

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for February 1, 2015. This was a big week for your MOW Team. So, let's not dilly-dally. Let's get this update started with the news...

Yes! It has finally happened. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between State Parks and the California State Railroad Museum Foundation to allow Foundation owned equipment to operate on State Parks' property – the SSRR Tracks – has been signed and executed. This was a 17-month process and there were times when we thought it would never happen. Folks, this is a major milestone, a tremendous advancement, and a huge step forward in our efforts to further mechanize our operation. With this MOU, we can improve our productivity 10-fold and end the back-breaking work of digging out rotten ties by hand. The MOW Team wishes to send its sincere thanks to Foundation Director, Kathy Daigle, for her steadfast support of our program and her perseverance in getting the MOU concluded. Also, thanks to State Parks Capital District Director, Dana Jones, for her efforts on the state's side of this process.

And, we have more good news! An additional 116 tons of ballast-rock was delivered this week bringing our total to 216 tons. Ballast, like gold or oil, is a commodity and the price fluctuates. Between order and delivery, the price changed. It went down! We ordered 200 tons total and received 216 tons. Then, the Foundation was rebated back \$500 by the quarry. Are the gods smiling on us or what?

Tuesday, the Mighty Weed Team headed south to the Hood Line. Mike Taylor, Dave Megeath, Joe Galipeau, and Dale Parker deployed the spray-rig to combat the green menace encroaching on the track. Demonstrating their dedication, the Weedies managed to complete spraying the entire line. The Weed Team's efforts will keep the Hood Line from becoming inundated and lost in overgrowth. Just so that you're aware, these are volunteers undergo strict training and are certified by the appropriate government entities to do this work (as you will learn at Part 214 Training on February 18th or 28th). Three cheers for the valiant Weed Team!

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Scott Morrison, Frederick Carr, Mike Harris, Frank Werry, Alan Hardy, Matt Blackburn, and Gene Peck made the Erecting Shop their home for the evening. Engineer Alan and Conductor Frank brought the Kalamazoo Tug back over to the Shops from Old Sacramento. Although the tug performed beyond expectations last Saturday, a few glitches we revealed that require attention. With the help of Pat, Frank, and Gene, Mike H. descended into the pit to take on the problem. Over at Team Tie-Shear, Scott, Fred, and Cliff, finished re-plumbing the hydraulic system then filled the tank with hydraulic fluid. Operational testing would begin on Thursday. Matt undertook one of those jobs no one likes to do: dumping all the accumulated garbage. We were inundated in old pink boxes that needed disposing. Many thanks to Matt for taking on this job.

Thursday, the Signal Department's electronic experts Joe, Bill Myers, Dennis Noble, and Dennis Gallagher continuing their efforts at restoring the light-reference system on the new-old tamper. They've been working on this complicated project for quite some time. On Thursday they activated it and it works! This was great news! Thank you Joe, Bill, Dennis and Dennis. In the evening, Gene, Fred, Scott, Alan, and Cliff began the operational testing of the Tie Shear. After a thorough check and several adjustments, the powerful Detroit Diesel roared to life. Now, Team Tie Shear could engage the various functions and begin to troubleshoot problems. As was expected, several issues were revealed. But, it started and its systems functioned. This was a major step forward considering the extreme nature of this machine's rebuild. Also on Thursday, Scott, Fred, and Cliff took some time to work out the hydraulic troubles with the tug.

The fine folks of the Mechanical and Restoration Shop restored the transfer-table to full operation on Friday. The transfer-table is a vital to the MOW Team's ability to deploy equipment – as it is to other railroad programs. Thanks to Al DiPaolo, Greg Kelsch, Dusty Galland, and Will Dutton for taking on the high-voltage challenge of bringing the transfer-table back to life!

Clem Meier, Pam Tatro, Michael Florentine, and Alan Hardy made up the team on Saturday. Competing events, including the annual Conductor/Train Master Seminar, co-opted many of our regulars. The plan had been to continue working out on the line but, considering size of the crew, an audible was called and the team went to work up in the future MOW Compound behind the Museum. Mike F. on the back-hoe and Clem and Pam with shovels and mattocks managed to level the ground between the 560 Interchange Track and the old 150 Track. The tracks in this area will be realigned and additional spurs built as a storage compound for MOW equipment. Mike F. demonstrated his expert skills at the controls of the back-hoe, as did Pam and Clem with their tools. By noon, a significant pile of dirt had been removed. In the afternoon, the team repaired the heel-block of Switch 4 at the North Turntable Lead. It's quite something what a small group of volunteers can achieve. The Saturday MOW Team's endeavors prove that. They are an example to us all.

This coming week, the Weed Team will take on the green menace along our tracks in the Old SP Rail Yards and up at the future MOW Compound in Old Sac. In the evenings on Tuesday and Thursday, the Team will meet as usual at or before 5 o'clock in the Erecting Shop. Saturday, 8 o'clock a.m. is the call time. Expansion of the retaining wall along the bike-path at Mile Post 1.1 will be a priority as well as further ballasting of the track. Things are really looking up for the MOW Team. Already, 2015 is proving to be a great year!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Dave and Joe prepare the spray rig for deployment



Mike T. checks out the directions for use...



Mike T. and Dave take the battle to the enemy...



The idyllic Hood Line



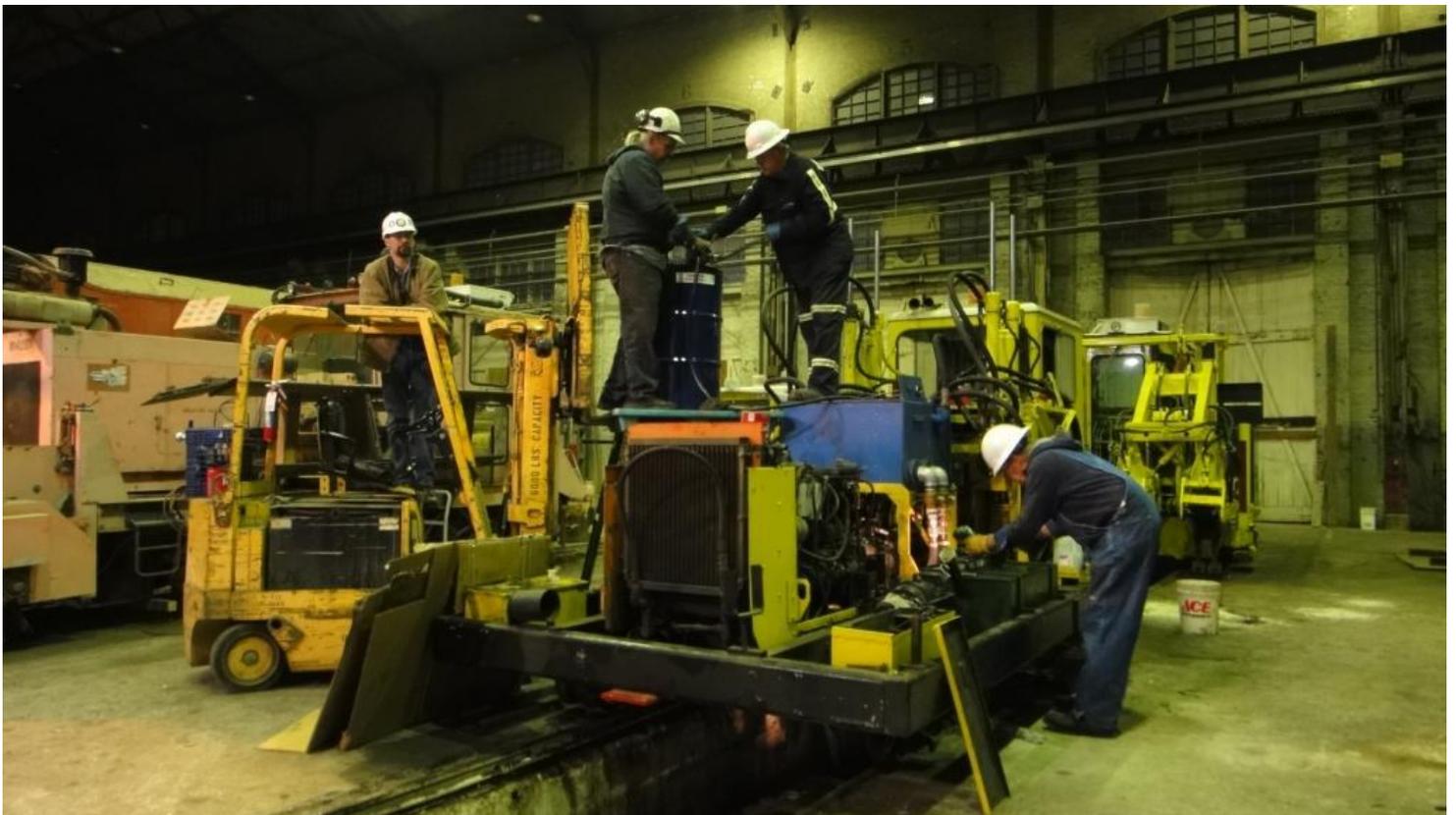
Engineer Alan and Conductor Frank bring the Kalamazoo over the UP Main



Matt takes out the trash



Is Fred conducting a sit-in? Nahh, just taking a quick break...



Matt, Fred, Scott, and Cliff fill the tie-shear's hydraulic tank with fluid



Mike H. down in the pit assessing the situation with Kalamazoo



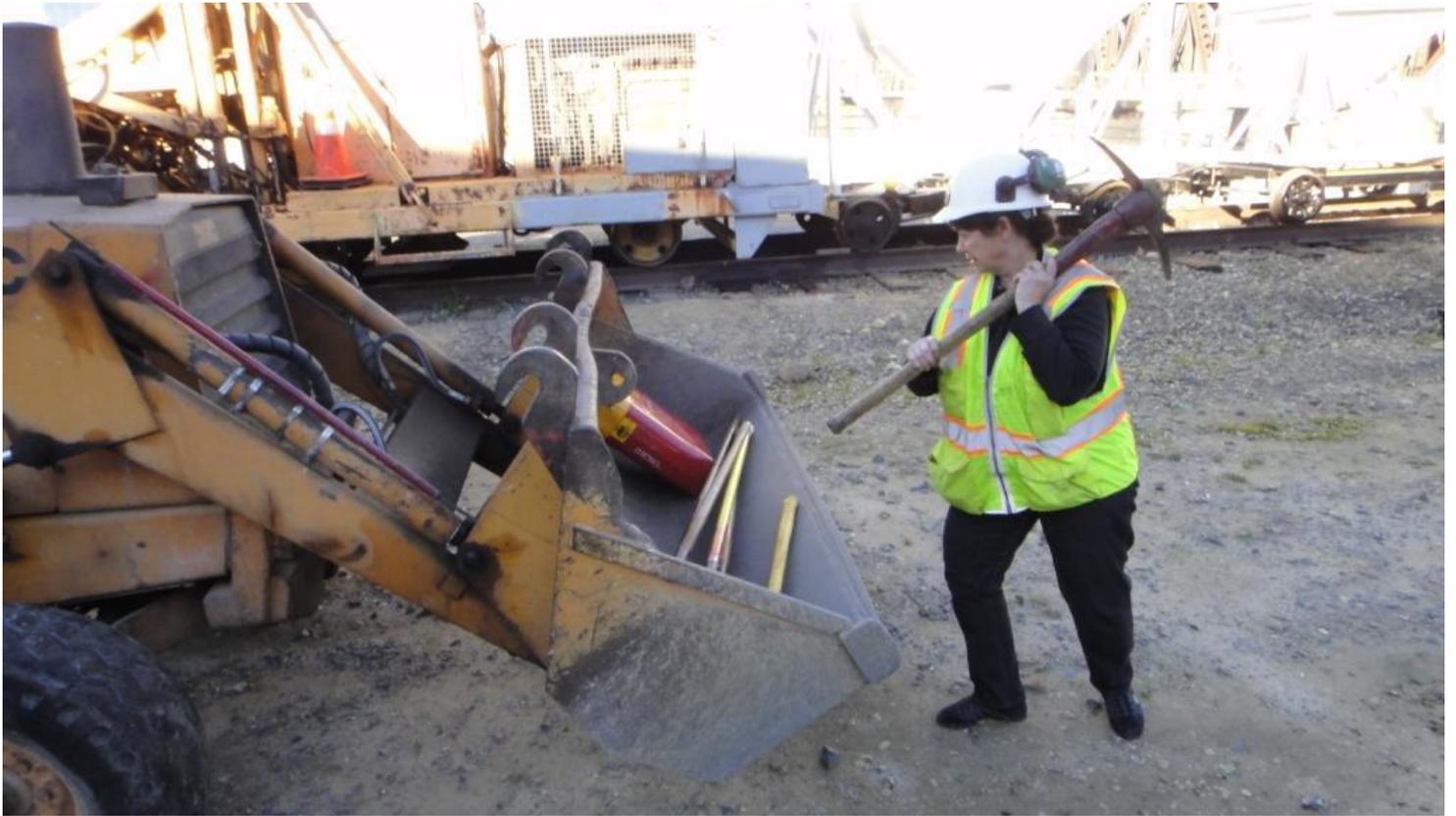
216 tons of ballast



Fred tackles one of the identified issues with the Kalamazoo



Alan, Clem, and Mike F. get the tools and equipment ready to roll



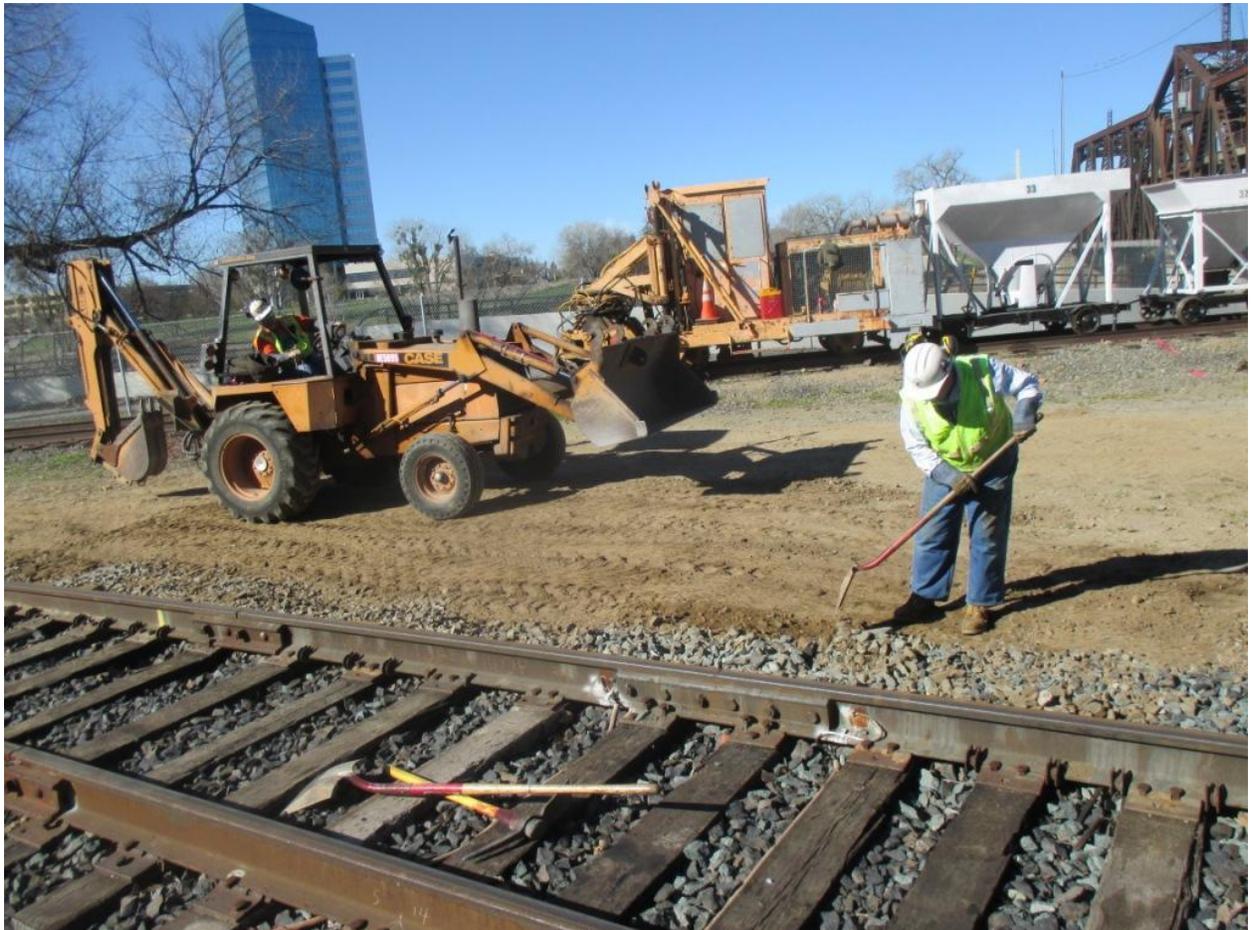
Pam has become our expert mattocks operator



Mike F. in the back-hoe and Clem tear resurface the area to the west of the 560 Interchange Track



Mike F. in the back-hoe and Pam take on the hill



Amazing what a small group of volunteers can accomplish