

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for July 28, 2013. It was a five day week for your MOW Team. So, let's throw a little oil, grease, and diesel on it and get this update rollin'!

Our always faithful and dedicated Weed Team are on Summer Recess so, it's the perfect time service their equipment. So, on Monday, Weedies Heather Kearns and Dave Megeath (who's just recovering from his emotional encounter with "tweetie" last week) brought the man-lift and chipper over from Old Sacramento to the Shops. Many thanks to Conductors, Chuck Malley and Karl Ryden for their invaluable help in conducting our machines over the UP Mainline.

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Dave and Heather set off on making these machines good as new. They changed the oil and filters in both machines and flushed the hydraulic system on the man-lift. After a little work on the brakes, these machines will be back out on the line. Pat Scholzen, Gene Peck, and Cliff Hayes put the scarifer back together after its major refit, which was a task-and-a-half. They fired-up the powerful Detroit Diesel engine which purred like a kitten. It was a beautiful sound. Chris Carlson then took it to the north end of Shops via the transfer table and spotted it over the pit and gave it a steam cleaning. The scarifer is crossing the UP Main on Monday and will be out on the line with us on Saturday. Your MOW Team Shop Crew did a fantastic job reviving this near dead machine. We are indebted to Pat, Gene, Cliff, Mike Harris, Dave, Heather, as well as Dennis Noble and Bill Myers of the Signal Department. Volunteer labor made this possible. A professional rebuild would have cost umpteen thousands of dollars. We did it for a pittance in comparison. The unquestioned value of volunteerism is proven yet again.

Thursday, your MOW Team, consisting of Cliff, Mike H., and Chris, set off on an emergency repair of the back-hoe which blew a hydraulic hose and tire. The State Parks staff had been using the machine behind the Museum when catastrophe struck. Luckily, we had Mike Harris with us, who is widely recognized an expert at plugging punctured ties.

Saturday was a herculean effort by your MOW Team. Mike Florentine, Garrick Worrell, Frank Werry, Harry Voss, Dave, Heather, Chris, and Alan, set out to attack wood-rot head on by changing out ties between Mile Posts 1.2 and 1.35. Folks, the replacement ties we're now using come from the old Union Pacific Mainline that we took apart last year during the realignment project. These are solid oak hard-wood ties and weigh a ton. I mean, these ties are so hard that spikes bend rather than drive into them. The fact that volunteers are manhandling these things is a testament to their dedication. Also, with the scarifer still in the Shops, we had to dig out the cribs of each tie by hand, using only picks and shovels. Complicating the situation was the fact that the train was running on top of us all day. We were using red-flag protection which meant the train could not enter our work limits without our permission. Yet, not once did we require the train to slow down or stop when rolling through our work limits. The train would pass through. Then, the Big Green Machine would set the section-gang machine on the track which would pull a couple ties. The crew would start digging, then drag the replacement ties in, continue digging, bring in the section-gang machine to insert the replacement ties, jack-up the rails to insert the tie-plates, set the spikes, then drive them (when they didn't bend) with our pneumatic spiker. Big Green then lifted the section gang machine off the track, and the motorcar work-train would set off to the Clunie or Miller Park Siding (depending the direction of the train). We'd then contact the locomotive to give permission to pass our red-flags *without stopping*. And then, do it all over again before the next train passed through. It was an amazing show and tribute to a crew that works incredibly well together.

Before I run out of space, let's get to the week ahead. Monday, the scarifer will cross the UP Main and certified ready for service. **Tuesday**, the MOW Team will meet at the Shops in the afternoon for more fun in the Shops. The evening crew may head out on the line. **Thursday**, more MOW fun ensues starting at 5 o'clock p.m. Saturday, we'll meet in the Shops for doughnuts at 8 o'clock a.m. before heading out on the line. We are going to get this area between the Santa Fes and Broadway rebuilt so that we don't have to revisit it for many years to come. Be part of the progress and join us.

Also, our heartfelt best wishes go out to Steve Mathias from the entire MOW Team. We're pulling for you, Steve!

We'll see you out on the line!

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Cliff and Mike take apart the hydraulic cylinder on the back-hoe to repair the blown hose.



Mike F., Chris, Frank, and Harry extract a tie with the section-gang machine.



Mike F. uses the nipping bar to lift the rail to relieve pressure as the bad tie is extracted.



Heather and Dave use a track jack to lift the rail to insert a tie plate.



Garrick shovels ballast to deepen the crib for the new tie.



Now the new (well, "newer") tie gets inserted.



Mike sets the spikes while Heather uses the pneumatic spiker to drive them in.



Here come da train – again!