

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for February 9, 2014. Yep, the clouds parted and the heavens and came down – inside the Boiler Shop this week. The MOW Team Amphibious Assault Unit was deployed for the first time this year. So before we all drown, let's telegraph the engine room for full steam ahead and get this update underway!

Tuesday, the Mighty MOW Weed Team had the day off. But, Shop crew was busy keeping the MOW Team mobile. Pat Scholzen, Alan Hardy, Cliff Hayes, Heather Kearns, Frederick Carr, Mike Harris, Chris Carlson, Harry Voss, and Gene Peck were all on hand for an evening of great progress. Pat, Gene, and Fred fixed a pesky oil leak in the engine of the Big Green Machine that has been dogging us for some time. Of course, they were successful. Then, Mike set out to fix a leak in its air system. He discovered that the rigid air-line emanating from the compressed air tank was not only cracked but, also, had a rather large hole in it. Needless to say, the system now works at 100 percent efficiency. The Green Machine is the anchor of our operation and, when it's down, we're down. So, many thanks to Pat, Gene, Fred, and Mike! Meanwhile, Cliff worked on building shields to protect the lights and horns on the new-old tamper from the Goths and Vandals who marauder through Old Sacramento. Speaking of the new-old tamper, it's nearly ready for the transfer of the work-heads off the old-old tamper and deployment onto the line. Almost single handedly, Alan has restored this machine. Heather repaired one of the hedge-trimmers. Chris and Harry took on the malfunctioning overhead crane in the Shear Bay. All in all, it was a very successful evening. We're all very fortunate to have so many mechanical experts dedicating their skills to Maintenance of Way!

Thursday, it was a dark and stormy night – inside the Boiler Shop that is. Alan, Heather, Mike, Cliff, and Frank Werry mustered on deck to batten down the hatches, and continue dismantling the hydraulic systems of the old regulator as it is converted into a tug. The biggest challenge was working through the oil, grease, and dirt that had collected on every component of the machine over the decades. Alan managed to get the hydraulic motor for the set-off wheels working. It's probably the first time in 30 or 40 years that it has been activated. As the evening progressed, we managed to pump-out out copious amounts of old hydraulic fluid from the machine. We finished the evening by prepping the building for rain by covering everything in anticipation of the impending storm and thinking good thoughts about the exceptional work we did.

Saturday, Alan, Pam Tatro, Steve Nemeth, Michael Florentine, Frank Werry, and Chris Carlson set the royals and stunsails, for a voyage into the eye of the storm. First and foremost, the order to “splice the mainbrace,” or, in our case, the “splice the doughnut-brace” was issued and the crew fueled up for a day of fighting green-water over the bow. The primary mission was to steam-clean the tug. First, Pam helped row the transfer table down to the fire-truck bay. Alan brought gantry crane south and lifted the tug to spot it on the rails. Chris launched the *Sea Tiger*, our pink regulator, to tow the A-6 motorcar out onto the transfer table to make way for the tug. We set our course and bearing for the north end of the building where the tug could be docked over the pit. Steve, Mike F., and Chris fired up the steam cleaner to blast off all the old oil, grease, and dirt. They were wet before starting this task. By the time they finished, they were soaked. But, they persevered because their hearts were pure and their cause was just. In the afternoon, steam cleaning continued reveling components not seen in decades. Then, the crew cleaned up all the muck and gunk that had been blasted off the machine which was a task-and-a-half in and of it self. The final duty of the day was to drain about 25 gallons of water that had collected in a tarp hanging over the Signals Department's quadrant of the building. The tarp was hung to protect the area from rain but did not provide for drainage. It looked like a giant whale suspended over the Signals Shop. As it was in danger of collapsing, Steve “Cap'n Ahab” Nemeth spearheaded the effort to spear the great beast, thus ending the threat. Job well done, Steve! Wet and tired, the team sailed into the sunset just after 5 o'clock rightly proud of their accomplishments.

In other news, two of our Team members have achieved new volunteer-hour milestones: Michael Sechrist received his 250 hour bar, most of which he earned with the MOW Team, and MOW Team Manager, Chris Carlson earned his 9,000 hour bar. Congratulations to Michael and Chris! We all appreciate your dedication and invaluable contribution to our railroad!

For the week ahead, the Weed Team is headed to Hood on Tuesday. Join them at 8:30 a.m. in the Shops. Of course the Tuesday Shops Crew will be meeting at the usual times. Thursday, come join the fun starting at 5 o'clock p.m. Saturday, we'll be in port enjoying doughnuts starting at 8 o'clock a.m. and engaging in very important work. Many thanks to all!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Mike H. re-assembling the air system on Big Green Machine



Harry operates the elevator as Chris diagnoses the defect in the overhead crane



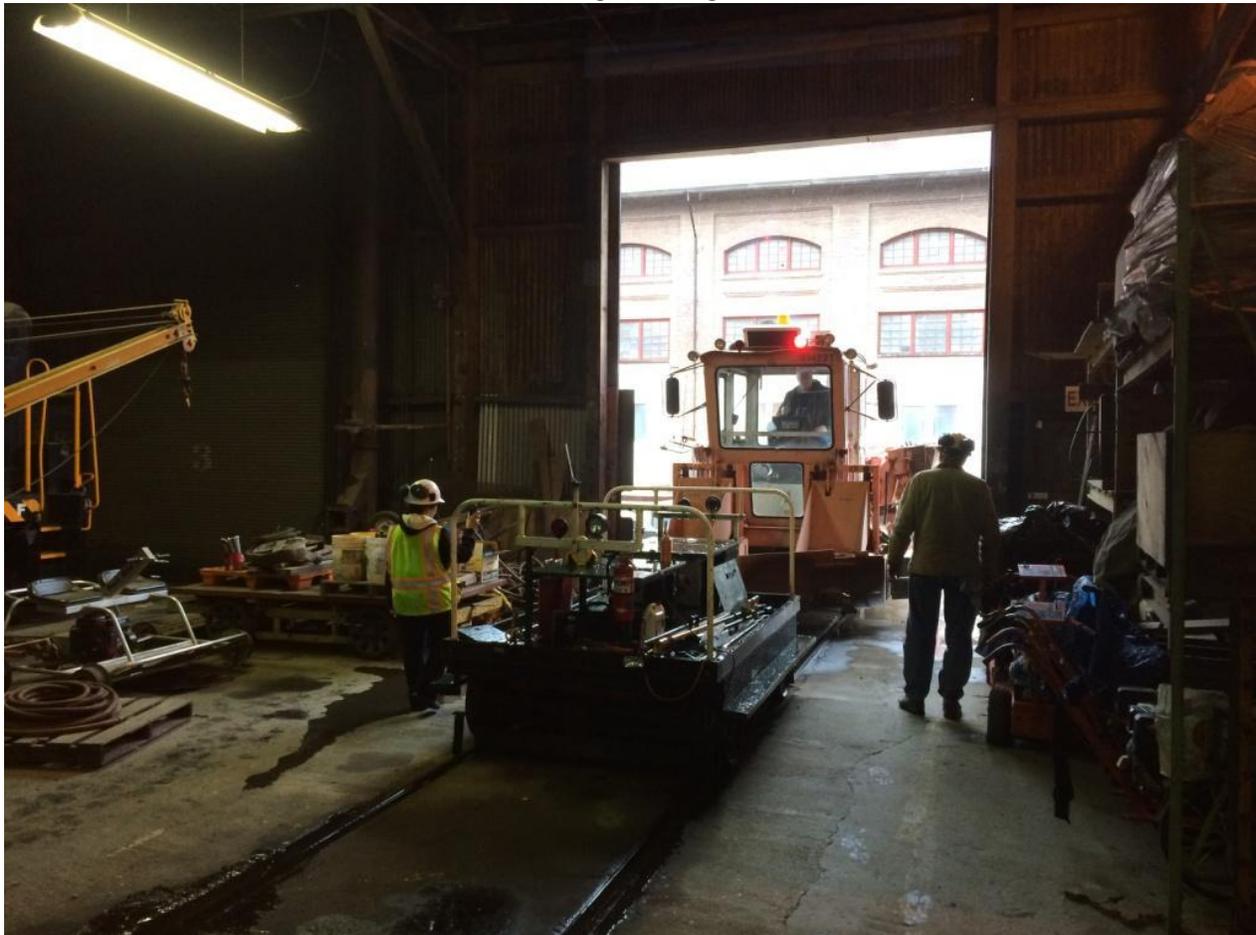
Cliff working his metallic magic



Heather rebuilds one of the hedge-trimmers, a key component of the Weed Team's arsenal



The tug takes flight



The *Sea Tiger* sets sail



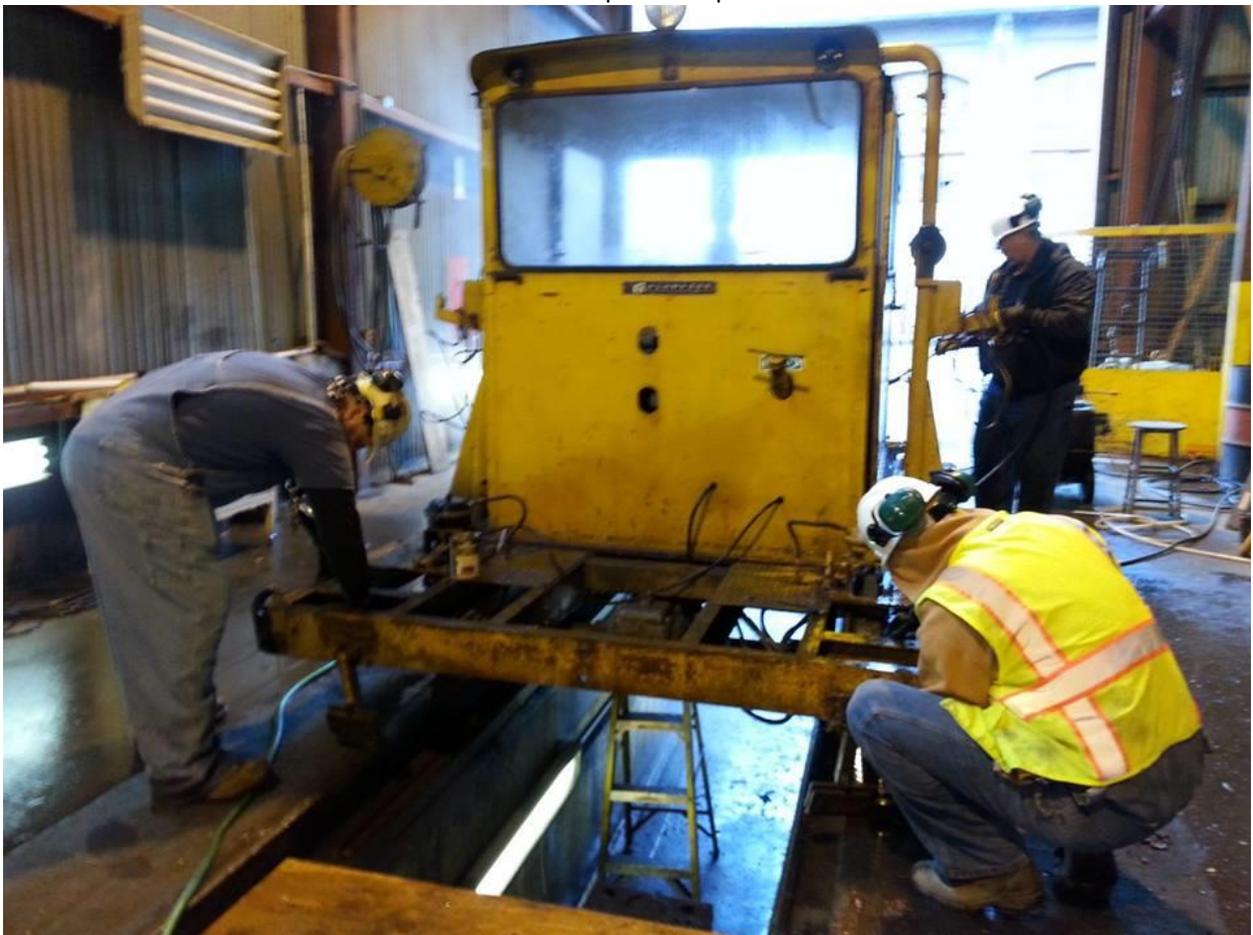
Steve on the forklift shoves the tug onto the transfer table



Full steam ahead! Steve and Chris work at steam cleaning the tug



Into to the pit of despair...



Mike F., Steve, and Chris fight on



Now that they can see things, Steve and Mike F. are able to remove more components of the hydraulic system



Cap'n Steve takes on the great blue whale