

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for June 7, 2015. We're always moving forward. Some weeks, faster than others but, progress is achieved nonetheless. So, let's keep this update moving forward by getting right into it.

The Mighty Weed Team was out in force on Tuesday. Mike Taylor, Heather Kearns, Joe Galipeau, and Dave Megeath set course for Hood to rummage through the briars and brambles. It's a never-ending battle through the jungle-like conditions down there. The Hood Line runs adjacent to Stone Lakes. It's a beautiful area which is why it would be nice to run trains through there and provide access to the public. Up near Mile Post 3.5, Weed Team mercenary Carol Nelson continues the campaign against "goat-head puncture vine" which has spread into the area. Thanks to the Weed Team's efforts, the old adage that, "Every day is one day closer to running trains at Hood," is true!

Meanwhile, back at the shops, Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Gene Peck, Frederick Carr, and Mike Harris were making lots of progress on many important projects. Unfortunately, I can't really provide any specifics. I (Richard) wasn't in the Shops on Tuesday. Due to paid-employment pressures, I was forced to adjust my track inspection schedule from Monday to Tuesday evening. So, I was out inspecting the track while Alan was probably painting something, Pat probably cooking something, Cliff welding something, Gene adjusting something, Fred making something, and Mike H. fixing something. You can bet the rent that progress was made in the Shops – despite my absence...

Thursday, I can report that Alan, Heather, Fred, Cliff, Joe Rivera, and Mike H. took on a very important task. Our good friends with the SSRR Mechanical Department were concerned that the wheels of the Granite Rock 10 might be impacting the point of the frog in the turnout at Switch 20 (south switch at Baths). After much conferring, the Team decided to install gauge-rods between the frog and guard-rail on the theory that the lateral forces of the GR10's large drivers in the curve may be pulling the guard-rail towards the frog thus diminishing the its effectiveness. The gauge-rods would provide rigidity and allow the two components to act as one piece. Wasting no time, Mike H., Frank, Heather, Joe, and Alan headed to Baths. Frank, Mike H., Heather, and Joe began digging under the frog and guard-rail to make room for the rods and clamps. Alan deployed his trusty patio chair and "directed." Joe brought in the rods and he and Mike H. got them into the correct positions. Nuts were tightened down and multiple measurements taken. Everything was compliant with federal regulations. In fact, the turnout qualifies to Class 3-4 track standards (we're Class 2). We would need to see it under load to determine if this solution worked.

Saturday, Miller Park would be our destination. Chris Carlson started the day off right with a big pink box of doughnuts to fuel the Team. Heather, Joe, Michael Florentine, Clem Meier, Frank, Alan, and John Rexroth made quick work of its contents. With the Amtrak Exhibit Train in Old Sacramento, we could not bring bundles of ties over from the Rail Yards. But, there was lot of other stuff to do. At Miller Park, we had 71 ties in the ground that needed plating and spiking. The most difficult job was filling the cribs around those ties with rock by hand. Shifting rock by hand is an *arduous* task. Frank, Heather, John, Joe, and Mike all took up shovels and got a good work-out. The ties need sufficient rock around them in order to provide adequate support when tamped. Alan in the scarifier and Clem needed to pull out a tie that had been inserted catawampus last week. They got the tie out, crib scarified and re-inserted. Then, they inserted three more which didn't get put in last week. Heather, John, and Chris began loading tie debris onto a flatcar for disposal at Setzer. The Team continued digging and shifting rock through the remainder of the morning while it was still cool enough to do this kind work. But, before we knew it, it was 11 o'clock. The Team needed to get to Baths to see if the gauge-rod solution at the frog problem worked. Everyone watched closely as the Granite Rock 10 passed over the frog at speed. It looked good. Initial observations indicate that this may have alleviated the problem.

The mechanized portion of operation began in the afternoon. First, the tamper was deployed to tamp the ties snugly up against the base of the rails. Then the rail-lifter was utilized to place tie-plates. Joe climbed in the tamper and Mike F. guided him to the ties that needed tamping. Heather staged tie-plates at each new tie so that Chris, John, and Frank could get them in place using the lifter. Unfortunately, the tamper suffered a bit of a malfunction. Concerned that it might fail completely and block the Mainline if we tried to nurse it back to town, the decision was made to secure it and leave it on site. The Team will retrieve it on Tuesday. All that digging tuckered-out everyone. So, we packed up and headed back to town. This project is moving along quite nicely. We're in a good place to pick up next week where we left off.

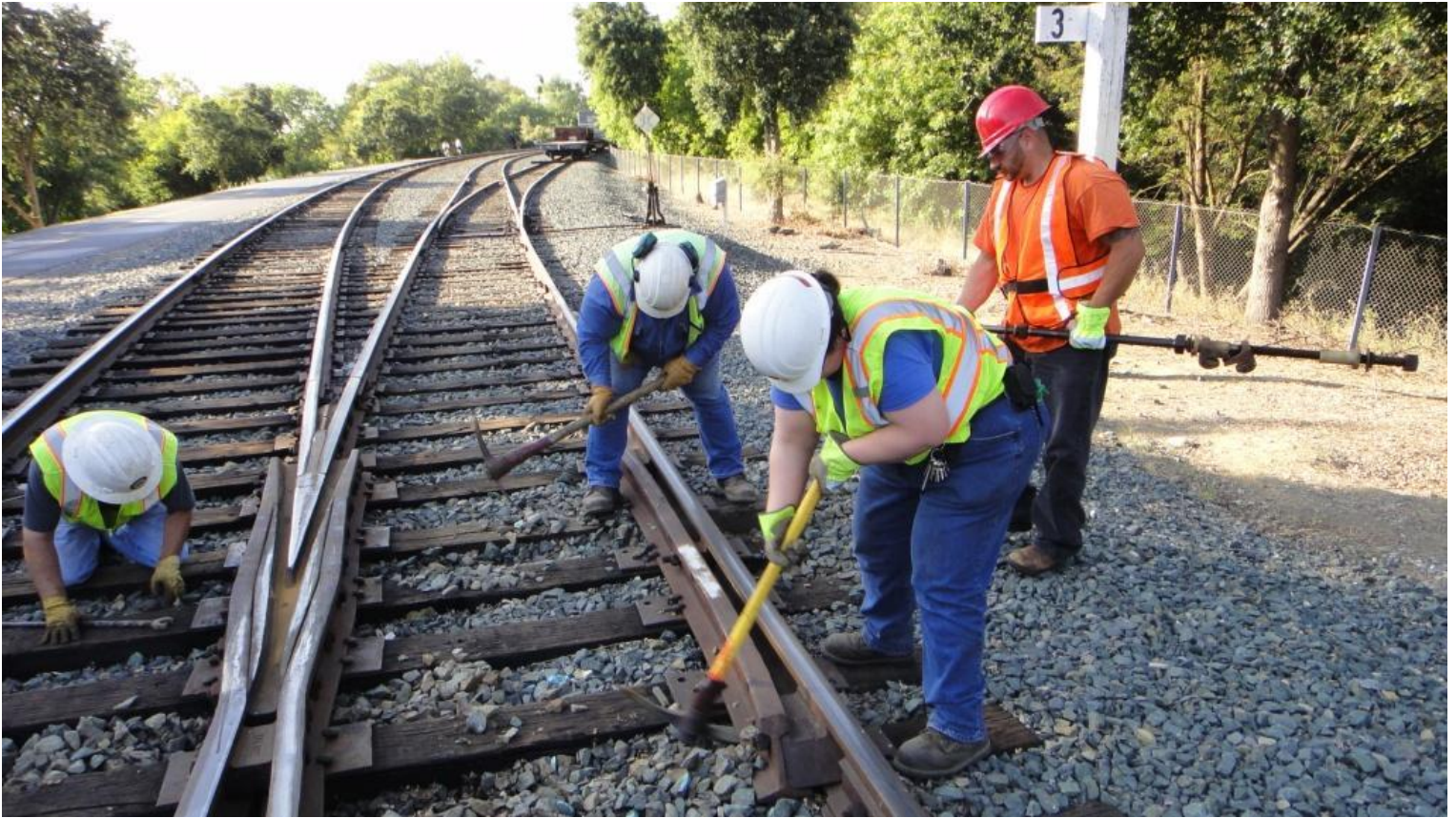
The MOW Team sends a big thank you to Team manager and chief doughnut supplier, Chris Carlson, for arranging a donation of nearly *1,000 gallons* of diesel fuel from Bayer Pharmaceuticals. This diesel will feed our equipment, as well as the locomotives, for quite some time and will save us all a tremendous amount of money. Thanks, Chris, for all your efforts on behalf of the MOW Team and entire railroad!

Important announcement: the make-up session of Part 214 Roadway Worker Safety Training will take place next Saturday, June 13th at 10 o'clock a.m. in the Stanford Gallery. This is likely the last time we will be offering this training (required by federal law) this year. If you have taken Part 214 in previous years and have a white binder please bring it with you. If not, we will have a limited supply on hand.

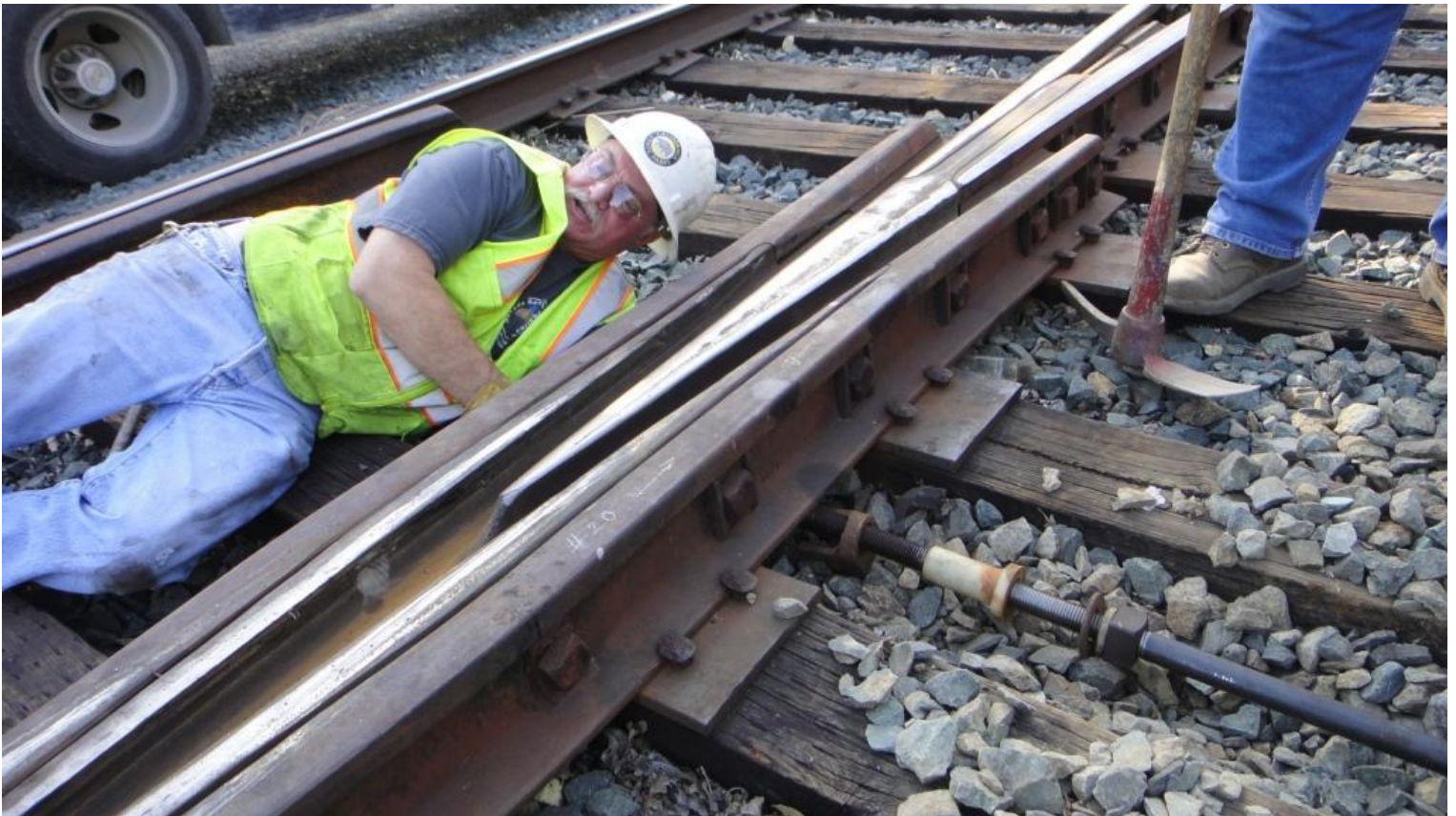
This coming week promises to be a promising one. The Weed team is taking Tuesday off but the Shops crew will meet at or before 5 o'clock in the Erecting Shop. Same goes for Thursday. Saturday, anticipate more fun at Miller Park. Call time is 8 o'clock. There are 30 holes in the ground awaiting new ties. Many thanks to the dedicated MOW Team who keep the wheels rolling on the rails!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Joe brings in a gauge rod for installation while Mike H. Frank, and Heather dig out the rock under the frog and guard-rail to make room



Mike H. is not lying down on the job. He's reaching under the frog to grab gauge-rod which needs to be hooked to the base on his side



Mike H. and Frank measure *guard-face* and *guard-check* while Joe tightens down the gauge-rod



The Team surveys the successful installation of three gauge-rods at the frog of Switch 20



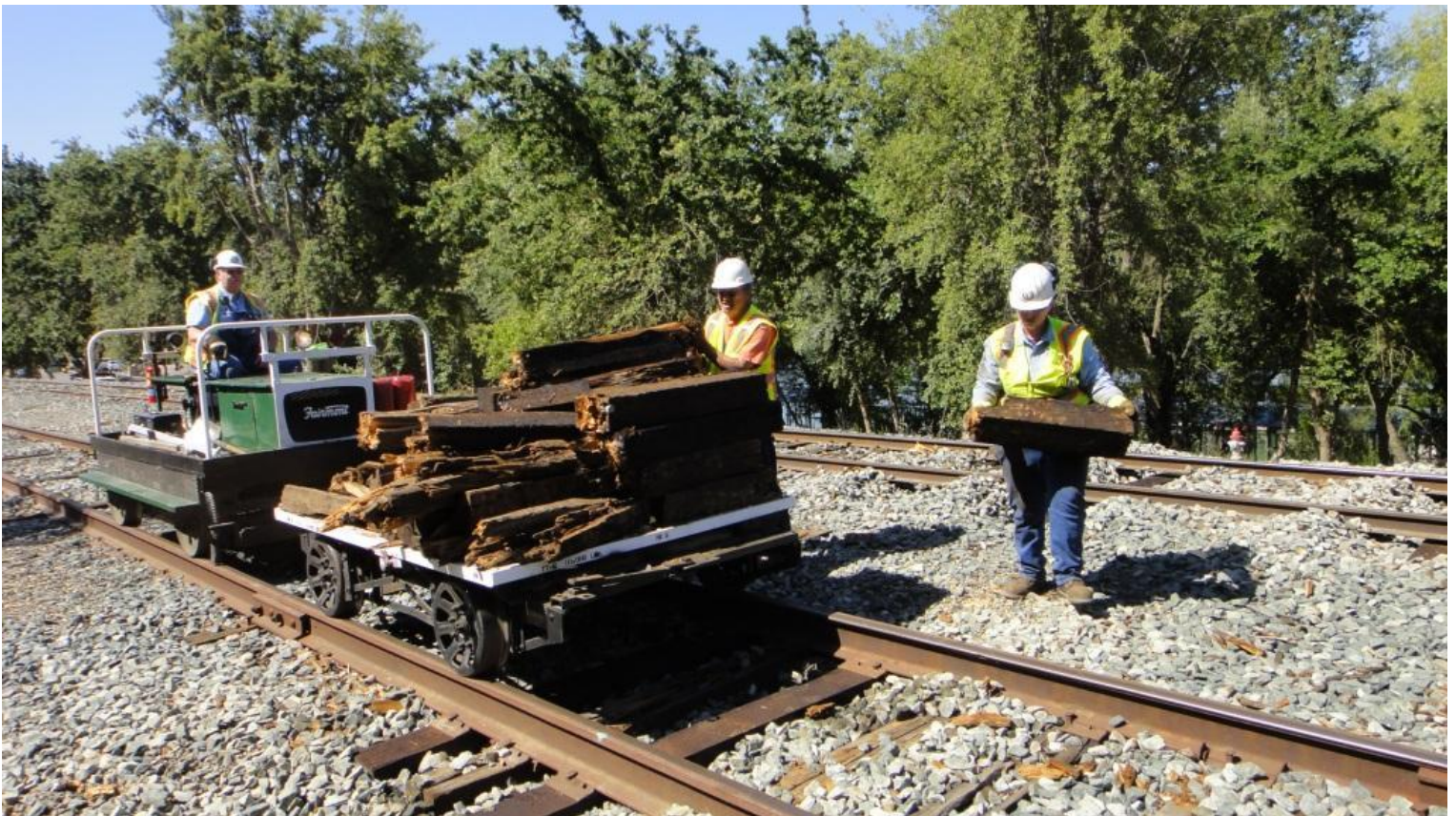
Alan, having deployed his trusty patio chair, keeps the Team on task...



Saturday at Miller Park, Alan and Clem put the extension drum and guard on the scarifier/insertor



John and Heather load tie debris on a flat-car while Frank and Mike F. shift rock into the cribs of newly inserted ties



Chris pilots the motorcar as John and Heather load the flat car with tie debris



Clem and Alan pull out half-installed tie went in catawampus and jammed last week



With the tie removed, Alan in the scarifier/insertor digs a more level crib



Dig, dig, dig! Mike F. fills in the crib with rock around a newly inserted tie



Meanwhile, further north, Mike F. guides Joe in the tamper as they tamp the ties installed last week



While deploying the rail-lifter, the crew is distracted by the appearance of the Granite Rock 10 – and who can blame them?



Distraction gone, Chris, Frank, Mike F., and John continuing deploying the rail-lifter



Mike F. operates the rail-lifter so that John and Frank insert tie-plates between the base of the rails and the ties



The Granite Rock 10 passes by while the Team loads the rail-lifter back onto its carriage