

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for July 10, 2016. The MOW Team took Independence Day Weekend Saturday off. But, fear not. The Team got right back to it this week. So let's get the words flowing and update you on all the activity and great accomplishments that occurred.

It's always a party when the MOW Team gathers – especially when we can celebrate Pat Scholzen's birthday. Pat is our Designated Supervisor of Barbecue Engineers (DSBE) and one of the MOW Teams longest-serving and most respected members. There to join the birthday boy in celebration were Joe Marcucci, Cliff Hayes, Anthony Filamor, Frederick Carr, Alan Hardy, Frank Werry, Gene Peck, Heather Kearns, and Mike Harris. "Cupcakes all around!" was the order of the day! Following cupcakes, the Team welcomed its newest member, Weston Snyder, from the latest docent class. Heather outfitted him in safety vest and hard hat and put him right to work. Gene, Pat, and Frank took on the blue tractor. They serviced the injectors and primed the fuel-line. In no time, they had the engine purring like a kitten on catnip. Joe continued his valiant efforts re-wiring the hitch wires on the trusty Chevy Truck, white trailer, and tire-mounted air-compressor. Cliff and Alan worked on reinforcing the ballast regulator's left-side wing to prevent it from breaking as the other did. Mike H. removed the faulty air-compressor in the scarifier-inserter. Frank, Anthony, and Weston fueled equipment housed in the Shops. Fred fixed the broken wheel of the battery charger. Heather used her magnetic wheelie-dealy to sweep-up metallic threats to our tires on the Boiler Shop floor. Indeed, it was an evening of good accomplishment with a group of great folks.

The Mighty Weed Team is now the place where all the cool kids get together as evidenced by its growing ranks. Mike Taylor led an all-star team of folks down the Sutterville Line on Thursday consisting of Frank, Anthony, Heather, Dave Megeath, Steve Wilson, and Ed Kottal. While Mike T., Heather, Ed, Steve, and Anthony repelled the green invasion of our right of way from the ground, Dave engaged aerial reconnaissance and precision attacks from the bucket of the man-lift operated by Frank. As green casualties amassed, Steve, Ed, and Anthony took great pleasure in grinding them to tiny bits in the chipper. Although the motorcar suffered some mechanical difficulties, the Weedies were able to claim victory in their ongoing efforts to free the line from evil clutches of the foliage foe.

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Mike T, Heather, Ed, Anthony, and Frank were joined by Alan, Joe, Cliff, Weston, and Mike H. Frank got the centrifugal clutch on the Rail-Rod put back together. Mike H. and Cliff worked on the air-compressor in the scarifier. Detroit Diesels are finicky engines. Parts that fit on one engine do not fit on an apparently identical engine. So, this project will continue. In Old Sacramento, Joe, Ed, and Heather took on the problem with the motorcar. Through process of elimination, they discovered it was a bad ignition-coil. The motorcar has a Ford engine with easily available parts and luckily, we had a coil on the shelf which Ed and Joe installed. With that, the motorcar's Ford Flathead V-8 roared to life! Up on the 150 Track, Anthony and Weston switched-out the tamper and the Kalamazoo tug. In the event that the motorcar couldn't be fixed, the tug would be needed for use by our trusty track inspectors. A great job by everyone!

Friday, Manager of Track Programs, Alan, along with the Team's Financial Manager, Frank, met with Capital District Superintendent, Matt Bellah, to discuss the MOW Team's priorities and projects – especially those that will impact the tracks in Old Sacramento. It was a very positive meeting that resulted in providing the MOW Team a bit of direction as to the District's and Museum's priorities for both our long-term and more immediate projects. There will be more on this in the coming weeks but for now, many thanks to Matt for supporting the MOW Team as we work to build a better railroad.

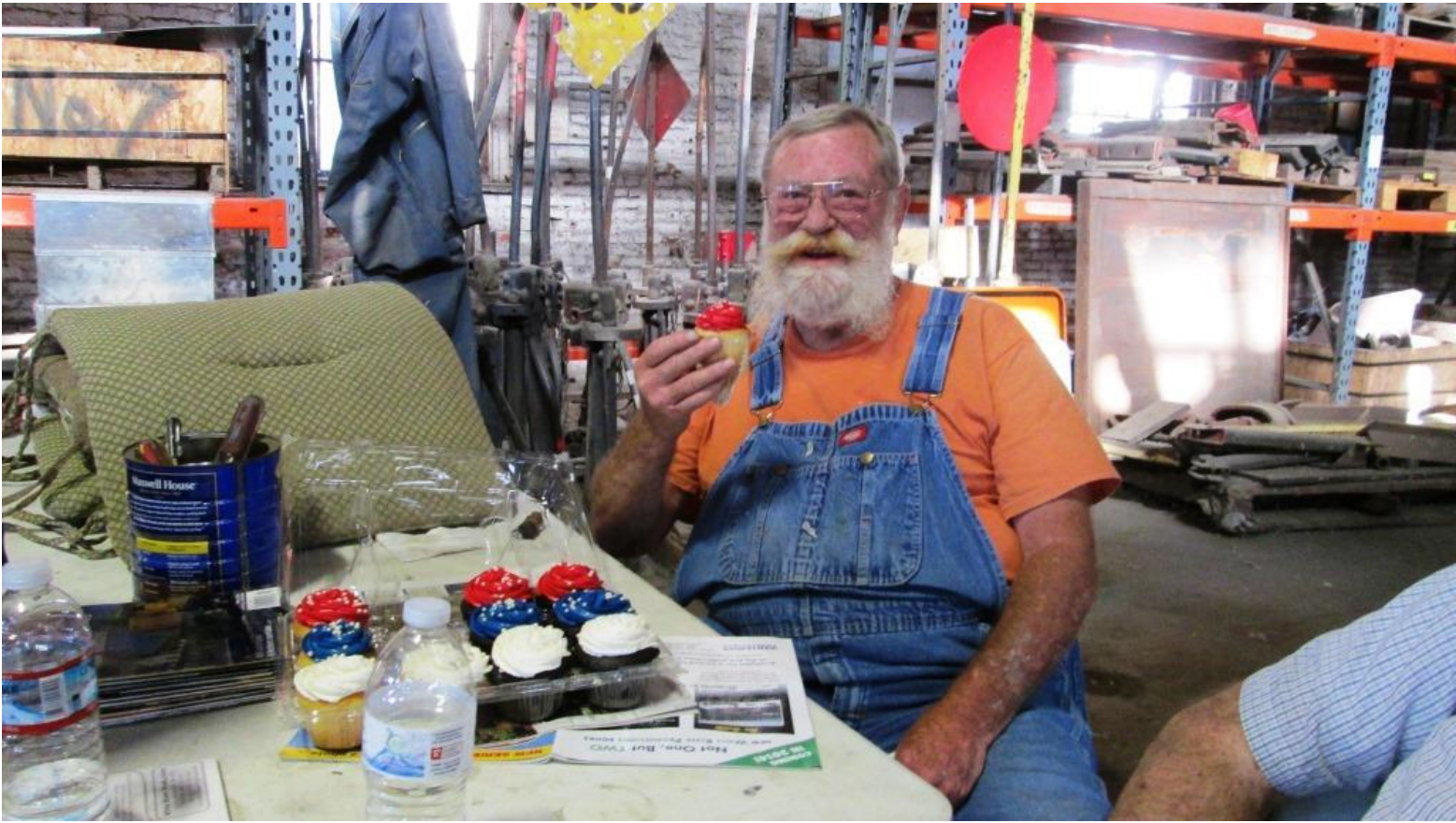
Our resident meteorologist, Steve Nemeth, arranged the best summer weather imaginable for the MOW Team's gathering on Saturday (for which he got an extra doughnut ration). Joining Steve were Alan, Joe, Harry Voss, Clem Meier, Heather, Weston, Frank, Anthony, Ed, Michael Florentine, and Jose Gomez. Also, the MOW Team was happy to welcome back Taka Blackburn who had been away for a while. The day's plan was to undertake a track-raise between Clunie and the Pioneer Bridge in order to get some rock under the ties which are essentially sitting only on dirt. Joe and Alan arrived extra early to load track-jacks as well as the "spot-board", "rabbit", and "hound." These quaintly-named tools are used to measure, sight, line, level, and maintain uniformity of the raise through the track segment. In other words, they make the track geometry simple. At the work-site, Weston, Clem, Jose, and Anthony dug pockets under the rails to place the jacks. Taka and Heather set the jacks. Alan adjusted the spot-board to the proper height then placed it on the rails some distance from the "rabbit" and "hound" (the sighting implements). Joe got down on the ground and sighted the level and alignment off the spot-board as Taka, Chris, Jose, and Heather jacked-up the track. As the track lifted to the appropriate level, Joe would signal the crew when to stop jacking. Then Frank brought in the tamper and tamped the track to the new level. Weston and Steve pulled the jacks as the tamper tamped around them. This project was going like clock-work. When suddenly, like the Old Faithful Geyser at Yellowstone, the tamper erupted in a great plumb of steam. Yep, we lost the radiator. This brought our track raising project to an abrupt end. So, all the jacks had to be lowered and removed. Mike F. in the Kalamazoo tug came in and towed the tamper back into town. Chris, Harry, and Heather were on the case and quickly diagnosed the problem. They took a jaunt to Napa Auto Parts procured the necessary pieces to put the tamper back together again. But, at this point, trains were running and it was too late to go back and set everything up again. Although the project was halted unexpectedly, it still turned out to be an outstanding educational opportunity for the crew as we haven't undertaken a proper track raise since 2010. The Team did an outstanding job adjusting to this out-of-normal situation.

An audible was called in the afternoon. The Team would spilt into two groups. Team #1 would collect dead ties at Clunie and deposit them in the ever-growing dead-tie pile at Setzer. Team #2 headed to Baths to survey and inventory bad switch ties. As they are all different lengths, switch ties need to be ordered separately. An accurate count of how many of each length is necessary. Ed, Steve, Joe, Weston, and Mike F. gathered-up all the dead ties. Chris, Anthony, Taka, and Harry conducted the survey. These projects both came to successful conclusions without any further incidents. With that, the Team headed back to Old Sacramento to put away the equipment and called it a day. It turned out to be a completely different day than originally anticipated but, it was a good one, nonetheless. In fact, it's always a good time with great folks when the MOW Team gets together for any project.

This coming week, the MOW Team will meet-up again on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at the regular time of at or before 5 o'clock. Saturday, we anticipate commencing the reconnection of the Firing Line Track in the Rail Yards with the "dead-line" track that we built last year. Doughnuts will be disbursed promptly at 8 o'clock a.m. In the meantime, many thanks to the outstanding members of the crew and supporters of the MOW Team!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Happy birthday, Pat!



Don't worry. Joe's just working...



With the tractor now fully functional, Gene tests the hydraulics by lifting the bucket



Heather and her magical magnetic wheelie-dealy sweeps up nasty sharp metal bits that might threaten the integrity of our tires



Frank monitors the man-lift while Dave conducts an aerial assault on offending tree limbs



Mike T. conducts the ground attack



Steve W. takes great pleasure in copping severed limbs to tiny bits



Weed Team Mobile Command



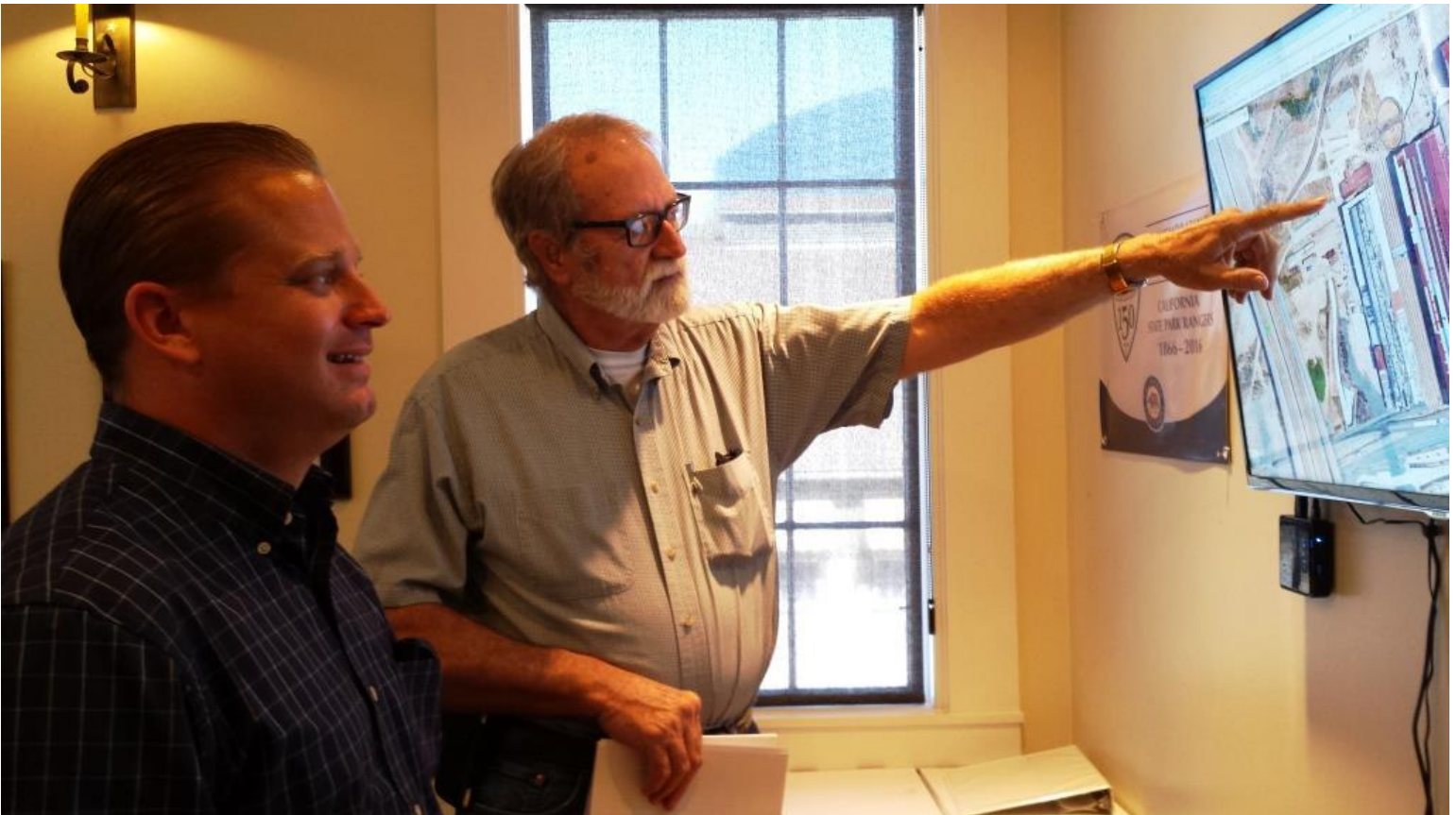
Ed and Joe discuss options for the repair of the motorcar while Anthony stands guard



Like two track machines passing in the night: Anthony and Weston switch around the tamper and tug



Joe finishes up installation of the ignition-coil on the motorcar



Capital District Superintendent, Matt Bella, discusses the MOW Team's long-term plans with Manager of Track Programs, Alan Hardy



Alan sets up the spot-board and places it on the rails



Weston and Clem dig out pockets for the track-jacks to be placed





Anthony and Jose place jacks



Taka cranks on the track-jack as Joe gives direction while sighting the level through the "hound"



Joe signals to Taka to keep cranking on that jack



Taka and Chris put their backs into it



Heather repositions the “rabbit” at the next jack



Joe looking through the sight-hole of the “hound” signals to Taka to stop cranking up the jack



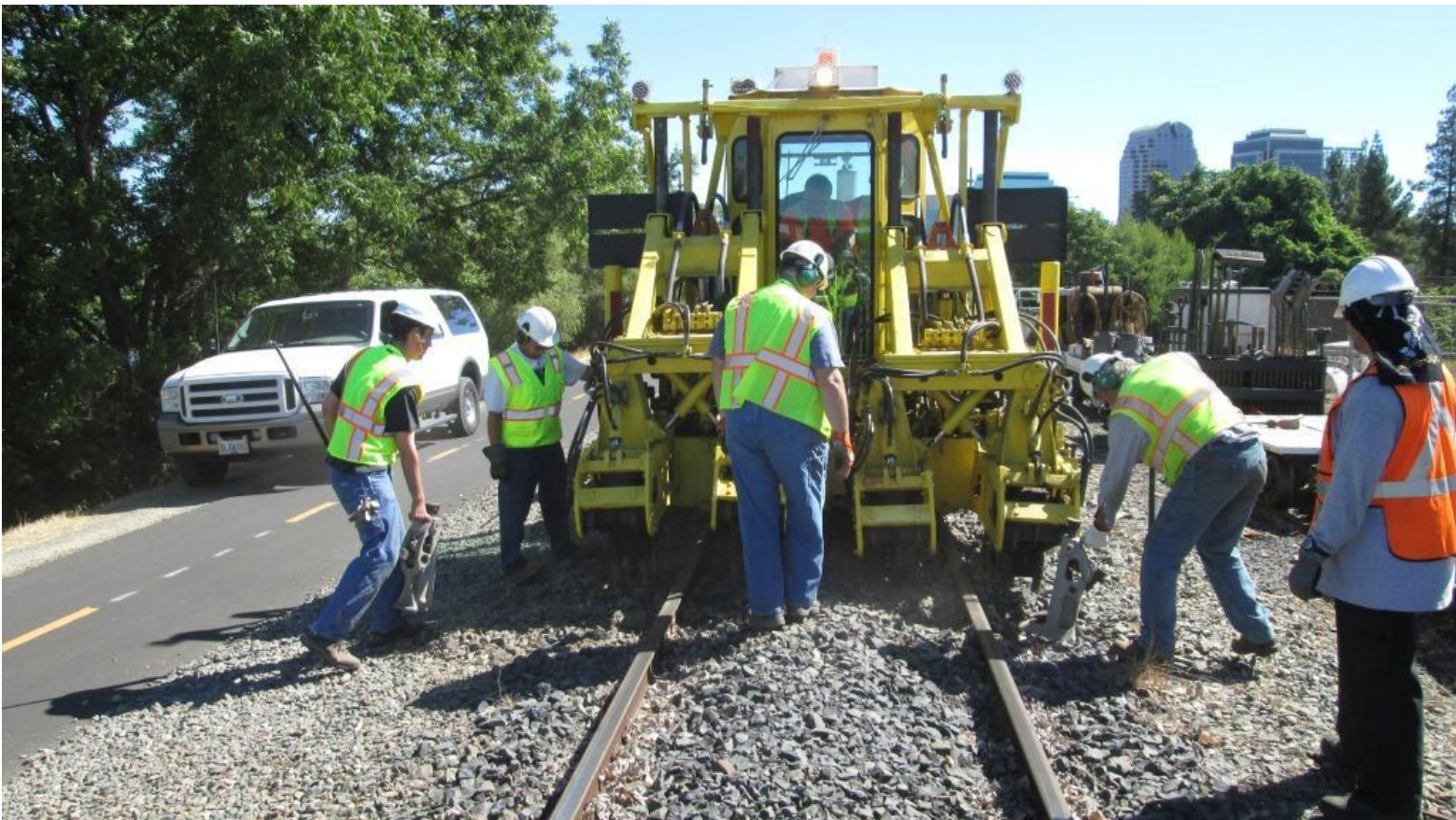
Frank starts tamping the track while Joe continues sighting the level with the “hound”



Meanwhile, Mike F. and Steve repair the bent draw-bar between the flatcars



Frank tamps as Clem manipulates the actuator



As the tamper tamps the track to the new level, Weston and Steve remove the jacks



Jose then takes the jacks further down the line to reset as the leveling continues



Catastrophe strikes when the tamper's radiator blew. Chris and Harry try to assess the issue on site



Hospital train: the Kalamazoo tug tows the tamper back into town



Weston watches the train pass by as the Team clears away dead ties



Mighty Mike F. is able to handle ties by himself



Mike F., Joe, Ed, Steve, and Weston clear dead ties from the line





Harry taps a switch tie to test its solidity. Taka marks the bad ones with marker paint



Two teams meet in the middle: Anthony watches as Weston, Steve, Ed, Mike F., and Joe take the dead ties down to Setzer