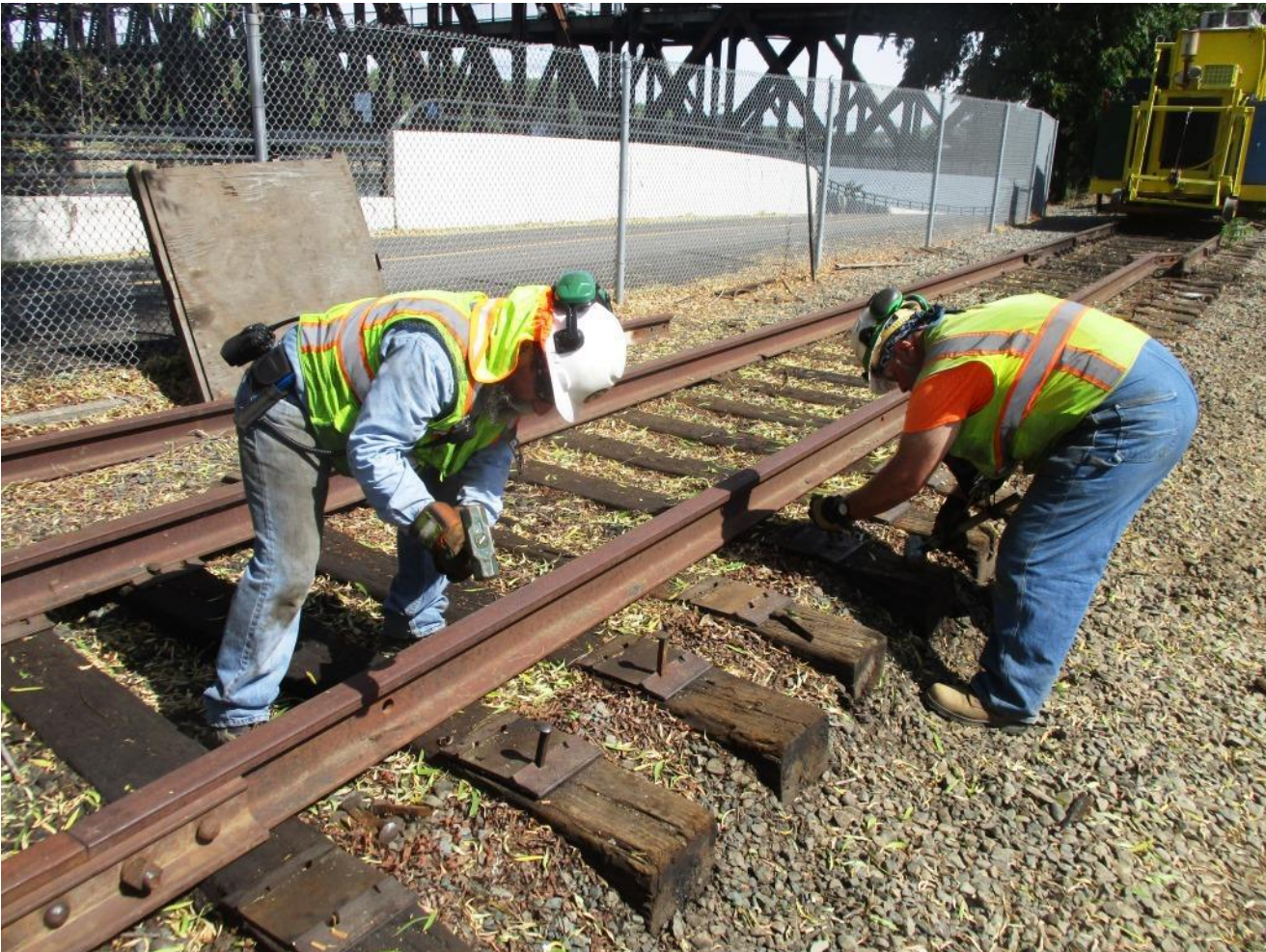


Kyle and Joe shimmy the 110-pound rail into place with a little ol' fashioned "Gandy Dancin'"



Bill, Joe, and Kyle plug old spike holes with tie-plugs

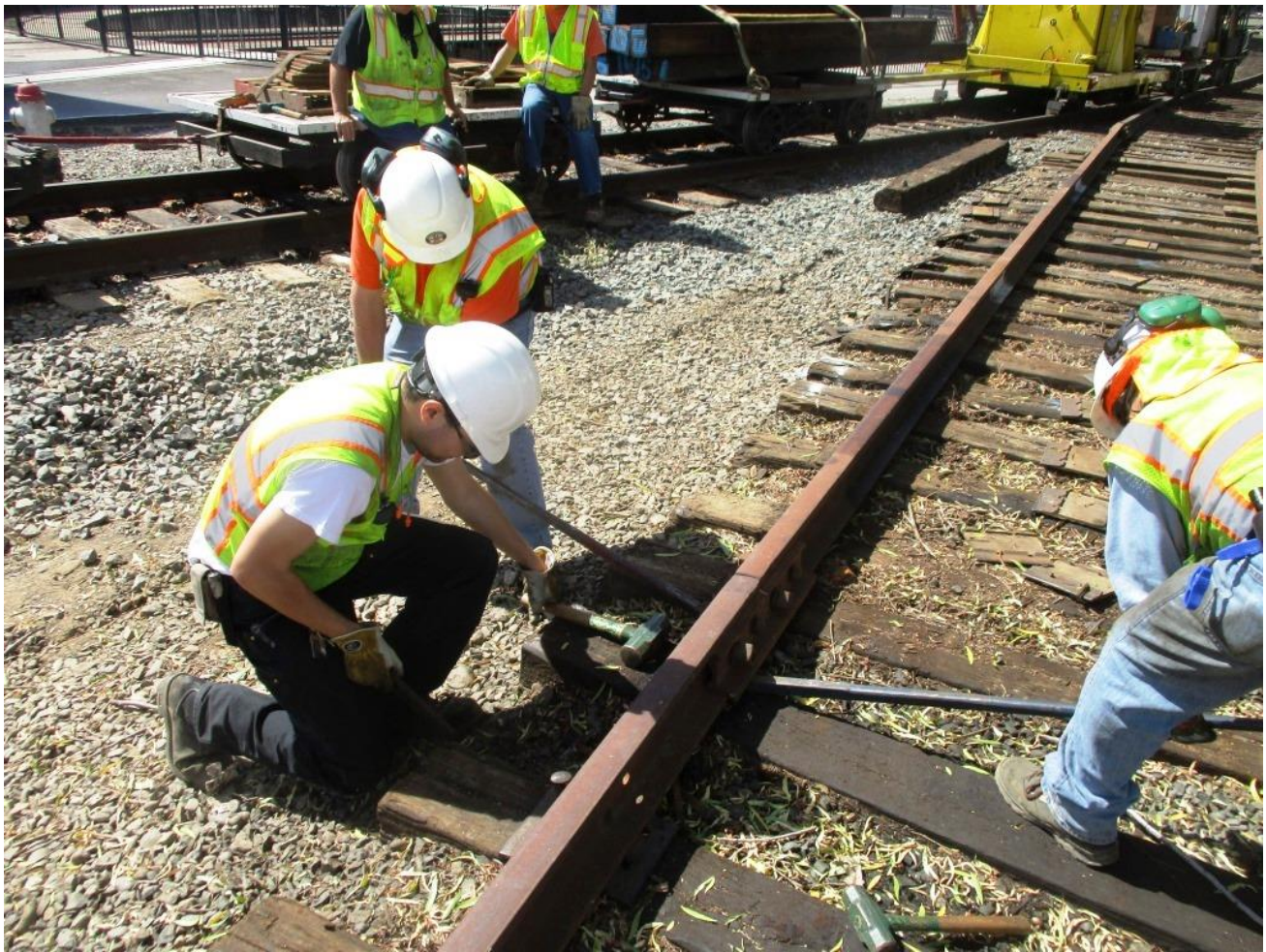




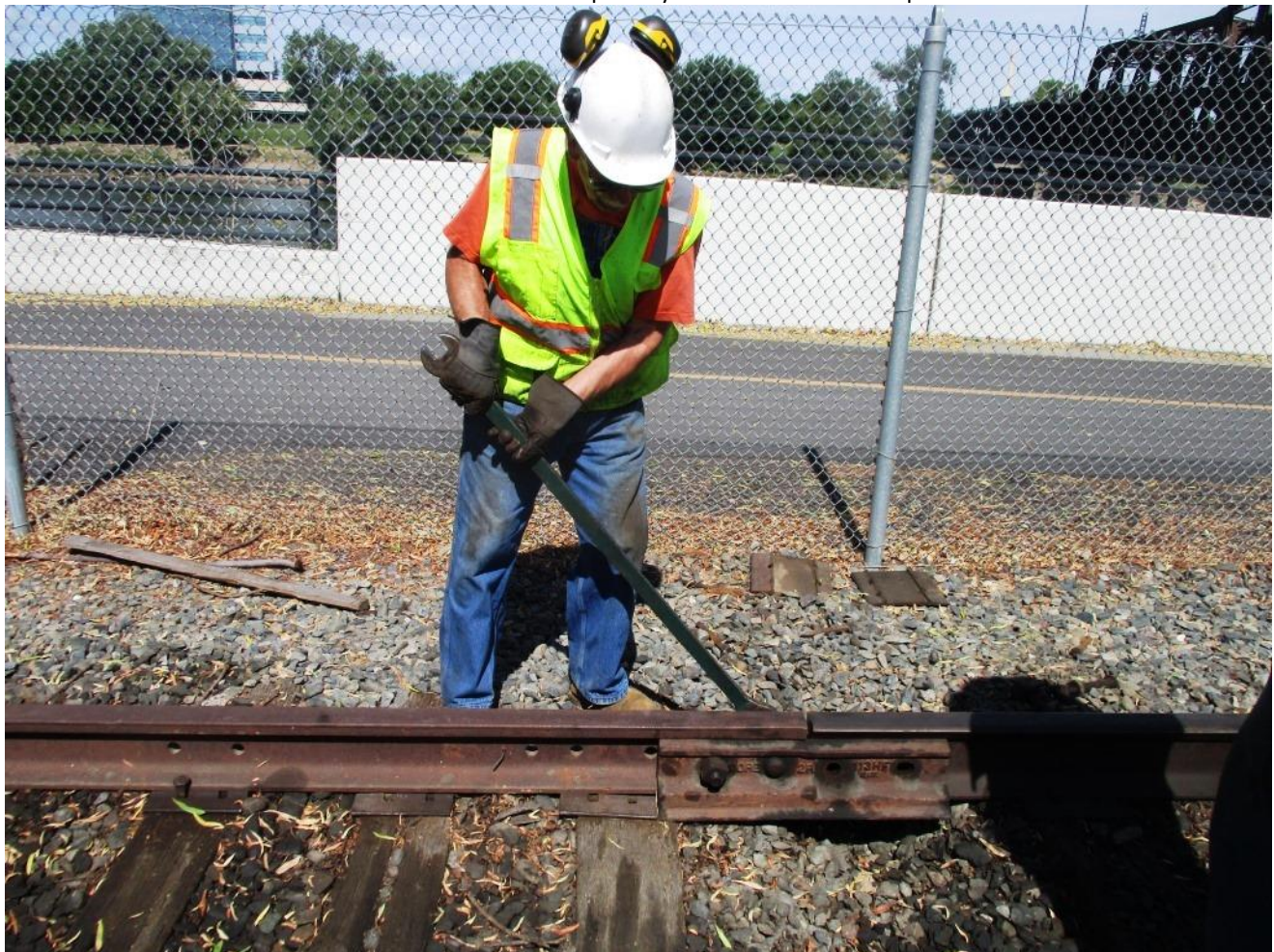
Joe and Mike F. tap-down a few spikes to hold the double-shouldered tie-plates in place when the rail is moved into position



Now Bill and Joe "Gandy Dance" the other 110-pound rail into position



Bill and Joe lever the rail up for Kyle to shim it with a tie-plate



Clem unbolts the south bolts so that holes can be drilled in the north rail



Bill tightens bolts at the south joint



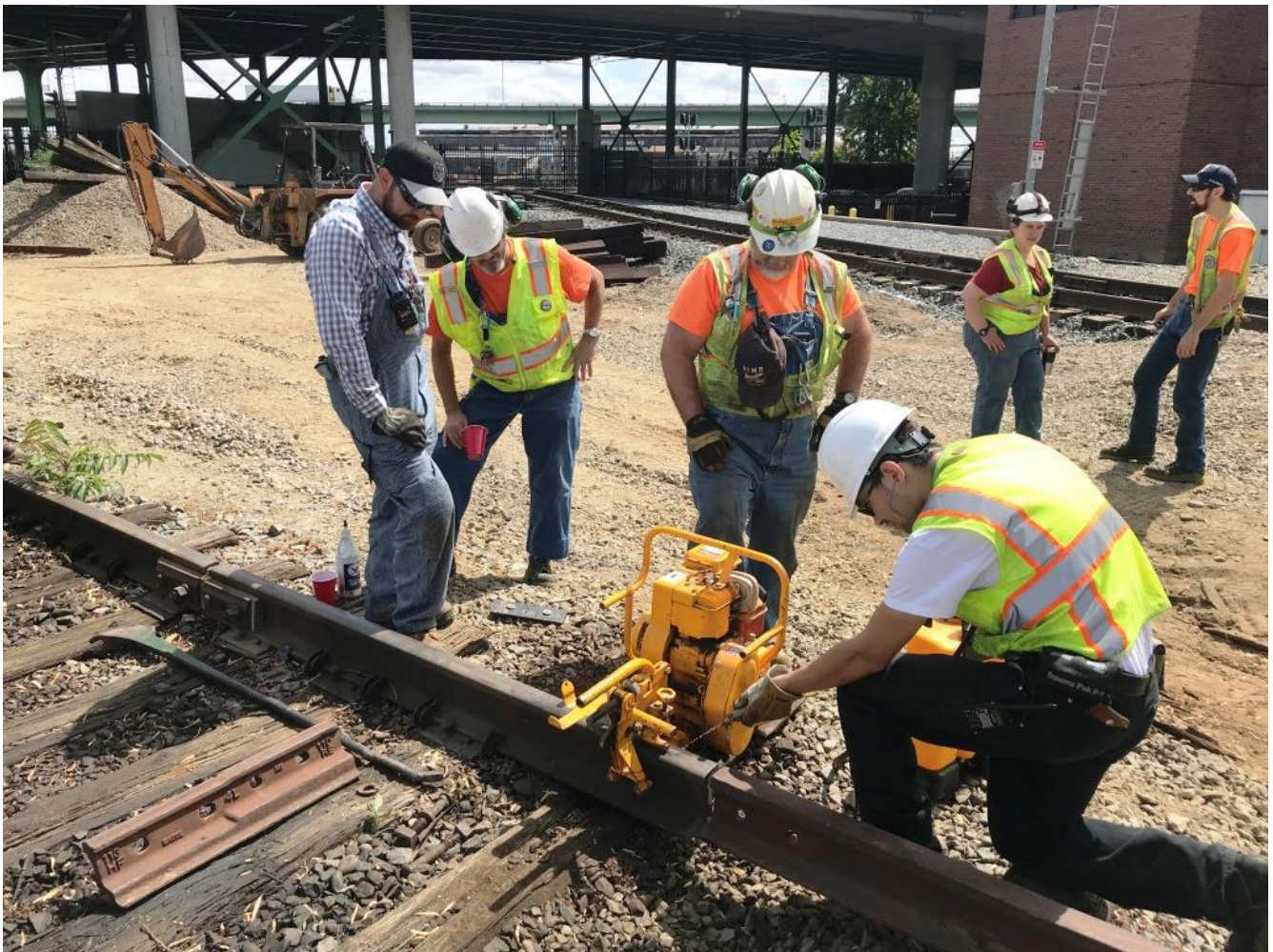
Harry, Clem, and Mike F. get the joint-bar in place to use as a template for drilling new bolt holes in the north rail



Mike H. uses a punch to mark the drill spot



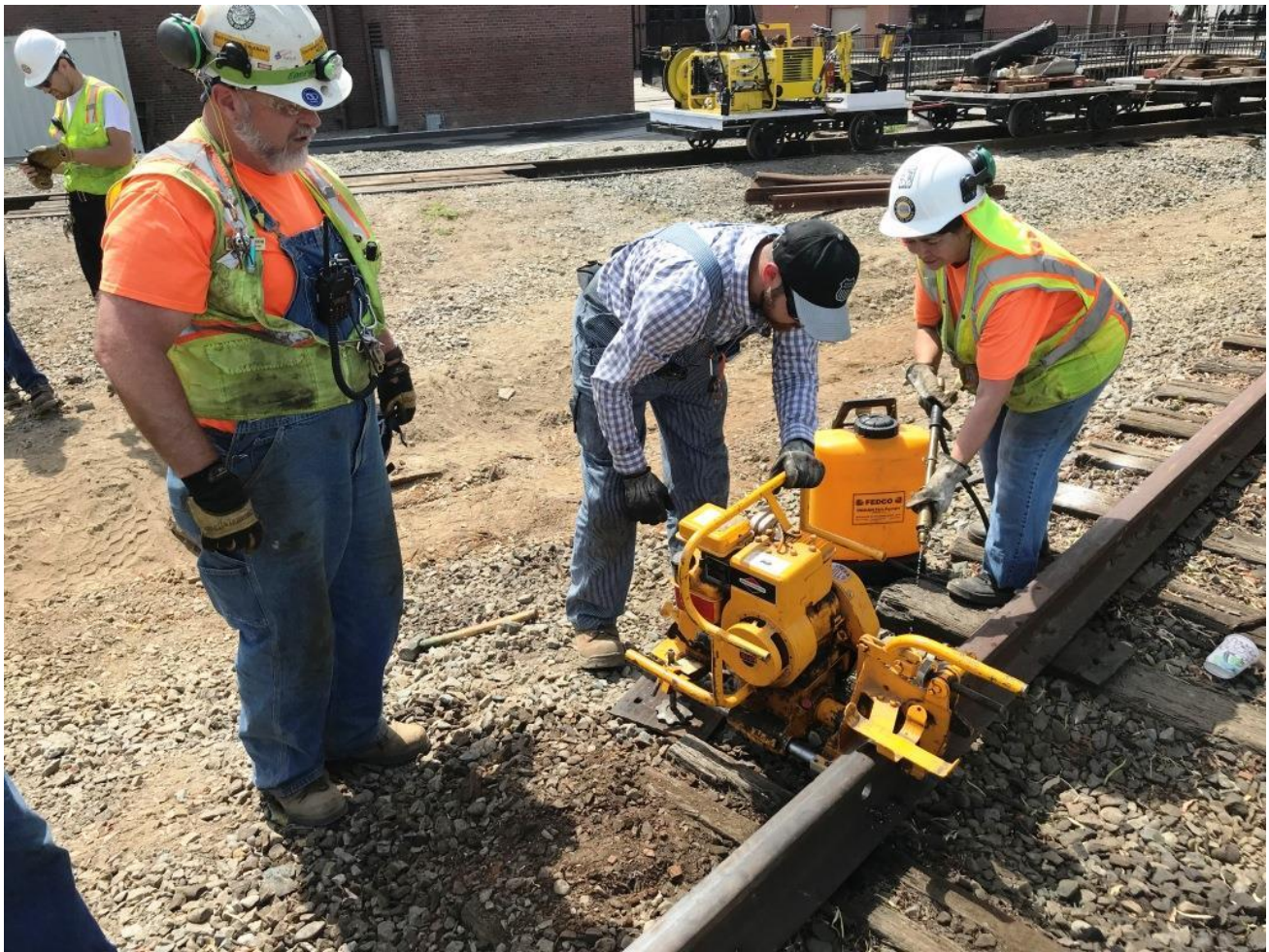
Mike F., Chris, Clem, and Joe line-up and level the heavy and unwieldy rail-drill



With the rail-drill now doing its thing, Chris, Ed, and Mike F. watch and wait while Kyle sprays the spinning bit with water to keep it cool



Kyle sprays water on the spinning drill-bit as it cuts a new bolt-hole in the web of the rail



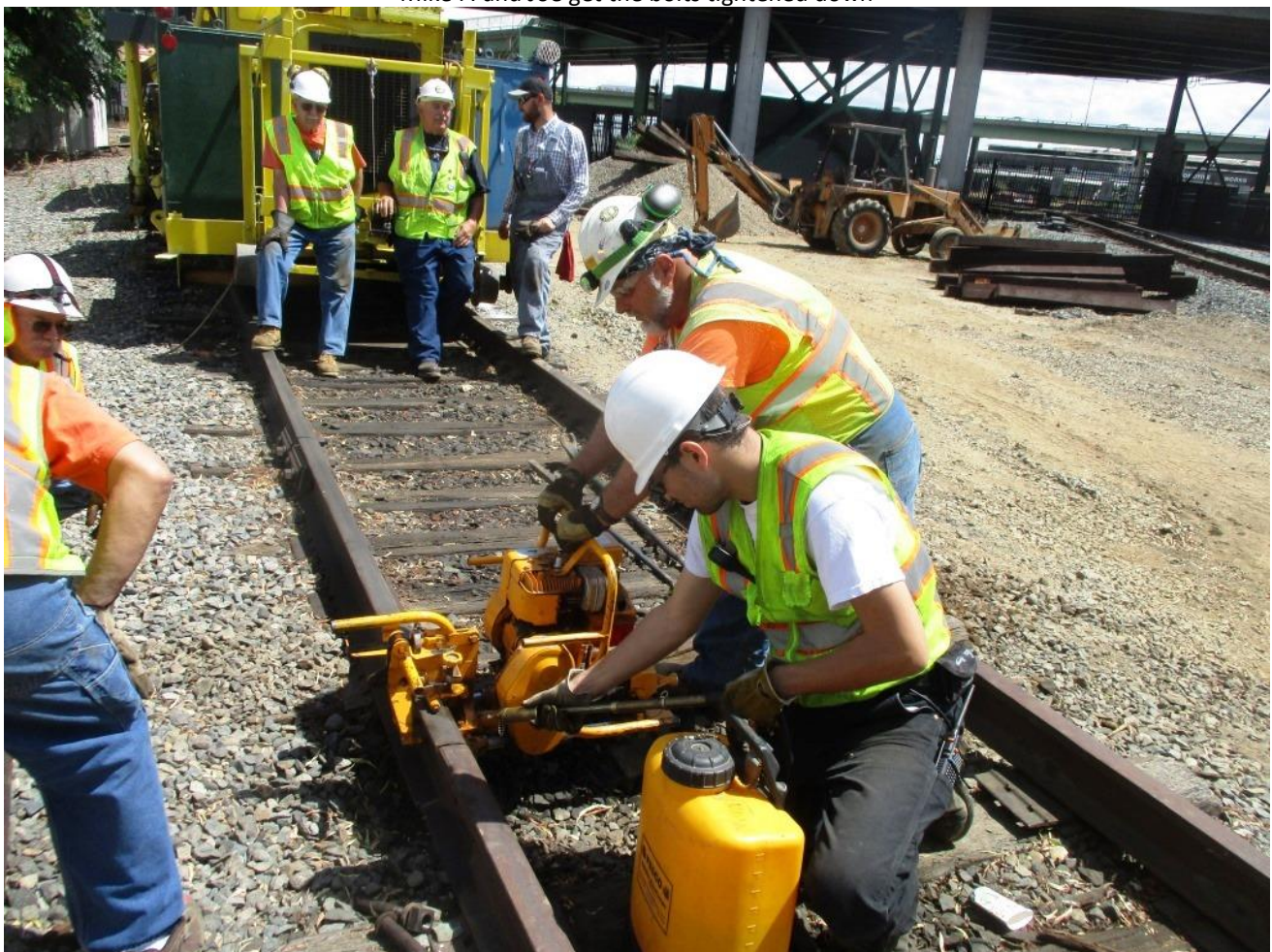
Mike F., Chris, and Pam move on and drill the second hole in the rail



With the holes successfully drilled, Chris and Mike F. get the joint-bar bolted on



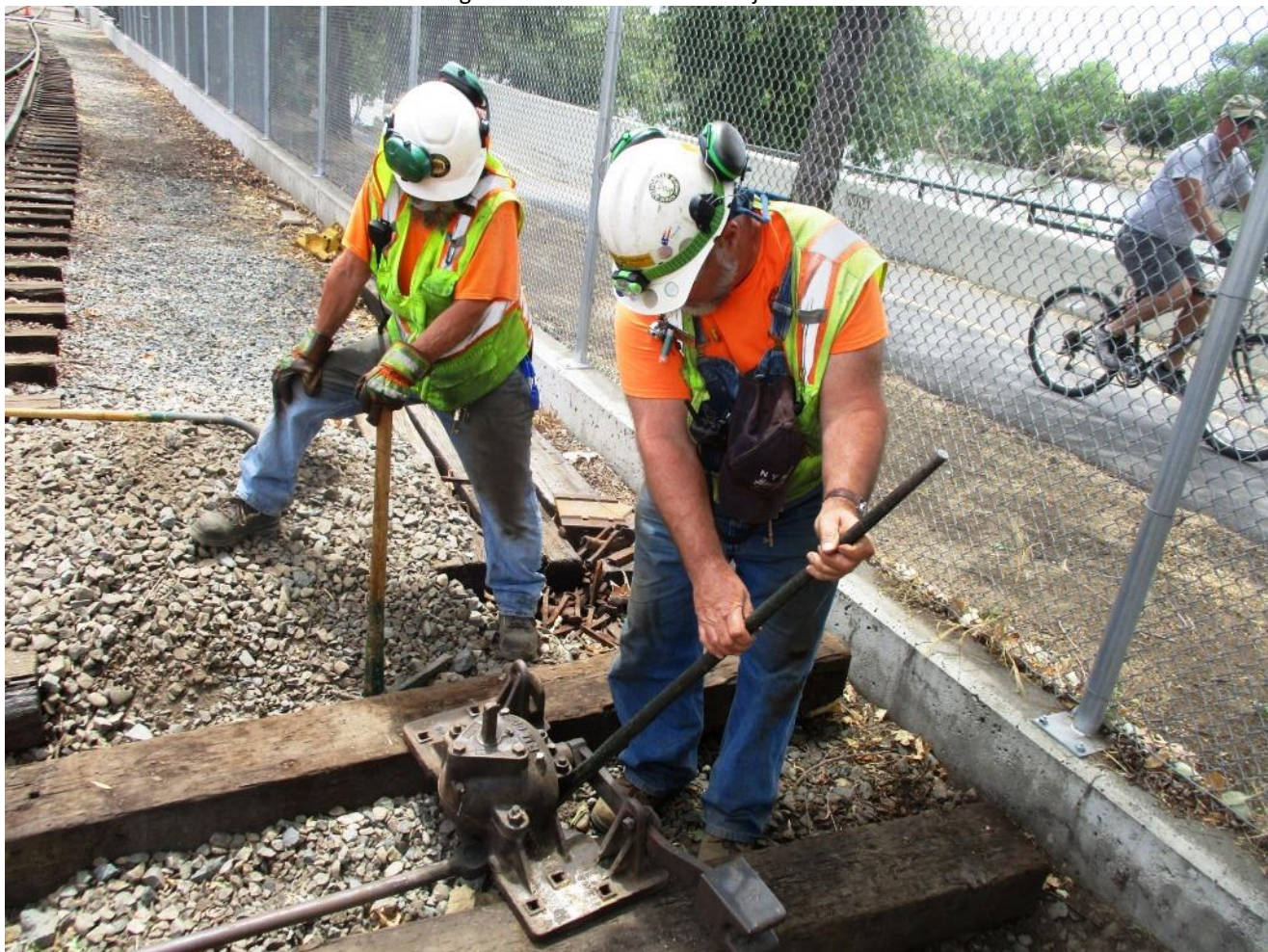
Mike F. and Joe get the bolts tightened down



Now Mike F. and Kyle drill holes in the west rail



Bill tightens the bolts at the next joint south



Joe and Mike F. move the ground-throw switch machine off the head-blocks

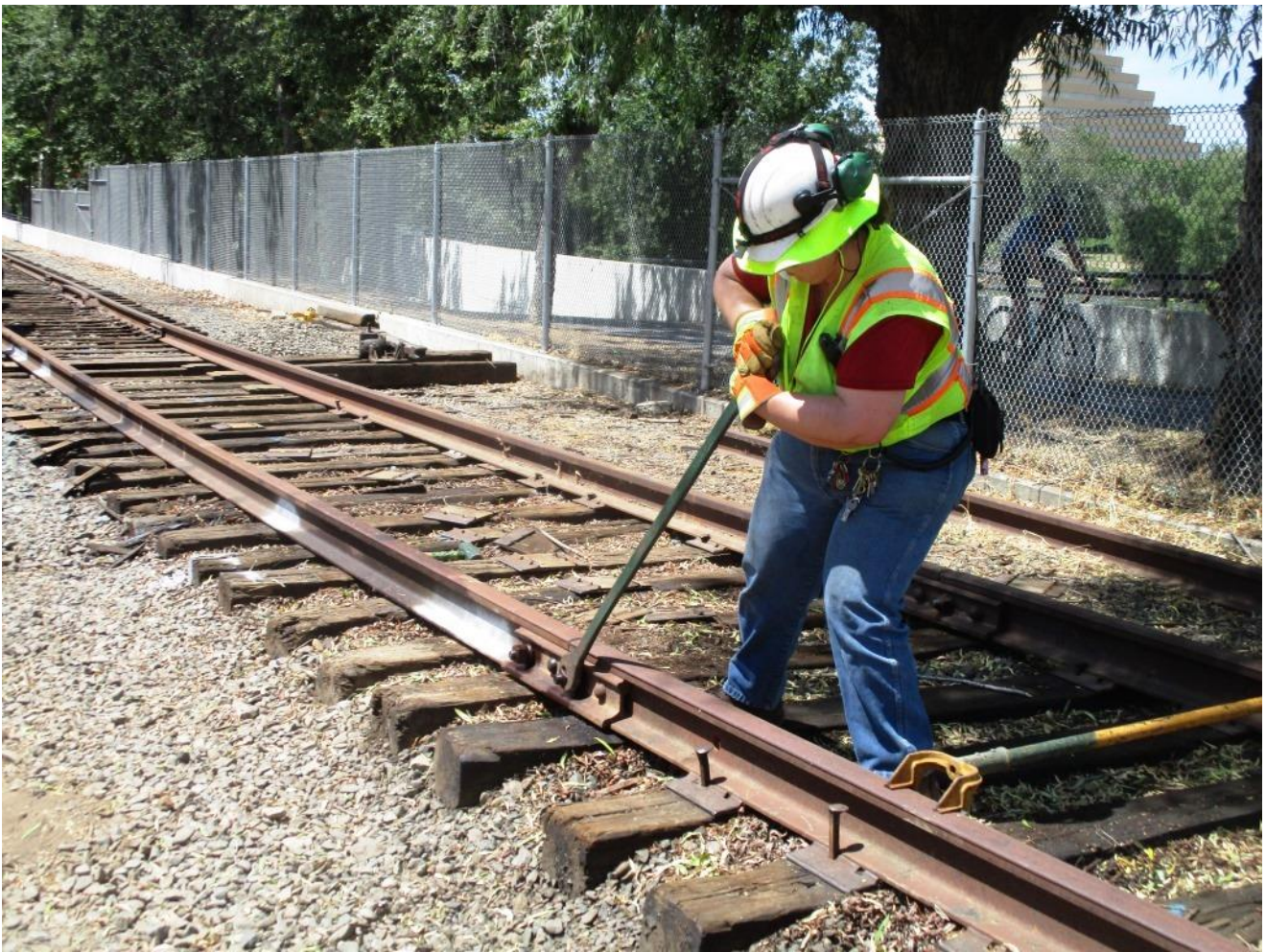




Ed and Kyle shimmy the head-block to the side to make room for digging out the west side



Let the gauging begin!



One of the bolts was the wrong size so, Heather replaced it and tightened it down



With this segment of the track in gauge, Mike H. sets spikes



As Bill, Mike H., and Ed were good boys on Saturday, Heather gave them an extra ration from the sacred pink box!



Kyle moves the Kalamazoo and work-train so as to deploy the hydraulic spike-driver



Bill drives spikes on the east rail with the hydraulic spike-driver as Joe sets spikes on the west rail



Bill drives spikes with the hydraulic spike-driver



John spreads the rails apart until they are in the proper gauge



Frank handles the hydraulic hose for John, who takes on the hydraulic spike-driver as Joe nips up the tie



Frank knocks the tie-plate into position for John to drive the last spike of the day



At the end of the day, Bill, John, Mike F. and Ed stop to admire the lovely, smooth curve they created