

Greetings!

This is you Maintenance of Way Team update for June 8, 2014. What a week! So much got done – success on many fronts. So let's not dilly-dally. Time to get this update rollin'!

The Mighty Weed Team was back in action on Tuesday, clearing the right-of-way from any vegetative impediments. Mike Taylor, Heather Kearns, and Joe Galipeau mowed the siding at Miller Park and the area around the south switch at Miller Park to MP 2.0. Then they headed down the Setzer Line to clear weed-growth from the footpaths from along the track. Once again, the Weedies worked through difficult conditions but the result is a safer railroad for all our volunteers.

Meanwhile, back at the Erecting Shop, Alan Hardy, Chris Carlson, Frederick Carr, Gene Peck, Frank Werry, Mike Harris, and Heather accomplished a tremendous amount. Chris spent the afternoon painting the A-6 motorcar. Now it looks so nice that we almost hate to take it out and get it dirty. Mike H. has taken on the role of EIC of the new-old tamper rebuild and the time had come to shift the work-heads from the old-old tamper onto the new-old tamper. Mike H. organized and planned this tricky move first by mapping then disconnecting the hydraulic lines. A bit of muscle was employed as Fred, Frank, Heather, and Gene using sledge-hammers and rebar to punch out the hefty pins holding the work-heads in place. Chris and Alan operated the two forklifts to lift, pull, twist, and support these apparatuses. Transferring such large, heavy, and awkward equipment proved a logistical challenge. But, Mike H. did a brilliant job bringing it altogether. By close of business on Tuesday, we had the left-side work-head transferred and installed on the new-old tamper.

Thursday, Clem Meier showed up early to continue working on cleaning up the new parking area to the north of the Erecting Shop. This area was littered with nasty things that don't agree with tires. Many thanks to Clem! During the day, Heather applied a second coat of paint on the A-6. In the evening, we were pleased to welcome Matt Blackburn back to the MOW Team. Joining him were Mike H., Alan, Heather, and Frank. Work on the tamper started right where the Team had left off on Tuesday. Now that we had experience, we managed to remove and install the right-side work-head relatively quickly. After hooking up the hydraulic lines, Alan started it up. Success! The major components were working as they should. We're very close, now, to deploying it out on the line. It's been quite a rewarding project, indeed.

Despite the threat of record heat, Clem, Harry Voss, Alan, Pam Tatro, DJ Champan, Fred, Michael Florentine, Chris, and Heather arrived at the Erecting Shop early on Saturday confident in the knowledge that doughnuts would be served. The plan for the morning was to head out on the line to the north switch at Baths and build up the area where brakemen normally step off the train for the run-around. With the new and evolving edict that no one can step on or off moving equipment, or only in certain places, our intention was to improve this area to provide better footing for brakemen in hopes that the decree can be annulled. Fred and Clem fired up the dump truck and Mike F. in the front-end loader filled it with fine rock that is perfect for walking paths. Harry, Pam, DJ, Heather piled in our trusty Chevy Truck and headed down the line. Fred dumped rock directly from the dump truck directly into the loader's bucket. Mike F. then maneuvered it over rail where we could spread it and build an even and stable surface. We managed to unload an entire dump-truck worth of rock and built-up about an area of about 40-foot north of the switch. It was a great start to this project that will make our line safer for all who volunteer with the railroad.

In the afternoon, we took the new-old tamper onto the Transfer Table Lead on a trial run. Most things operated as they should with just a few adjustments to be made. At that point we took the machine inside over a pit and steam-cleaned it. The work-heads were covered in grease which needed to be removed before painting which we were able to do. But it turned a hot day into a hot and steamy day – kind of like summer in Georgia. At this point, it was getting late so, we put everything away, chatted for a while about the successes of the day, and headed for home proud of our accomplishments.

For the week ahead, the Erecting Shop will be open for business on Tuesday and Thursday at 5 o'clock. More work on the tamper, amongst other things, is on the agenda. Saturday, the doughnut hour is 8 o'clock a.m. on the dot. It should be another good week. Our railroad survives thanks to the dedication of the volunteers– whether with Operations, Signals Department, Weed Team, Shops Crew, Car Department, and the MOW Team. Many thanks to all!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.





Mike T. mowing up the hill along the Setzer Line



Joe doing his best to cut through the jungle in our Setzer Yard





Fred and Mike pound out a pin holding the work-heads on to the old-old tamper

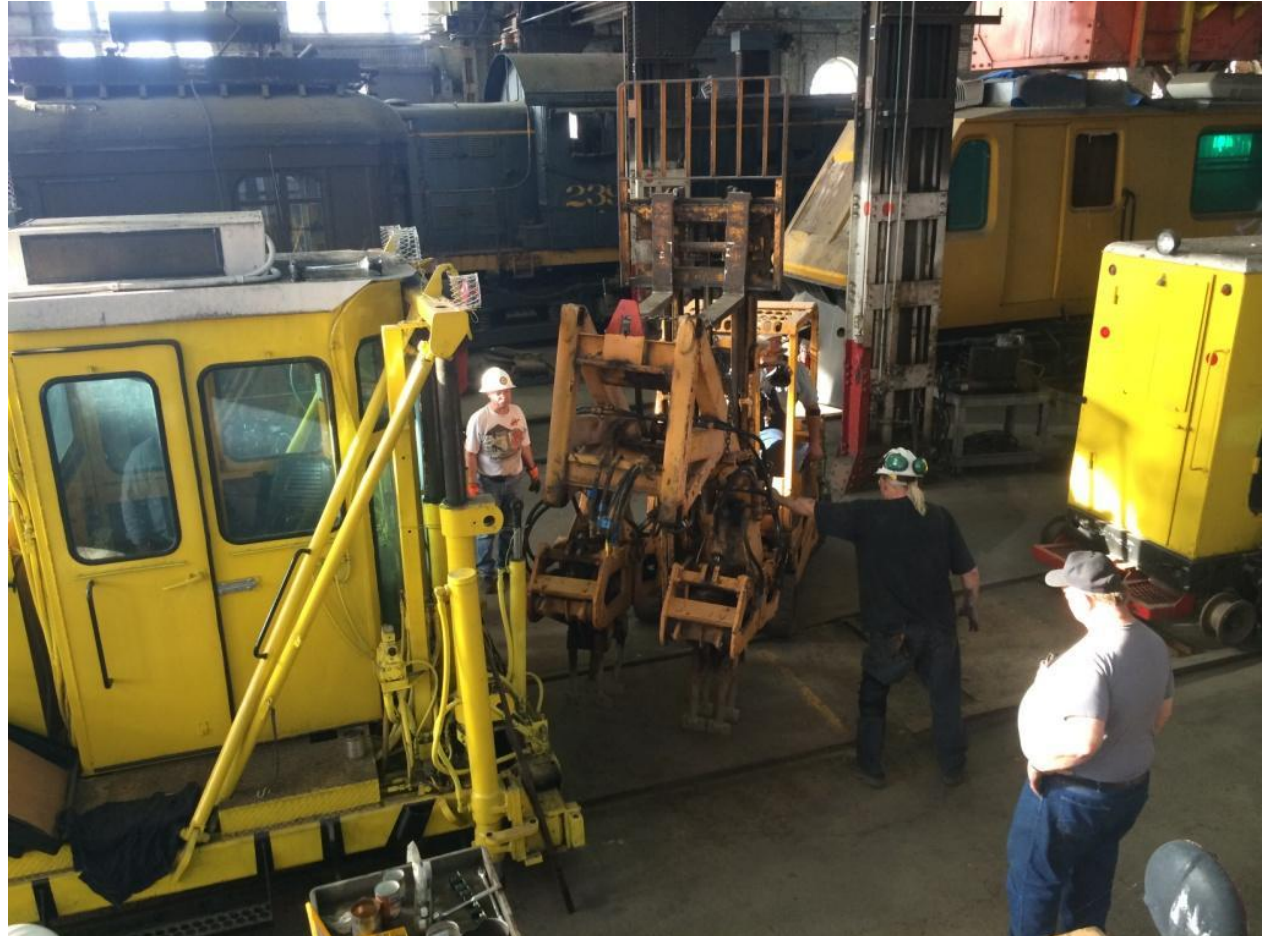


Removing the support pins in tight quarters required a bit of team-work





The view from the roof: Frank, Gene, and Mike H., secure the work-head to the forklift for removal from the old-old tamper

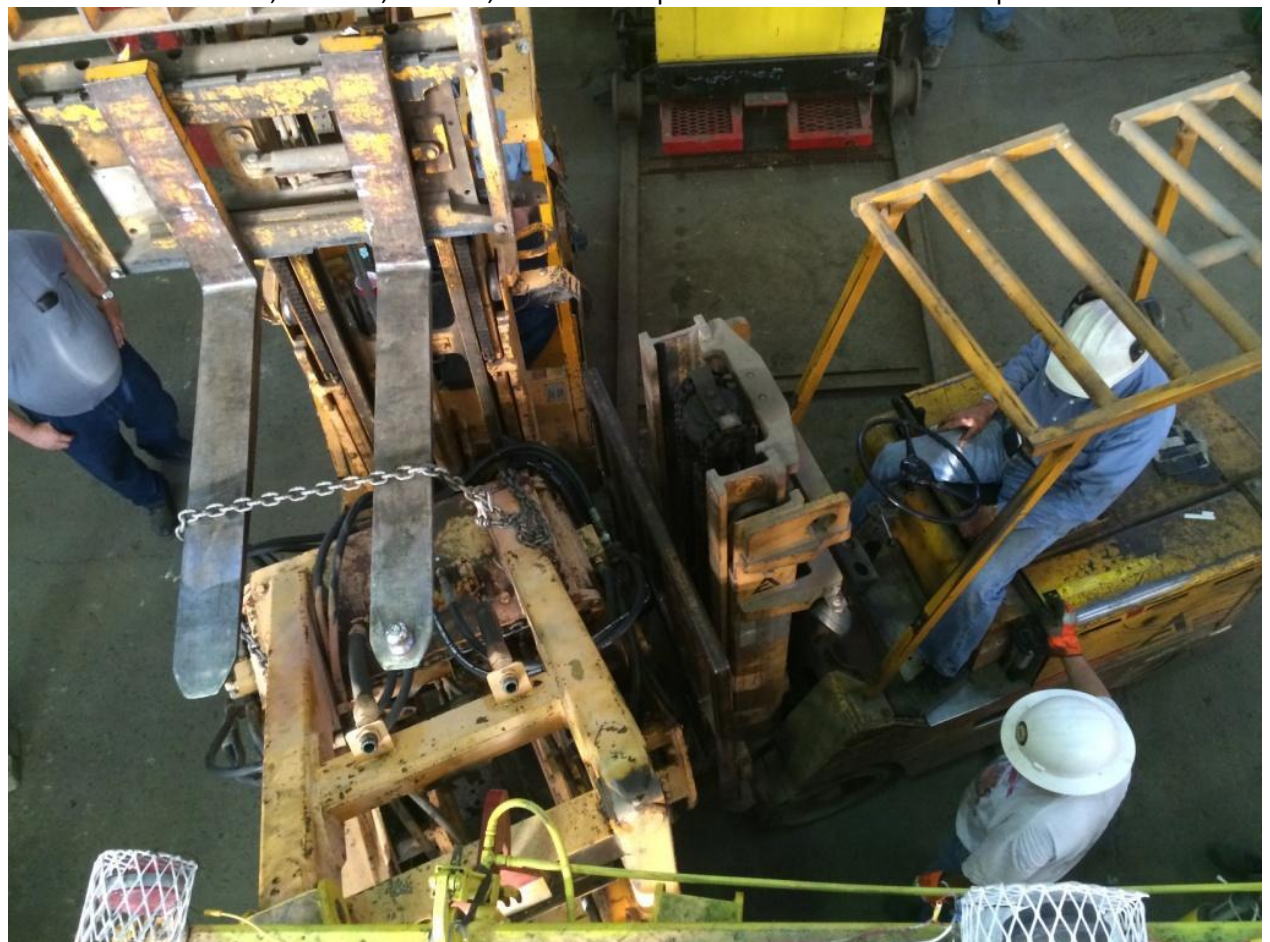


Removed from the old-old tamper, Mike H., Fred, and Gene maneuver it for installation on the new-old tamper





Chris, Heather, Mike H., and Heather position the work-head into place



The view from above: two forklifts are employed to position the work-head on the new-old tamper





Both work-heads now installed on the new-old tamper



Mike F. displays fearlessness when bringing the front-end loader across the track





Harry and Heather guide the placement of fine rock near Switch 17



Harry, Clem, Fred, and DJ spread and smooth the new surface





Pam shovels spilled rock into the loader's bucket



A great team: Pam, Harry, Clem, Fred, DJ, Heather, and Mike F





On builder's trials, the refitted new-old tamper is tested for the first time



Time for a bath: Chris steam-cleans years of muck and grease off the work-heads