

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for April 12, 2015. Steam returned to the Sacramento Southern Railroad this week and your MOW Team was right there working to make sure the Granite Rock 10 would have a safe and smooth surface on which to run. So, let's get this update started before too much pressure builds up casing the pop-off valve to pop-off.

Tuesday, the MOW Team Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Frederick Carr, Scott Morrison, Gene Peck, Heather Kearns, Matt Blackburn, Mike Harris, and Alan Hardy brought warm spirits and good works to the Erecting Shop. Scott made the final fixes and adjustments to the tie-shear. Once the "kicker cylinder," which is being rebuilt off-site, is installed, the shear will be ready to deploy. Mike H. began digging into the A-5 motorcar's dead engine. Mike H. is a master mechanic and, undoubtedly, will make things right. In the meantime, the Interpretive Handcar Program is without a working motorcar. So, Matt headed over to Old Sacramento to set up the A-6, motorcar for the Handcar program to use. Then it rained and the rainbow appeared over the building signifying a good omen for the MOW Team.

With the environmental mitigation work going on in Rail Yards, the MOW Team often has had to move the track materials stored to the west of the Boiler Shop. Digging in our materials yard is set to commence in a couple weeks. Wednesday, Heather and Alan spent the day moving the materials. Heather climbed aboard the Big Green Machine and Alan the yellow electric forklift. It was a tag-team effort. Alan would pick stuff up and move it into position for Heather to grab and transport out over rough terrain to the new location. After eight hours straight they managed to move about a third of the total that need to be relocated. Kudos to Heather and Alan for a job well done.

Thursday, Alan, Cliff, Gene, and Mike H. returned for more MOW fun. Mike H. continued working on the A-5. He pulled and inspected the head-gasket as well as removing the water pump and fan. Cliff and Gene modified the tie-shear and the new-old tamper with shunting wires on the wheels that will enable these machines to trigger the grade crossing warning systems on the Mainline. Alan continued painting the world yellow. But, to be fair, Alan does dabble in other colors, as well – blues on hydraulic tanks, greens on diesel tanks, black on decking and railings, white on roofs, and red on couplers and hooks. Artistically, his style is more Cézanne or Monet than Mondrian or Kandinsky. But, really, his style is neither Impressionism nor Expressionism. It's MOWism – truly a new school in the world of art...

Harry Voss, our Designated Supervisor of Doughnut Distribution, arrived at the Erecting Shop early Saturday morning with a large pink box. Alan, Pam Tatro, the three "Mikes" – Harris, Florentine, and Miller, Steve Nemeth, Heather, Frank Werry, Ed Moriarty, and Scott made quick work of the doughnuts before heading out to the area between Capitol Mall and the Circle of Lights. Several wobbly joints in the area needed attention. First, the team would tackle a particularly bad joint where the two rails were pumping independently of each other. This joint was triaged last week. Now it was time to fix it for good. Mike M., Mike H., Steve, Pam, and Ed began digging out the joint. Harry and Frank fired-up the tire-mounted compressor and Mike F. began cutting away asphalt around the joint. With sufficient space created, Alan and Mike M. brought in the pneumatic impact wrench to pull the nuts. But, the socket was not fitting on the nut despite being right size. The taper of the joint-bar and the length of the bolt were precluding the socket from grabbing the nut. So, Mike M., Mike F., and Frank used track wrenches to pull the nuts manually. Despite being soaked in Kroil, the nuts seized on the rusty bolts. Meanwhile, the clock was ticking away. Time for the first train was quickly approaching. Yet, the joint was half-way dismantled. Steve, Alan, and Mike M. tried using a track-chisel to cut the nuts off the bolts to no avail. Tick-tock – the EIC is starting to panic. Frank and Mike F. began working the nuts back and forth with the track wrenches and eventually got them to a place where the impact wrench socket would fit. Once the nuts came off, things moved quickly. The rail was nipped, new tie plates were installed and new bolts tightened down. At 10:55, the **red-flag** at Capitol Mall was moved from between the rails to the right side of the direction of travel. The track was back in service just in the nick of time.

The sight and sounds of the Granite Rock No. 10 rolling through our work limits on its maiden revenue run on the Mainline was a beautiful thing. But we still had work to do. More asphalt needed to be cut away to access the north rail. The opposite joint needed attention as well as joints north and south of this location. More buckling asphalt needed to be shaved-down and the holes we had created. Josh Ilac joined us in the afternoon. He got right to work tightening bolts and shaving buckled asphalt with the jackhammer. Also joining us was Signals Department and Weed Team member Carol Nelson. As the afternoon wore on, the train's departure time from Old Sac. became less and less predictable. The Team would stop work in anticipation of the train passing through our limits. Unfortunately, the train kept falling further behind schedule. Under such circumstances, opening up more joints seemed ill advisable. Instead, we packed-up to return to the Shops and pulled the **red-flags** at 3:13 p.m. Nonetheless, it's a pleasure having steam back on the line!

Everyone at the MOW Team wishes to send hearty congratulations to our good friends in the Mechanical/Restoration Shop who literally rebuilt the Granite Rock 10 from the ground up. They did incredible and inspiring work to bring steam back to the Sacramento Southern Railroad. The entire Museum community owes the volunteers and staff who rebuilt this locomotive a tremendous debt of gratitude.

This coming week, the MOW Team will gather in the Shops as usual at or before 5 o'clock p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. Saturday, we will return to Embassy Suites Alley for more joint work. To the folks who showed up this last week, your patience and fortitude is greatly appreciated. Saturday was frustrating at times but, we got through it. Again, thank you.

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Cliff and Fred build a protective shield for the rail-lifter's exhaust



There's a Boiler Shop at the end of the rainbow...





Cliff installs the shield on the new exhaust pipe that Alan built



Heather on Big Green moving the track materials out of the environmental mitigation folks' way





Steve, Mike M., Ed, Alan, and Mike H. begin work on digging out this troublesome joint



Pam picks-up asphalt debris as Mike F. with the jackhammer cuts around the joint





The impact wrench is brought in. Mike M. tries to get a grip on the nut while Mike H. holds the bolt in place with his foot



With the impact wrench striking out, Alan and Steve use a track chisel in a futile attempt to break the nut off the bolt





Meanwhile, Pam continues digging out the joint opposite



Mike M., Mike F., Alan, and Scott make a second attempt with the impact wrench to free the nut from the bolt.





Steve, Alan, and Frank insert tie-plates between the base of the joint-bars and the sunken tie to add stability and support



Panic averted, it's 11 o'clock and the Team reverts to its predestinated safety spot to await the arrival of Granite Rock 10's maiden run though our working limits. Top from left: Steve, Mike F., Alan, Ed, Frank, and Pam. Bottom from left: Mike H., Scott, Harry, Heather, Carol, and Mike M.





“Granite Rock 10 has permission to pass red-flags located at Mile Post 0.3 and Mile Post 0.6 without stopping, over...”

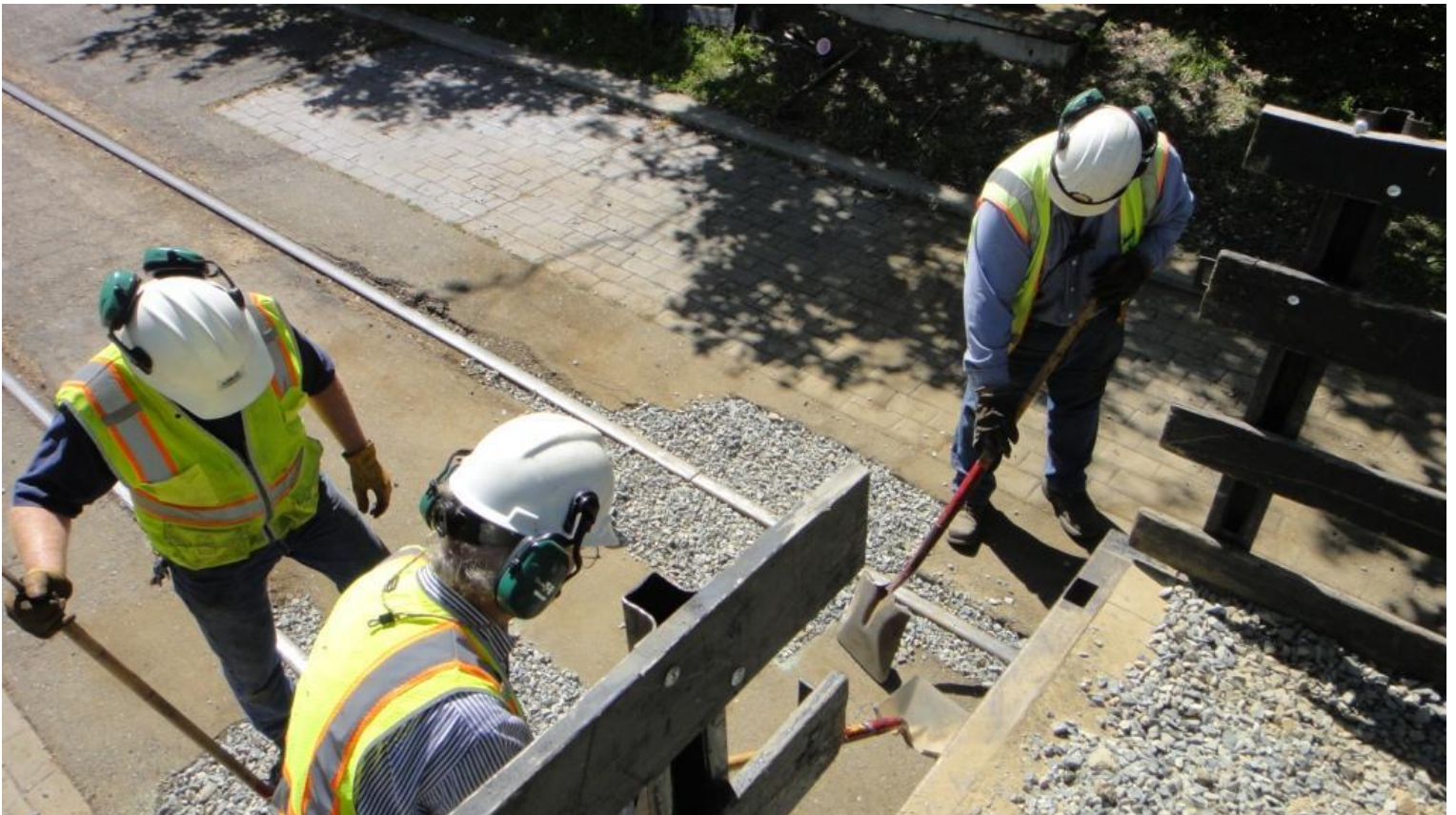


Back for more fun in the afternoon, Mike M. digs with the mattocks, Steve with the jackhammer, and Mike H. with the shovel





Mike F. uses the jackhammer to shave the buckling asphalt



Filling in the holes, Ed, Steve, and Frank use crushed rock to fill in around the joint