

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for November 5, 2017. Spooky nights and a stormy morning punctuated the MOW Team's week. With Halloween 2017 now come and gone, let's get you up to date on all the pertinent facts before the ghosts, ghouls, and goblins come back.

Mike Harris, Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Chris Howard, Michael Florentine, Matt McCracken, Kyle Blackburn, Frank Werry, Gene Peck, and Heather Kearns sacrificed trick-or-treating on Halloween night to spend it at the Erecting Shop, instead. Pat, Gene, Chris H., and Mike F. first worked on the air-compressor's engine. It's back from the repair shop but needed some adjustments. They quickly tackled that. Kyle and Matt located a piece of diamond-plate to use for modifications to the air-compressor's rail-cart. Mike F. climbed aboard Green Machine 2 (GM2) and grabbed the large dumpster outside the Boiler Shop and brought it around to the Erecting Shop into which Chris H. and Matt dumped the Shop's trash. This is a must-do job that's never much fun so, many thanks to them for taking care of it. Heather filled a bucket with hydraulic fluid for the new-used hydraulic power unit. Frank, Matt, and Mike F. headed to the Boiler Shop to locate and test the rail-drill which we'd be using on Saturday. Then, they loaded it in the truck. Clearly, it was a more productive evening than hunting down free candy.

Thursday was a frenetic evening for Alan, Ed Kottal, Mike Taylor, Kyle, Joe Margucci, Chris Carlson, Anthony Filamor, Chris H., Matt, Mike H., Frank, DJ Mandella, and Heather at MOW. Mike T. and Ed spent their time servicing the mighty Weed Team's equipment. Matt removed a wheel on a derelict motorcar to be used to replace a wonky wheel on the air-compressor's cart. Speaking of the compressor's cart, Kyle welded his modifications in place. Then, Chris H., DJ, Kyle, Anthony, Mike H., Joe and Frank headed over to Old Sacramento on the Kalamazoo to retrieve the flatcar with the hydraulic power unit on it and take it back to the shops where a hose-reel would be added to it. Also, the Team collected the Interpretive Handcar Program's (IHP) bench-car for storage at the Shops. Back at the Shops, Alan, Chris C., DJ, Anthony, and Chris H. cleared everything off the flatcar. DJ and Chris H. moved the Nolan track-cart and tools to the deck of the Kalamazoo. Chris C. and Anthony mounted the new hose-reel to the hydraulic power unit which was then lifted onto the flatcar by Alan on the yellow Hyster forklift. Chris C. then had the new-used hydraulic power unit loaded onto the flatcar so that the Team could use two hydraulic tools at the same time. Joe and Heather worked over in the Boiler Shop getting the truck all loaded with the necessary equipment for Saturday. Over at the Kalamazoo, Mike H., Kyle, DJ, and Anthony worked on securing its turntable which was leaning and scraping switch-parts as it traveled. With the hydraulic system on the Kalamazoo deactivated, there's nothing but latches to hold the turntable up. Kyle descended into the pit to wrap chains around it while Mike H. worked from inside the cab. This was a bit more complicated than it may seem but, they got it done. Finally, with DJ, Chris C., and Joe helping Alan on the forklift, the air-compressor's engine was lifted onto its cart. Man, does time fly time flies when you're having fun!

It was a dark and stormy morning on Saturday as Alan, Joe, Heather, Mike F., Bill Hastings, Art Flutter, Anthony, Matt, Eric Baugher, Frank, Weston Snyder, Harry Voss, and Chris C. arrived. Luckily, doughnuts were already on hand to brighten everyone's spirits. On this rainy Saturday, a division of labor was called for as the Team planned to split into two separate work parties. Team One would change-out a broken rail on the Sutterville/Zoo Line while Team Two would continue spiking further up the hill. With rain, power in the Boiler Shop is shut-down (something to do with no roof). So, deploying becomes a little more complicated. But, deploy they did. Conductor Frank conducted the Kalamazoo pulling the hydraulic power car over the UP Main. Matt, Mike F., Joe, and Heather deployed the A-6 motorcar and work-train consist. Harry took the back-hoe down to Front Street where the replacement rail would be loaded onto flatcars. At Baths, everything came to a halt as the A-6 suffered a catastrophic failure. Its transmission chose that moment to blow-apart. It's now a hopeless pile of junk. This is a major setback for the Team as the A-6 is the mainstay of our operation. Furthermore, it meant that all the equipment had to be consolidated behind the Kalamazoo which killed our ability to split into two groups. Spiking would have to wait. Replacing the rail was the priority. At the site of the broken rail, Alan, Frank, Joe, and Weston chiseled-off the bond-wires from the rail. Then, Mike F., Heather, Art, Matt, Joe, and Bill pulled spikes. A chain was attached to the new rail and anchored around the track. Slowly, Chris C. in the Kalamazoo pulled forward allowing the rail to drop off the flatcars. Bill, Weston, Matt, and Joe unbolted the old rail and pried-off the joint-bars. Like Gandy-Dancers of old, Mike F., Frank, Bill, Weston, and Joe used lining-bars to shimmy the old rail over. Chris C. and Matt set up the brand-new hydraulic rail saw to cut the new rail to size. Once cut, the Team used two-man rail-tongs to lift the new rail over the old and into place. Then, the rail-drill was brought in to drill new bolt holes. Joe, Bill, Mike F., and Frank clamped to the rail and adjusted its position to cut holes in the perfect places. Once drilled, the rails were lined-up and joint-bars put on. Matt, Bill, and Joe tightened down the new bolts. The old spike holes had to be plugged before new spikes could be driven. Next, the Team deployed its brand-new hydraulic spike-driver. We now have two which speeds things up considerably. Chris C. took the first shot at it followed by Weston and Joe. But, Weston decided that he prefers good ol'-fashioned track-gang style spiking by hand. So, as Heather, Matt, and Anthony drove spikes the new-fashioned way, Weston took-up the spike maul. With the broken rail now replaced, the Team spent the rest of the afternoon setting and driving spikes further up the hill. Both hydraulic spike-drivers – and Weston – were deployed. Matt and Anthony engaged in tandem spiking with the hydraulic spike drivers. It's amazing the amount of work that can be done with the right tools. Although the skies were clearing, the time had come to put our toys away so, the Team packed up and headed to Old Sacramento where the Kalamazoo would tow the A-6 back to the Shops where it faces an uncertain future. Despite not being able to put Adam Smith's "division of labor" theorem into practice, the Team accomplished a tremendous amount of work. Although the portrayal above made it sound easy, replacing a rail is quite an involved endeavor. But, it's one that every member of the Team is proud to have achieved.

This coming week, The MOW Team meets at the Shops on Tuesday and Thursday at or before 5 o'clock. The Weed Team will head out on the line on Thursday starting at 8:30. Saturday, the MOW Team will continue its push to the Zoo starting at 8 o'clock a.m. As always, thanks to all!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris C., and Richard



Gene and Mike F. make adjustments to the air-compressor's engine



Kyle and Matt take a sheet of diamond-plate to the welding table



Kyle puts on a fireworks show



Mike F. on GM2 picks-up the dumpster...



...Into which Matt and Chris H. dump the Shop's trash



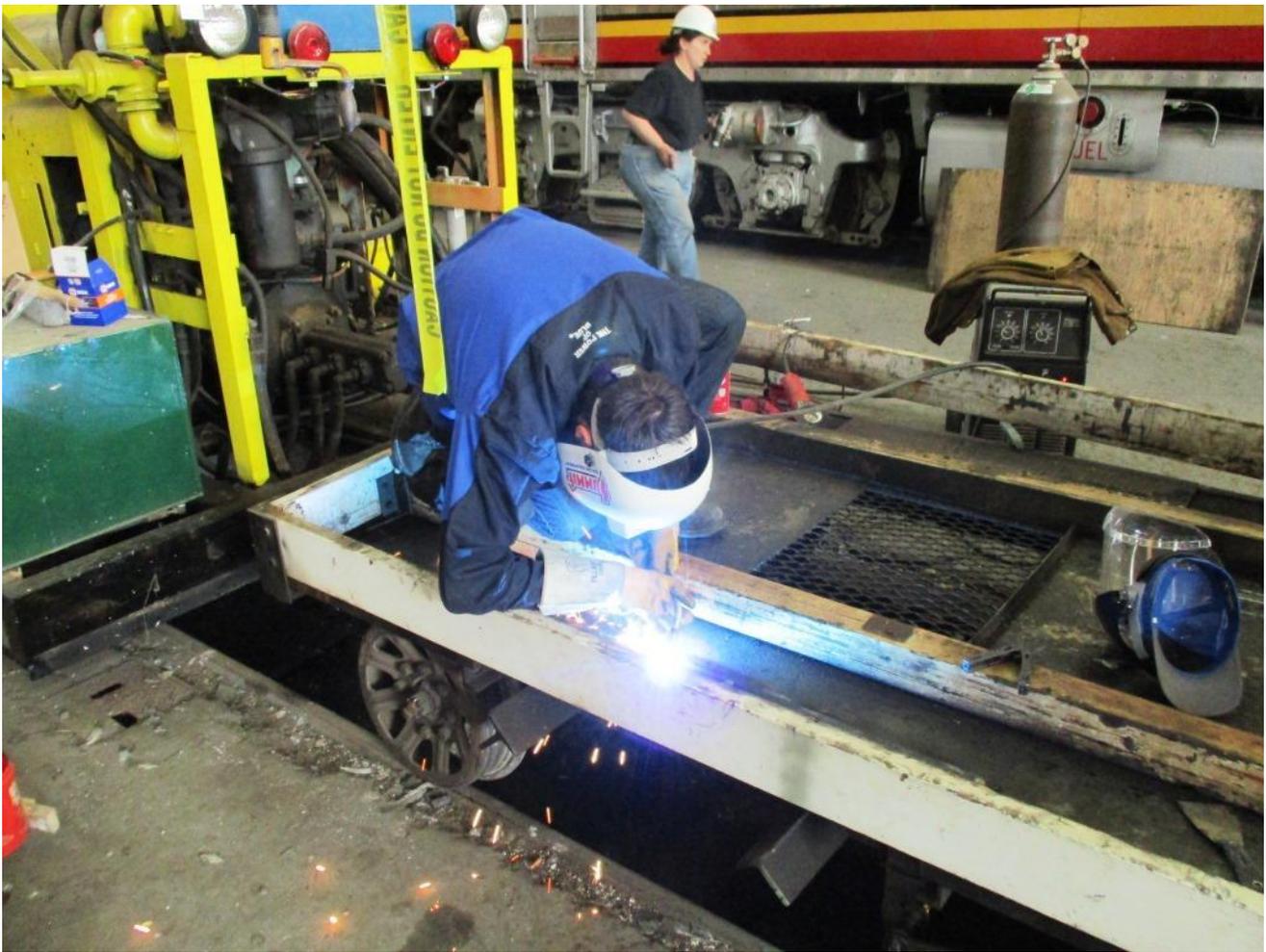
Heather fills a five-gallon bucket with hydraulic fluid



Matt moves equipment out of the way to access the rail-drill



Mike F. gets the rail-drill started to make sure it works



Kyle welds the diamond-plate in place on the air-compressor's cart



Anthony pulls the MOW Team work-train consist out of the container with the A-6 motorcar



Joe and Mike H. act as switch-engines and pull the hydraulic power unit flatcar up to the Kalamazoo for a hook



Joe and Mike H. spot the hydraulic power unit flat car while the rest of the Team bring the IHP bench car up the line



Kyle and Chris H. bring the IHP bench car in for a hook



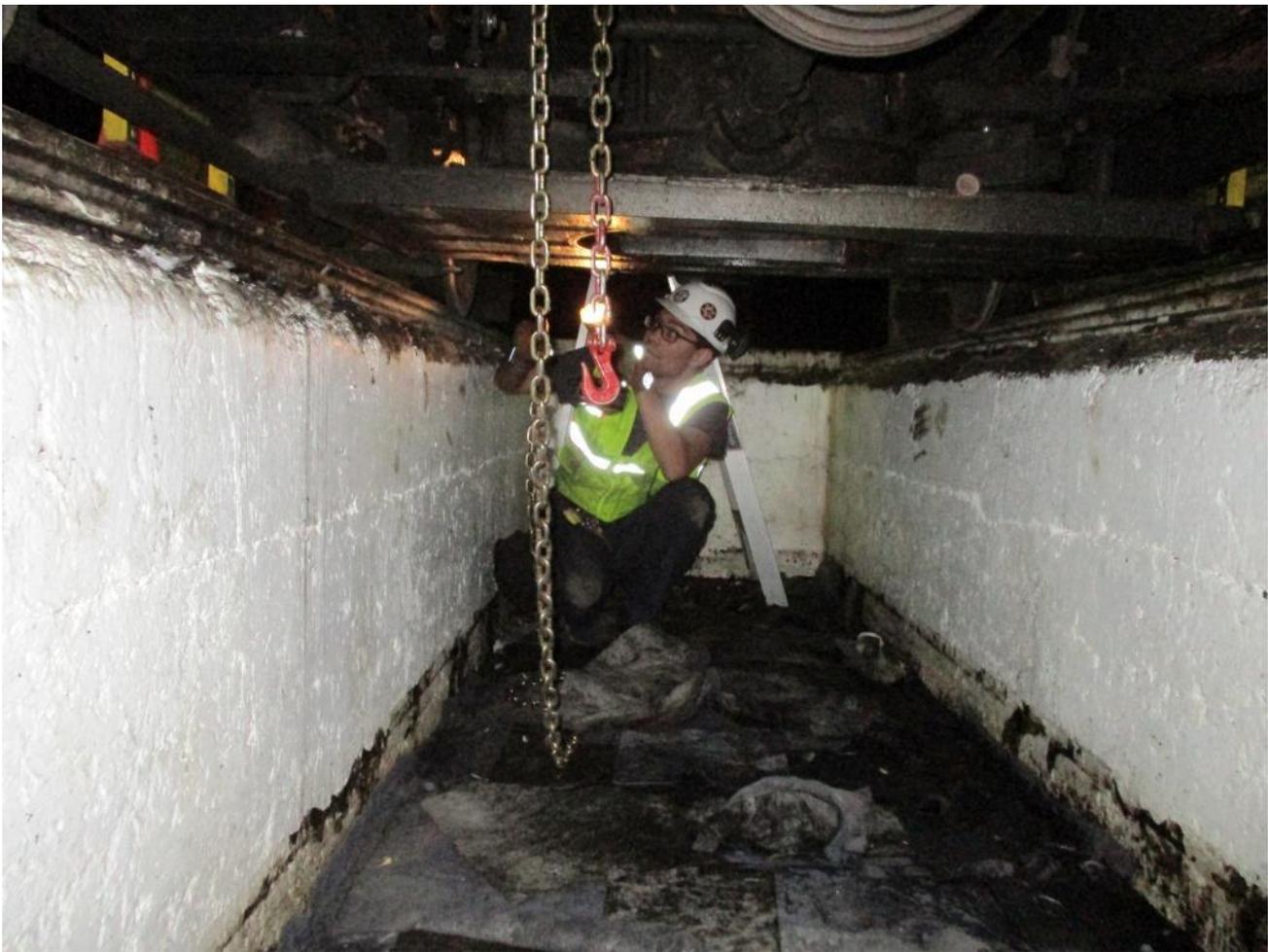
Conductor Frank rides the IHP bench car as the signal turns green



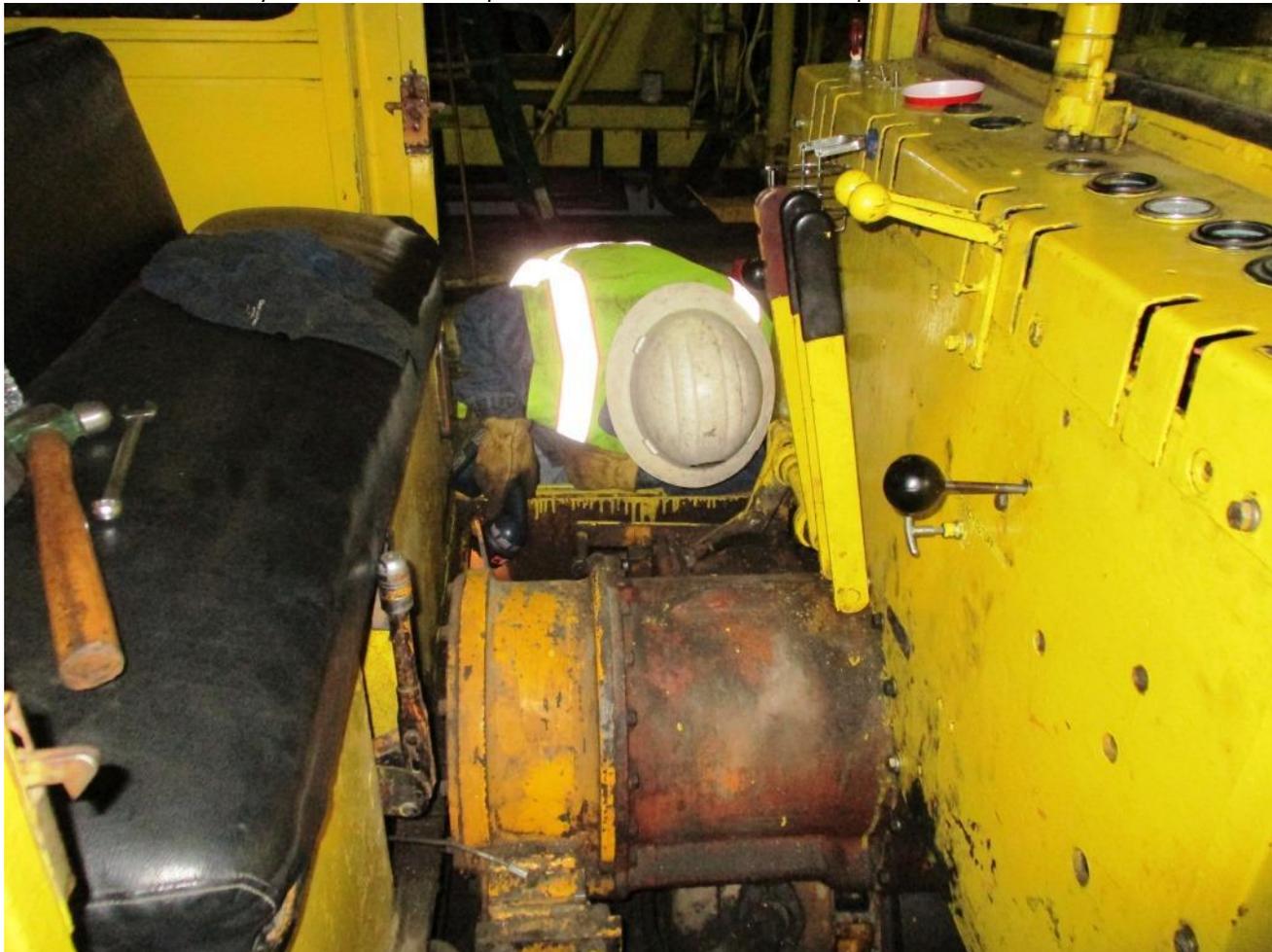
Anthony, Mike H., and Kyle use a lining-bar to lever-up the turntable on the Kalamazoo



Chris C. and Anthony install the new hose-reel on the hydraulic power unit



Kyle descends into the pit under the Kalamazoo to chain-up the turntable...



...While Mike H. handles the chains from above in the cab



Alan lifts while Chris C. and Joe guide the new-used hydraulic power unit onto the flatcar



Matt's photo of his handiwork after having removed the wheel from the derelict motorcar is too artful not to share



On a dark and rainy Saturday morning, Joe pilots the Kalamazoo out of the Erecting Shop



Mike F. spins the work-train on the turntable



Following the catastrophic failure of the A-6 motorcar's transmission, the Team consolidates all of its equipment behind the Kalamazoo



Joe holds the chisel as Mike F. unleashes the hammer on it to break the bond-wire off the track



Measure twice, cut once: Alan double-checks the measurement on the rail being replaced. It's an odd size – 30-feet, one-inch



Alan attaches a chain to the new rail, the other end of which is anchored around the track



With the new rail anchored to the track, Chris C. moves the Kalamazoo south as Bill, Weston, and Mike F. use lining bars to keep it from rolling



Frank and Joe take the joint apart



With the nuts removed, Bill and Matt use a track-punch to punch the bolt out of the joint



Matt pries off the joint-bar...



...To expose the busted rail



Weston, Bill, Mike F., and Frank demonstrate a little Gandy-Dancing as they use lining-bars to shove the old rail out of position



Anthony deploys the hydraulic hoses for use by the new hydraulic rail-saw



Matt and Chris C. set up the new rail-saw



Matt cuts the rail with the new hydraulic rail-saw as Joe uses a shovel to shield the sparks



With the rail cut, the Team uses two-man rail-tongs to lift the new rail over the old and position it on the tie-plates



Mike F., Joe, and Bill position the rail-drill to cut new bolt-holes



With the rail-drill clamped to the track, Anthony sprays the drill-bit with water to keep it cool while Mike F. watches for it to punch through



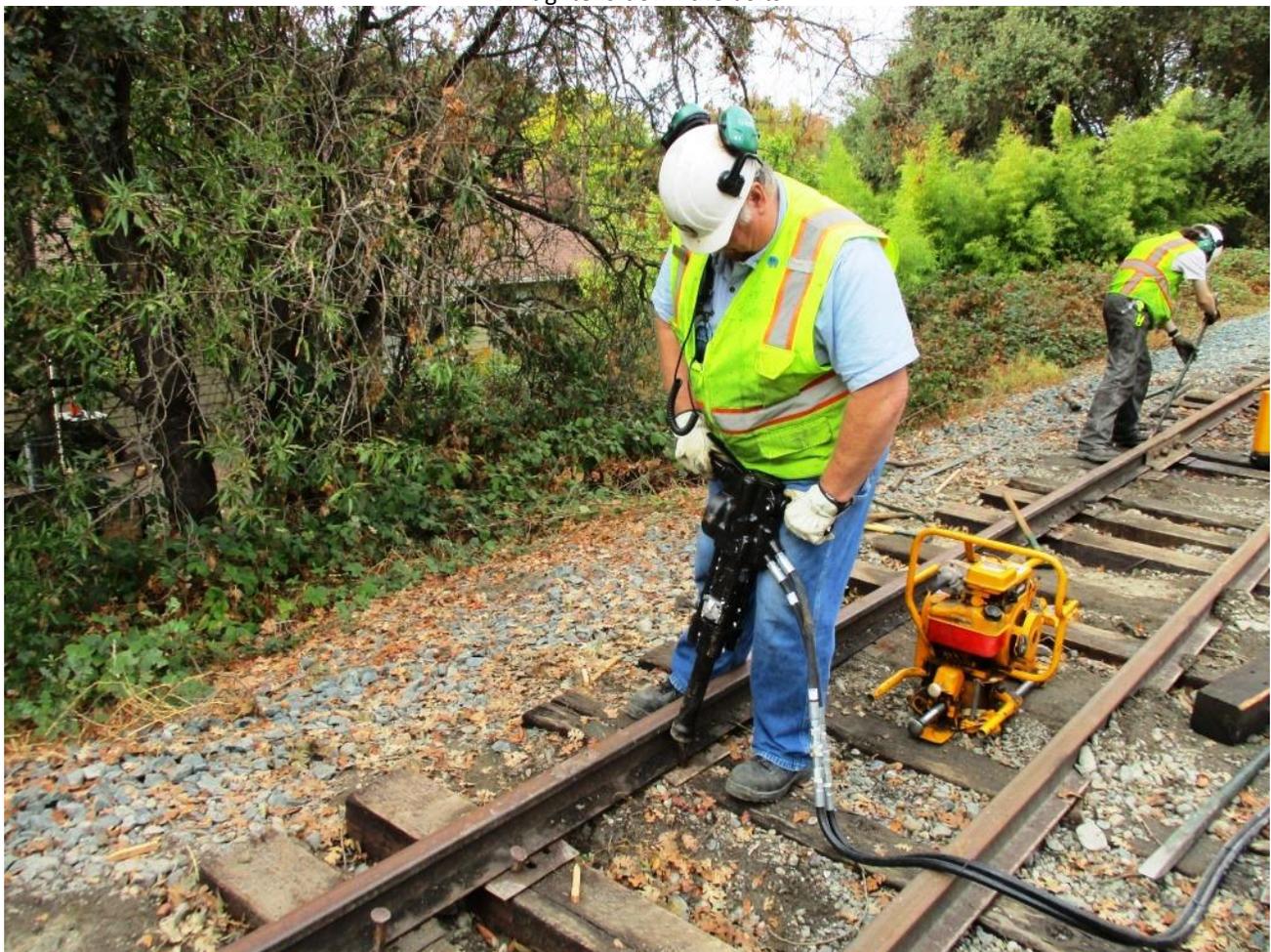
With the holes drilled, Mike F., Joe, and Bill move the ungainly and heavy drill out of the way



Joe uses a lining-bar to lever-up the rail to get level as Heather installs the joint-bars



Bill tightens-down the bolts



Chris C. gives the brand-new hydraulic spike-driver a go (it still has bits of Styrofoam packing material stuck to it)



Joe's next on the new hydraulic spike-driver



Weston says, "Fie on thee, modern technology. I reject thee..."



The modern and ancient: Heather drives spikes with the hydraulic spike-driver while Weston interprets old fashioned track-gang railroading



Matt and Anthony show how it's done: tandem spiking