

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for August 5, 2018. Your MOW Team was out and about all week keeping its carousel of progress spinning. So, let's hop-on this progressive merry-go-round and get this update whirling right now.

Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Jack Shrive, Alan Hardy, Michael Florentine, Joe Margucci, Mike Harris, Frank Werry, Kyle Blackburn, Heather Kearns, and Gene Peck spun into action on Tuesday evening. A large supply of steel arrived at the Shops this week for Cliff to turn into anti "urban-artist" protection shields on the ride-on spike driver. He and Pat worked feverishly at cutting the steel into the right sized pieces to construct the shields. Jack removed the oil-encrusted muffler from the Kalamazoo tug which is being replaced. Kyle and Heather worked on permanently securing the Kalamazoo's turntable. Then, the Team decided to take advantage of the late summer light and pull some ties on the new switch project behind the Museum. Joe fired up the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger. Mike F. brought the Big Green Machine (Big Green) over to Old Sacramento to position all the extra long ties needed. Mike H., Jack, and Frank dug-out the ends of ties to be removed and pulled spikes. Alan, Joe, and Mike F. identified the extra-long ties needed from the extra-long tie-pile for replacing those being pulled. Jack and Mike H. used their strong backs to move the into position. Joe then rolled the Jackson 125 into position and began removing the marked ties. Folks, Joe is an artist when it comes to the operation of this machine. He can get the 125 to do things it wasn't designed to do like pivot a tie into place. This includes 15-foot long ties inserted in places with only eight feet of clearance. The Team was really pleased with its progress on Tuesday evening.

Thursday, Jim Bays of the SSRR Mechanical/Restoration Shop continued assisting the MOW Team by using one of the Shop's big milling-machines to shape the wing-rails for the frog at Switch 19. With Jim's great help, we think we'll finally be able to get the rail to fit within the frog structure which will allow us to restore the frog and Switch 19 to service. In the evening, Ed Kottal, Jack Shrive, Chris, Joe, the Brothers Blackburn – Matt and Kyle – Samantha Houck, Alan, and Heather were all on hand. Ed arrived early and used the back-hoe to fill the hopper-cars down at Setzer with ballast-rock. This rock would be used on Saturday as we start ballasting the new switch behind the Museum. Alan, Chris, and Jack found a 13-foot tie and 15-foot tie in our switch-tie pile to the west of the Boiler Shop. These were the last two big ties needed for the switch project. Big Green was used to load them in the truck. Over in Old Sac., Samantha used a lining-bar to straighten a tie. Joe activated the 125 and Kyle and Chris spun it around. Joe again used his finely-honed skills to insert these long ties in very tight spaces. With the ties inserted, the Team returned to the Shops where they sought out tie-plates for the diverging track, construction of which is the next phase of the project. Soon, a sufficient number had been gathered and loaded on the truck. With that, Team members returned to the friendly confines of the Erecting Shop and called it an evening, pleased with another fine evening of great success.

Saturday started as all Saturdays should: with doughnuts. In fact, doughnuts were on site when the early birds, Alan, Joe, Mike F., and Heather arrived. First thing was to get the new muffler put on the Kalamazoo. Old Detroit Diesels are easy to work on and Joe had it installed in five minutes. Then, he, Mike F. and Conductor Heather got the MOW Team's work-train over to Old Sacramento. At the Shops, Bill Hastings, Matt Blackburn, Clem Meier, Mike Willis, Ed, Steve Nemeth, and Samantha chowed-down on doughnuts as the morning briefing occurred. The switch project would continue but, also, the Team would install a new guard-rail block on Track 1 leading into the Central Pacific Passenger Station (CPPS). The old block had split in three. Clem and Joe began by removing the bolts and pulling spikes around the guard-rail. They slid the old block out and new block in and – well, nothing quite lined up. This is the problem when trying to fit a stock-rail forged in 1891 with a guard-rail from 1903. Yes, folks, the CPPS track are ancient. This simple task should have taken 15 minutes but took about two hours. Soon, the entire Team was out there pushing and pulling, lifting and lowering and, eventually taking the entire guard-rail assembly apart before it all fit right. Up at the switch project, Ed, on the back-hoe, began grading the roadbed for the diverging track. Alan, Mike F., Mike W., Ed, and Samantha then laid-out ties for the diverging track. Mike F. on Big Green brought in a new stick of rail which Samantha, using a lining bar, shimmed into position. She and Alan then bolted it up. Bill and Matt had taken the Kalamazoo down to Setzer to pick up the hopper-cars that Ed had filled on Thursday for ballasting the new switch. But first, the heavy hoppers rolled over Track 1 to the CPPS to help settle the track at the guard-rail.

With the guard-rail project done, the Team refocused its efforts at the switch. Gauging, plating, and spiking was the main task. Steve and Ed engaged the grapple-gauger to pull the rails into gauge. Bill, Joe, and Mike F. used track-jacks to lift the rails so as to insert the extra thick switch-plates, which are kind of like a puzzle to figure out as they traverse two diverging rails and all the spike holes have to line up. The Team set spikes all through the switch point area. Mike F. deployed the spike-maul and drove a few by hand. Steve, Samantha, and Bill got the hydraulic spike-drive all fired up and sent the remaining spikes deep into the wood. Next, it was time to drop some rock. Steve reeved up the Kalamazoo and slowly shoved the ballast hopper cars over the area to be ballasted. Mike F. and Alan regulated the rock-fall. Joe, Bill, and Ed began shoveling and spreading the rock around by hand. Then a lightbulb blinked on over Joe's head. Since the ballast regulator can't work within a switch, Joe suggested using the 125 as a plow – grab a tie with the claws and shove it along the tops of the rails thus spreading the mounded rock. Brilliant! And, that's exactly what they did – spreading the rock evenly about between the rails. It's good to have people with brains on your team! With the rock now spread, tools were picked up and put away. Conductor Heather sent the Kalamazoo and work-train back across the UP Main to be put away in the Shops. It was a darned good day for the hardest working volunteers on this side of the tracks!

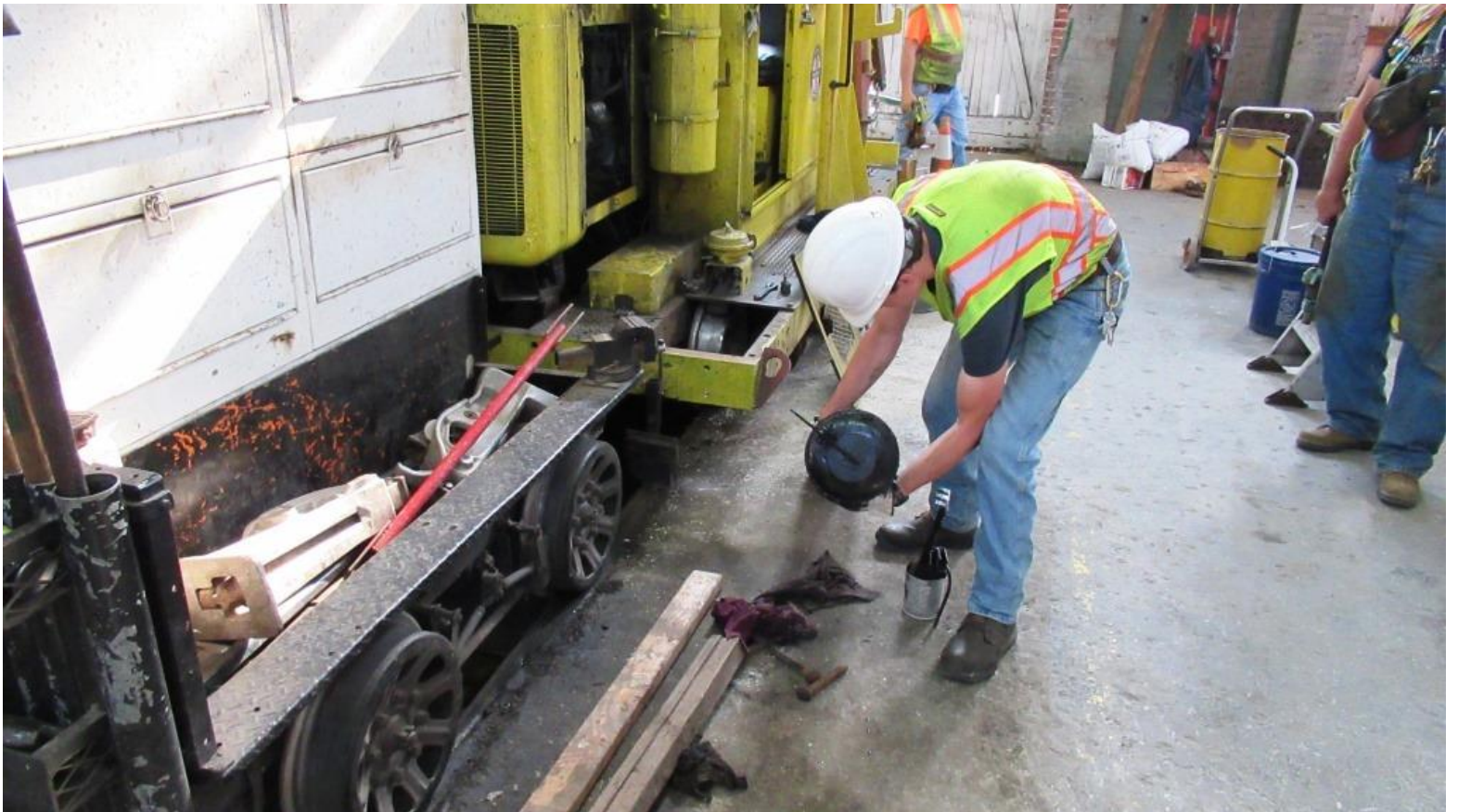
This coming week, the MOW Team will resume its activities on Tuesday and Thursday launching at or before 5 o'clock. The Weed Team will commence the 2018 tree trimming season on Thursday, call time is 8:30 a.m. at the Shops. Saturday, the MOW Team will gather at 8 o'clock a.m. To the wonderful, incredible people who make up the MOW Team, it is an honor and privilege to serve with you. Thanks for all you do.

See you out on the line,

Alan and Richard.



Pat measures a strip of steel for use in the anti-vandalism shields for the ride-on spiker

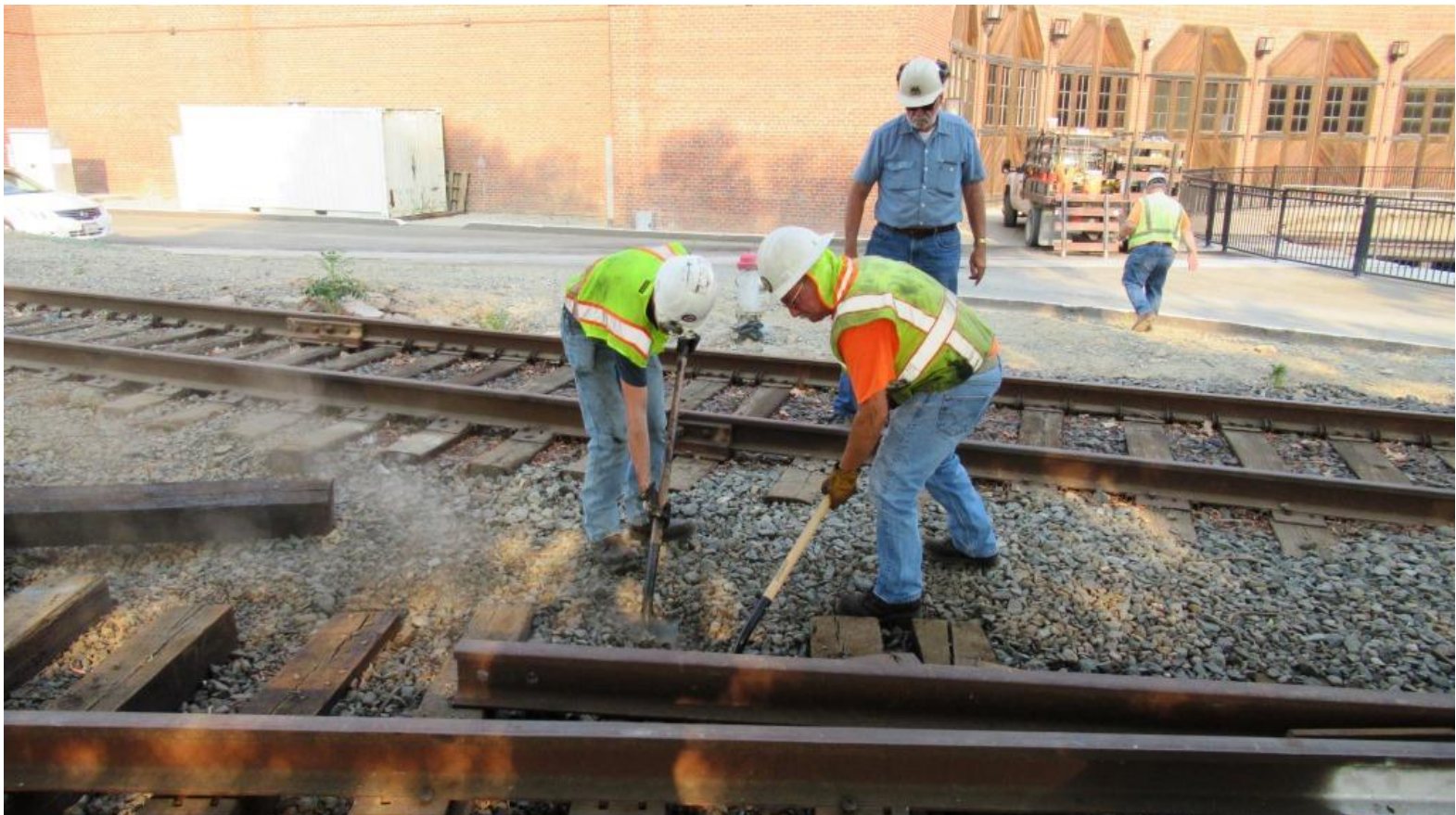


Jack removes the old muffer from the Kalamazoo





Uh, looks more like a Saturday than a Tuesday. Granite Rock 10 and Mike F. on Big Green both working on a Tuesday



Jack and Mike H. dig out the end of tie that is slated for removal



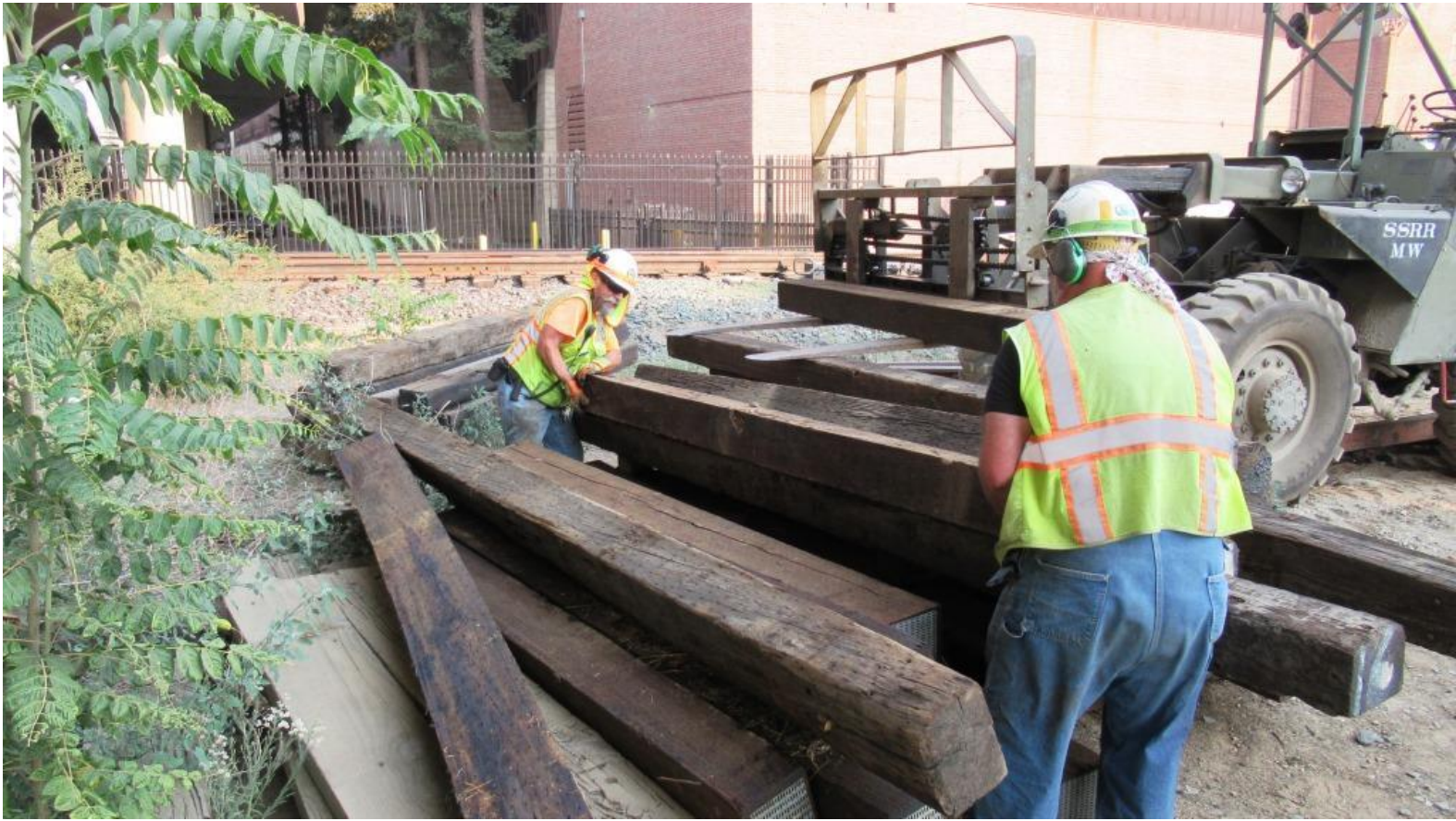


Jack and Frank dig out the ends of ties



Alan and Joe search for a 10-foot tie in the extra-long tie pile





Joe and Mike F. roll the long tie onto Big Green's forks



Mike F. nips the rail as Jack pounds out the tie-plate



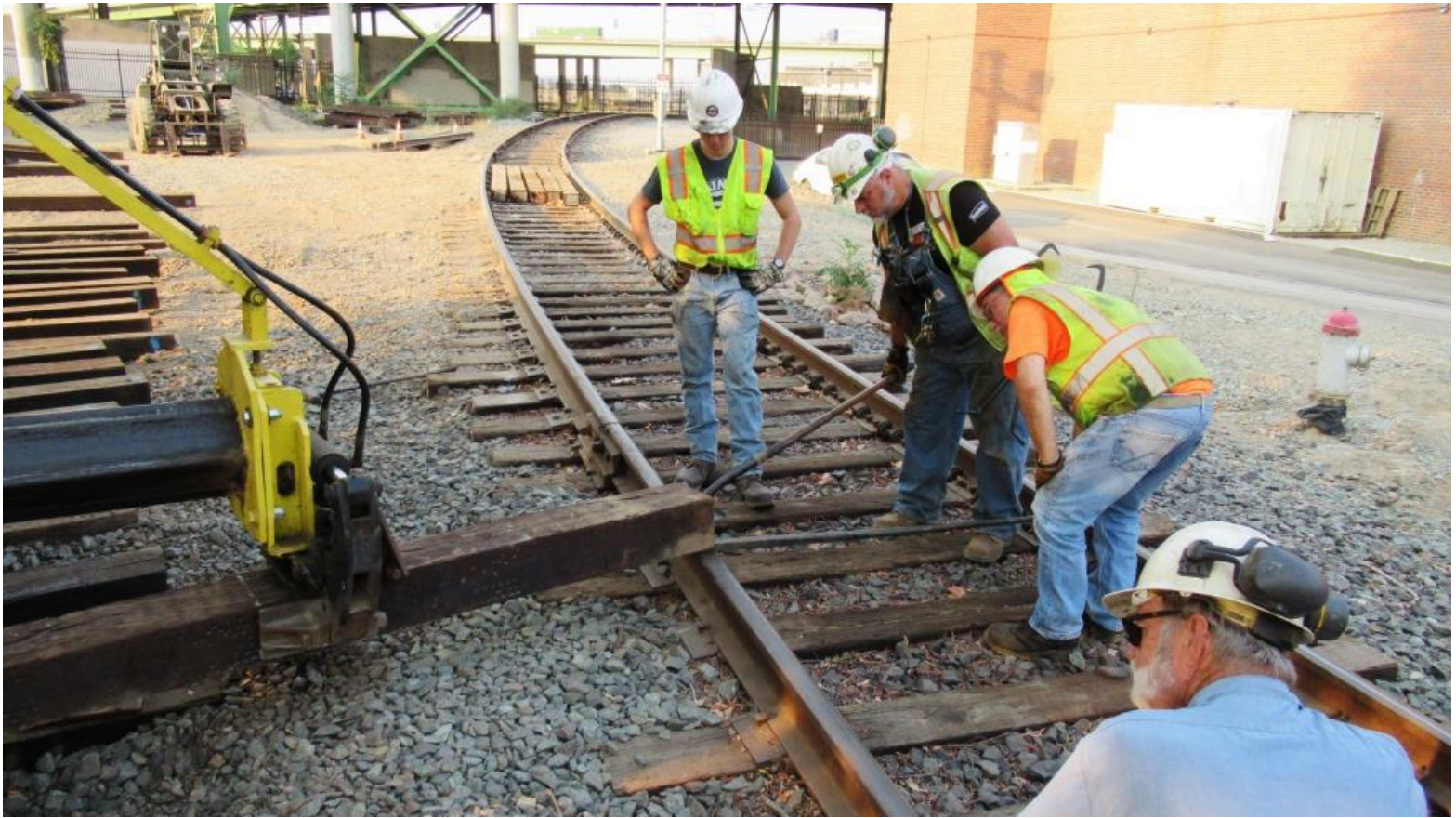


Joe brings in the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger, scoots the claws under the diverging rail, and gently grabs the very end of the tie being removed



And, out it comes!





Mike F. and Mike H. help to lever-up the long tie being inserted over the rails of the of the 560 track

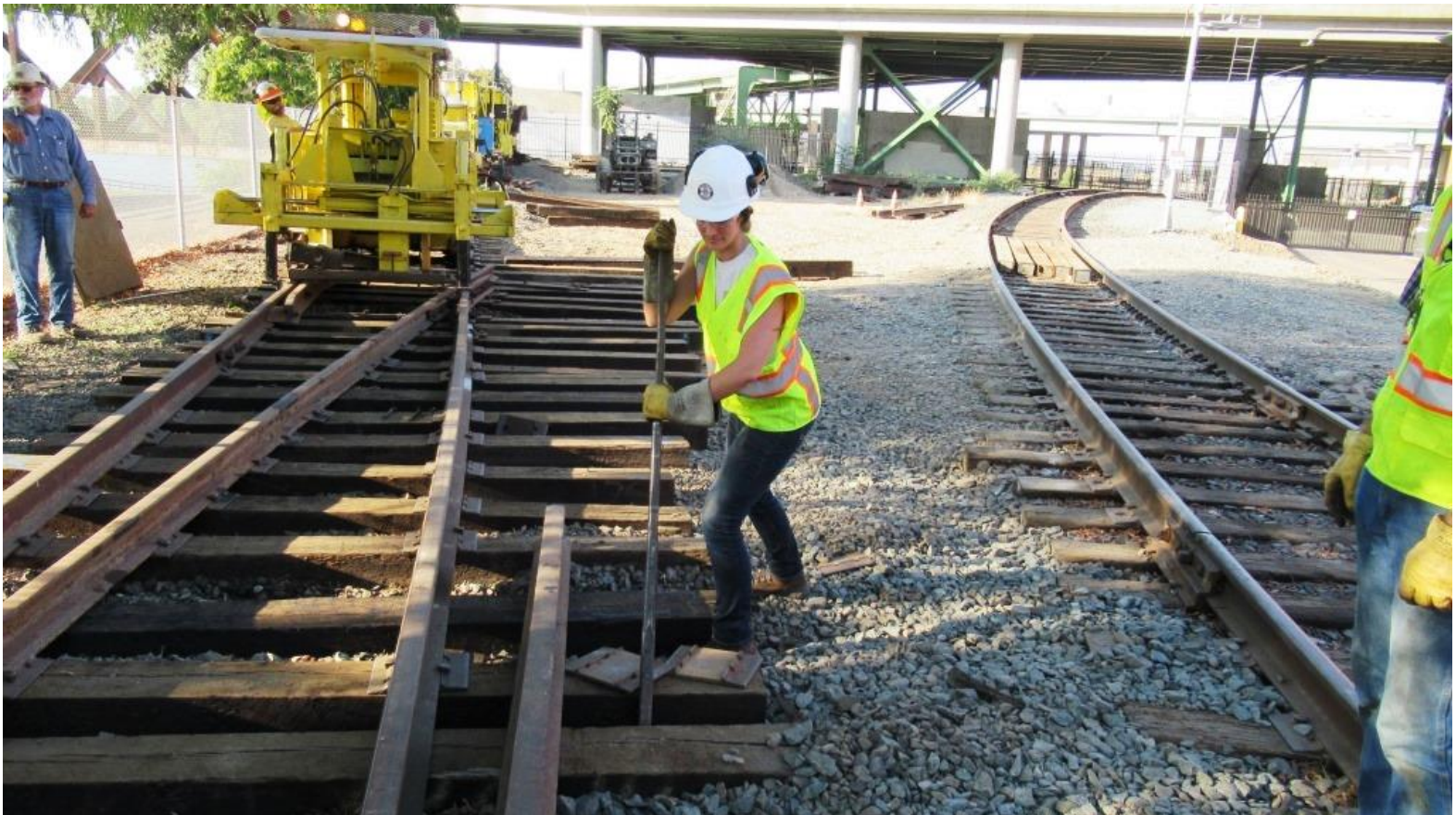


Jim Bays milling the wing-rail for the frog at Switch 19





Alan and Jack roll a 15-footer onto the forks of Big Green



Samantha uses a lining bar to shimmy a tie straight





Kyle and Joe take the 125 for a spin



Joe grabs the 15-foot tie with the Jackson 125





Ed and Joe search out tie-plates for the 110-pound rail of the diverging track



Ed show Kyle how to determine if it's the right sized plate by measuring the distance between the spike-holes



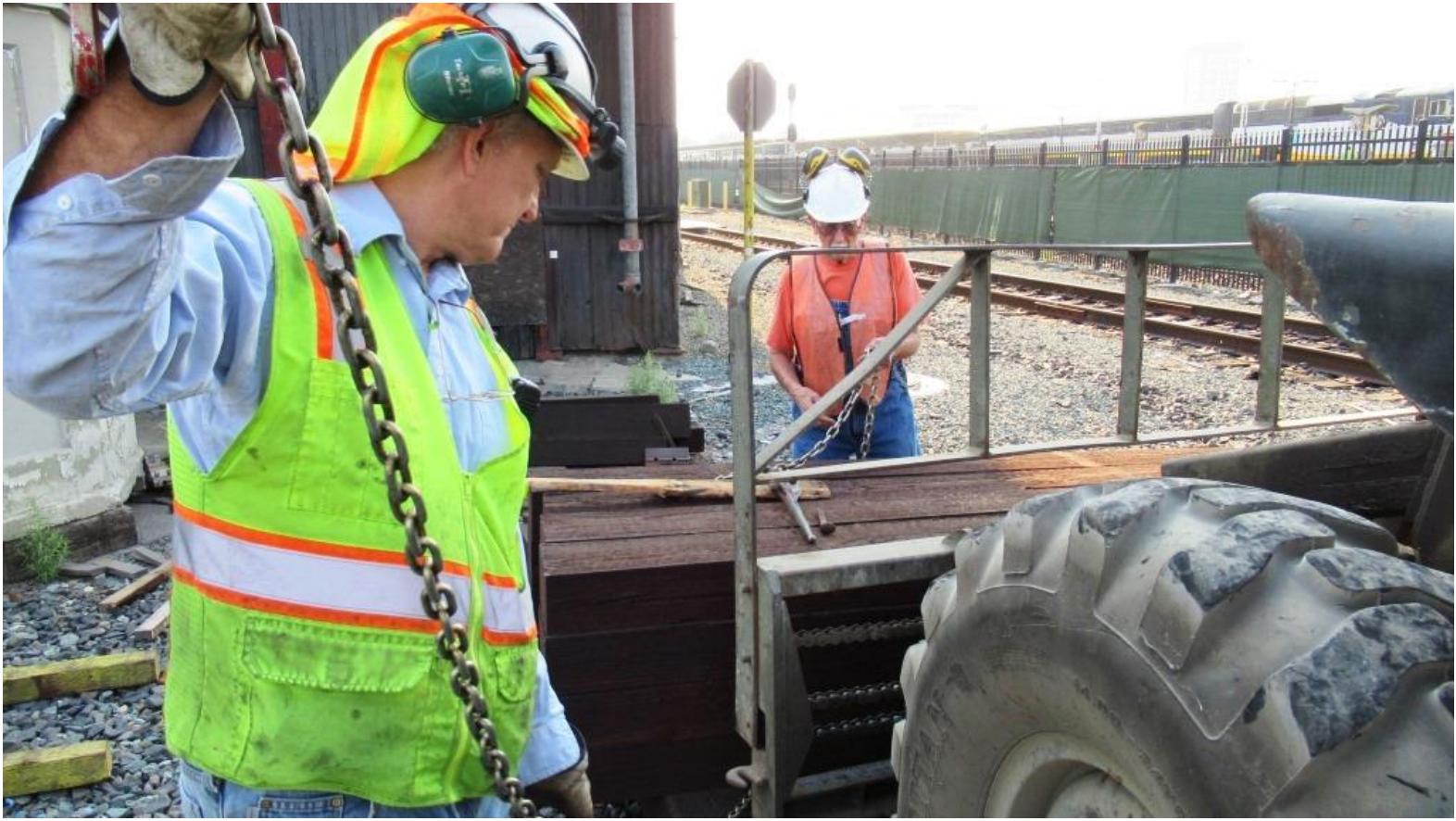


Joe installs the new muffler on the Kalamazoo



Early bird Mike F. gets the MOW Team's work-train ready to deploy





Steve and Clem chain a bundle of ties to the forks of Big Green



Joe and Clem get started removing the busted guard-rail block





Steve and Clem watch the old guard-rail block split in three as it slides out



Yep, it's broken all right...





Joe, Steve, and Clem work feverishly to get the replacement block to fit with a stock-rail forged in 1891 and a guard-rail forged in 1903

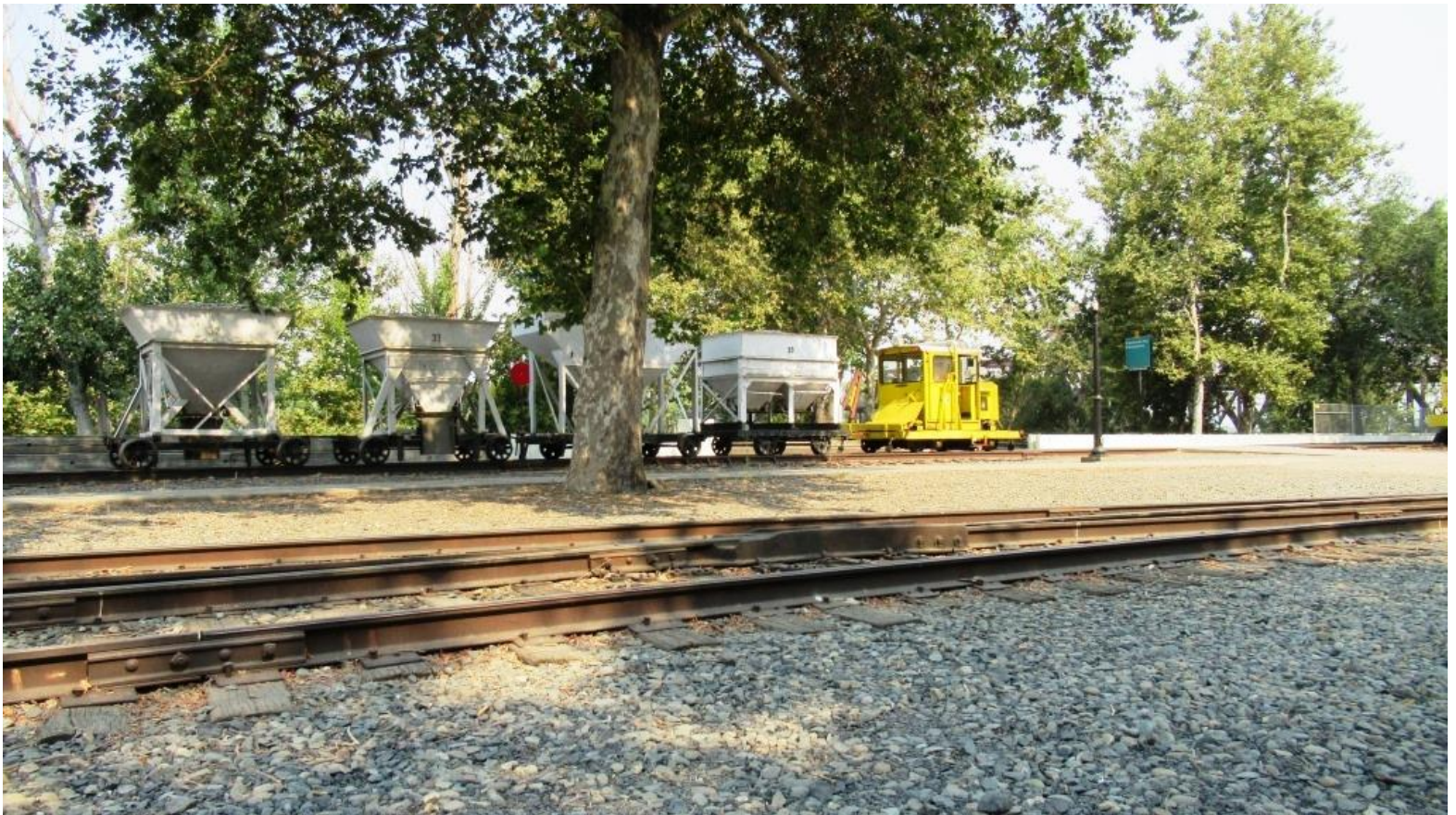


Pushing, pulling, lifting, lowering, Steve, Joe, and Clem continue their quest to make it fit – or else!





Goodness gracious! This is getting ridiculous! All of this for an eighth of an inch!

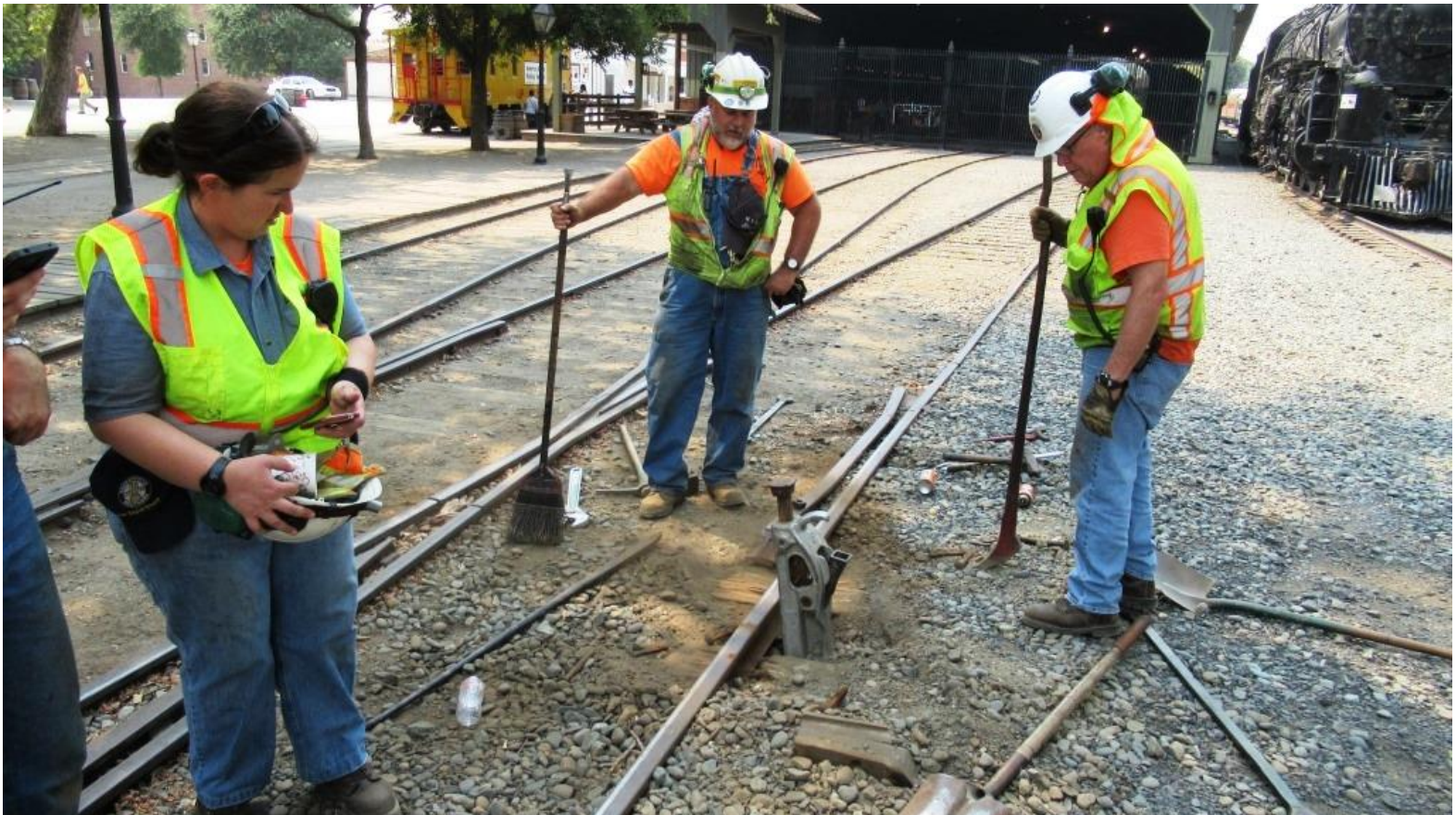


Matt and Bill haul the ballast hoppers into town





For crying out loud! What's taking so long? Everything finally lined up just in time for the rest of the Team to join the fun



With the block installed, Heather, Mike F., and Bill contemplate putting everything else back together





Meanwhile, up on the hill, Alan give Ed some guidance on grading the roadbed for the diverging track

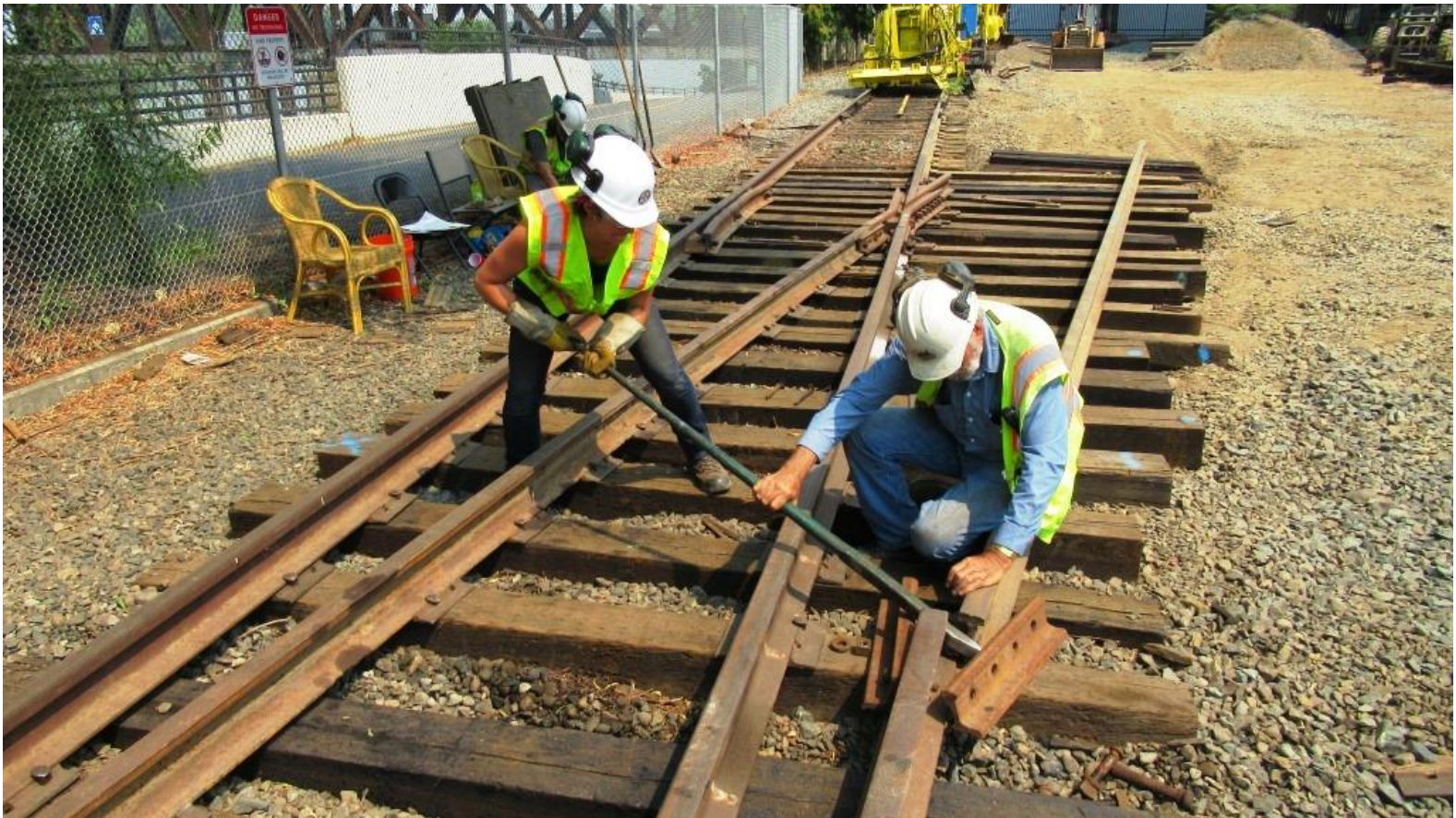


Ed gets the roadbed dug out for the placement of ties



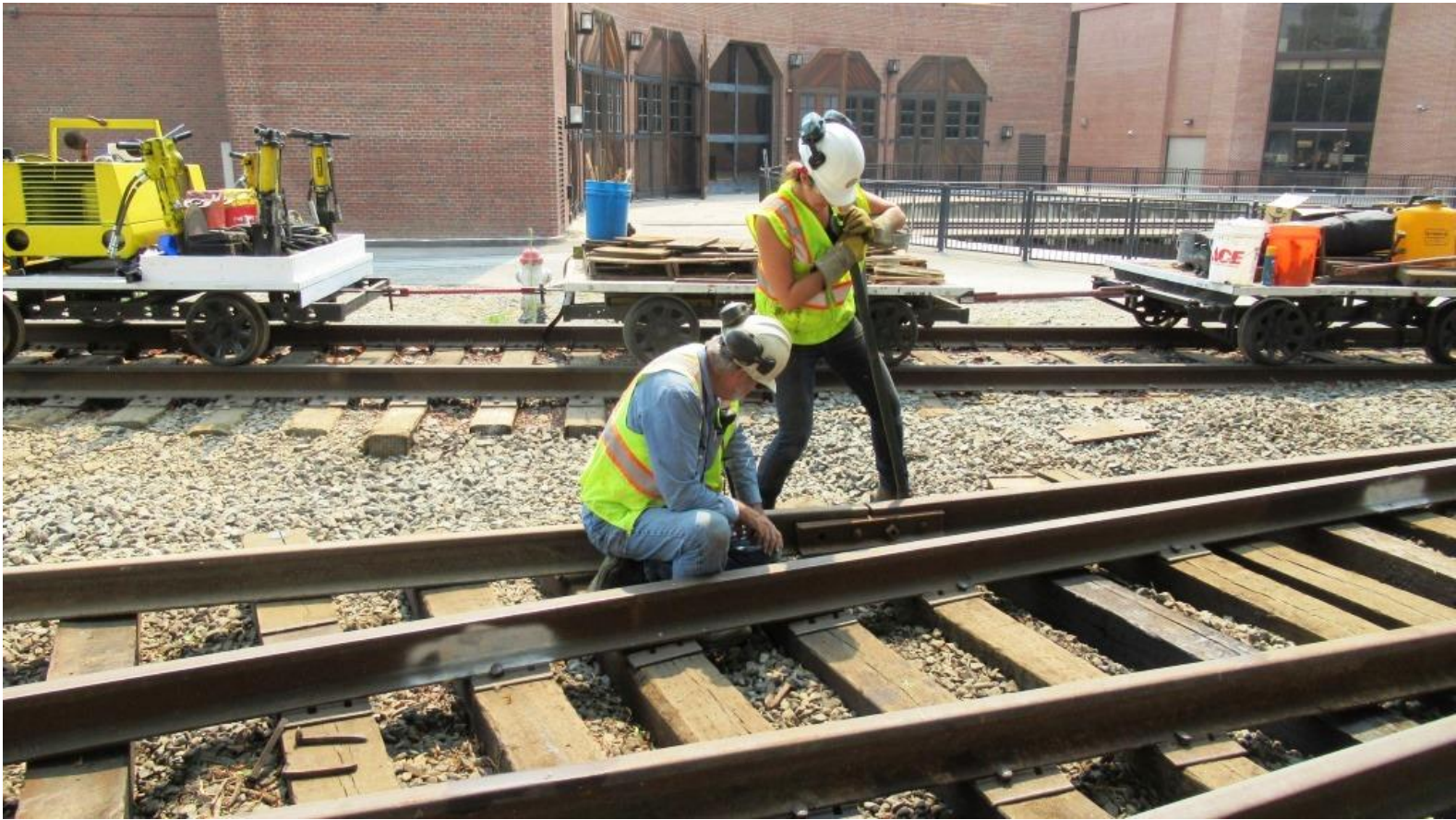


Mike F. on Big Green brings over a stick of rail for the diverging track



Samantha uses a lining bar to adjust the alignment of the rail for bolting it to the track





With the joint-bars in place, Samantha tightens the bolts



Bill and Mike F. bring the Kalamazoo pulling heavy hoppers to roll over the new guard-rail assembly to help settle the track





While spinning the Kalamazoo on the turntable, Joe and Mike F. attract an audience...

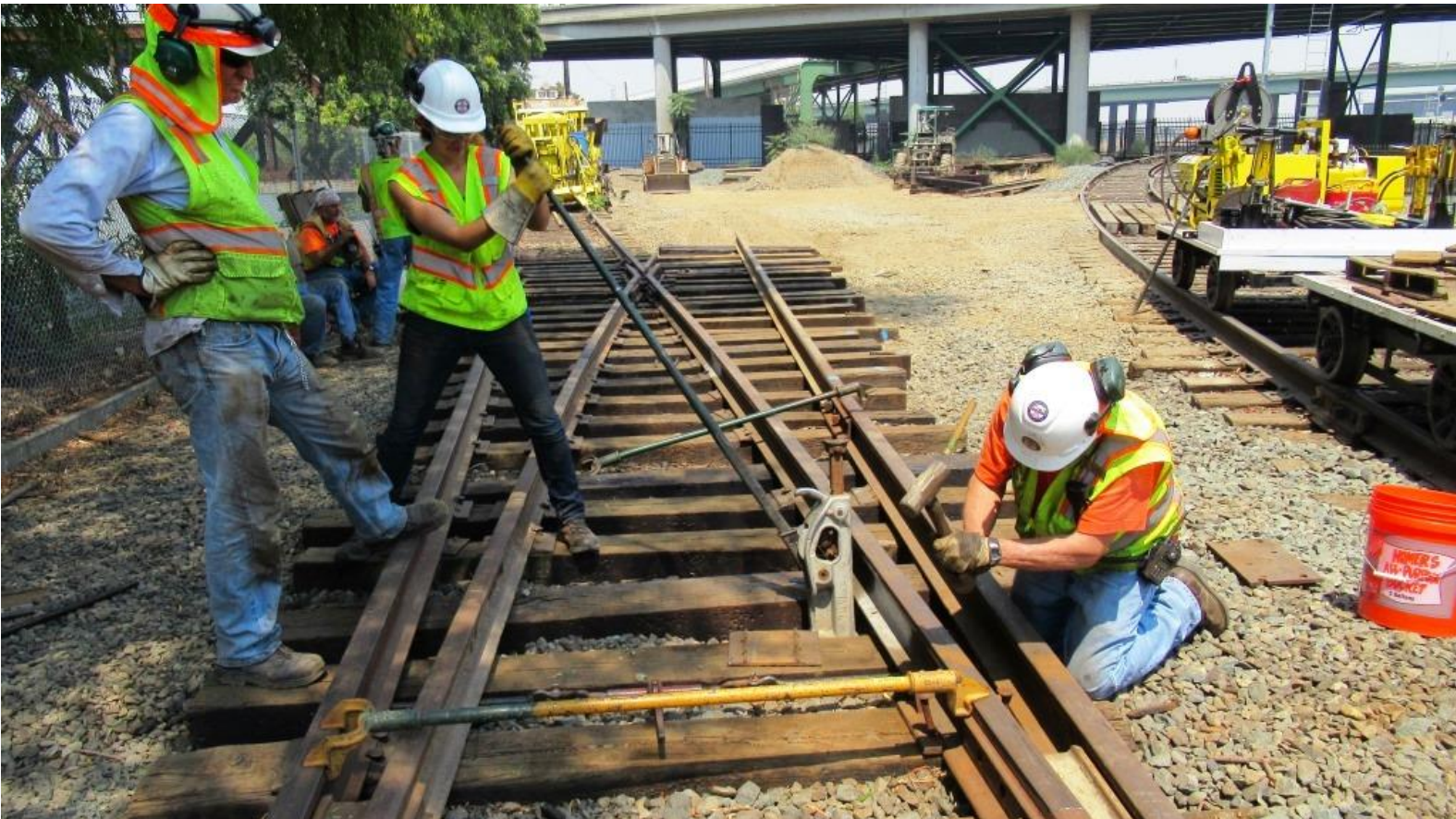


Steve and Ed use a track-jack to lift the rail sufficiently for inserting thick tie-plates





Ed and Steve use the grapple-gauger to pull the rails into gauge



Samantha cranks on the track-jack as Bill sets a spike





Bill nips the tie as Mike F. drives spikes the old-fashioned way



Bill nips the tie as Steve drives spikes the new-fashioned way





Steve nips the tie as Samantha gets some quality time with the hydraulic spike-driver



Steve uses the Steve Tool to hold the un-set spike in place as Bill drives it in



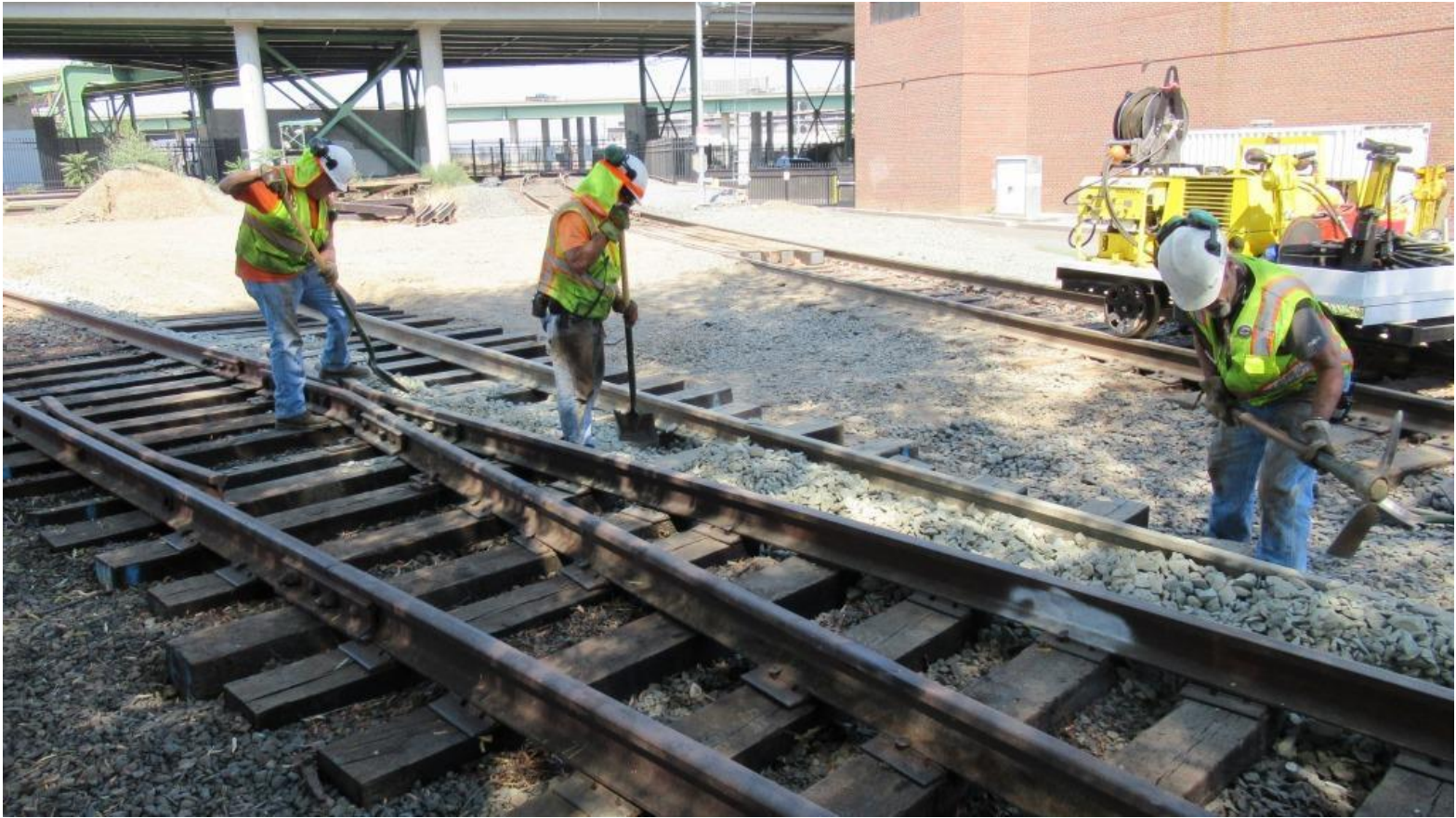


Bring in the hoppers! Alan and Mike F. regulate the flow of rock from the hoppers as ballasting of the switch begins



Alan now drops rock from the center-dump ballast hopper





Bill, Joe, and Ed spread the mounds of ballast-rock about



Bill's thinking, "There must be an easier way"





Here's the easier way. Use the Jackson 125 as a rock-plow



Saturday's train crew was afraid to take the GR10 down to Sutterville Road because of "air quality issues." We made up for their decision...