

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for April 22, 2018. Your MOW Team was “cooking with Crisco” this week, making progress on a variety of projects. So, let’s not turn the heat down and allow that Crisco congeal by delaying this update any further!

The MOW Team’s week started Tuesday with the mighty Weed Team’s latest adventure out on the line. Mike Taylor, Steve Wilson, and Ed Kottal loaded the 65-gallon spray-rig in the track and took care of the final bit of weed-spraying for the year. The vegetation vigilantes doused their enemy with blue-brew along the Auxiliary Track then sprayed down the Setzer before finishing up on the 560-Track in the Rail Yards. This touch-up spraying will put a final halt to the green invasion. Our Weedies are a fantastic Team who do great work for our Railroad!

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Pat Scholzen, Chris Howard, Joe Margucci, Frank Werry, Kyle Blackburn, Matt Blackburn, Gene Peck, Jack Shrive, Heather Kearns, and Alan Hardy convened at the Shops for the evening’s activities. The Team would venture out onto the line to do some touch-up work, themselves. About a dozen ties remained up-spiked north of Switch 17. So, the Team headed to Baths to complete this work. Matt and Joe set spikes. Then, with youthful enthusiasm, Chris, Jack, and Kyle all decided to interpret old-fashioned track-gang railroading by driving spikes by hand. Soon they switched to hydraulic power. While in the area, Alan ventured out onto the I-5 Bridge to mark clusters of bad ties to be replaced (starting Saturday). With the spiking done, the Team inspected joints and changed the spike placement on some older ties that were driven incorrectly. Spikes were pulled by hand and reset correctly. Indeed, it had been a productive evening for your MOW Team.

Thursday, Ed Kottal, Joe, Chris, Kyle, Frank, Alan, Jack, Taka Blackburn, and Heather set out to stage for starting the restoration of the track on the I-5 Bridge on Saturday. Over in Old Sac., Kyle brought the Kalamazoo tug pulling the work-train consist out of the Central Pacific Passenger Station (CPPS). The propone fork-lift was deployed to lift a bundle of new ties onto the one of the flatcars. As it was a loose bundle, Jack, Ed K., and Frank, arranged the ties evenly on the flatcar then strapped them down. Chris topped-off the Kalamazoo, tamper, and Jackson 125 tie-exchanger with red-diesel. Joe and Frank got the hydraulic power-unit and tools transferred from the truck to the other flatcar. Jack and Ed K. got the 125 moved off the 150-Track to the North Turntable Lead. The Wizard of Electrons, Joe, and his apprentice extraordinaire, Kyle, fixed a faulty switch in the tamper that was interrupting the proper functioning of the forward running lights. Heather, Ed K., and Frank then headed to the turntable where the east rail had slipped northward. The propane forklift was used to ram it back into position. With everything put away, the Team headed back to the Shops where the empty diesel jerry-cans were refilled. Then, the garbage was taken out. You know, it’s simply amazing. This Team is more efficient than German engineering or a Swiss watch!

Saturday started early for Joe and Chris. They headed to Old Sac. to deploy equipment from the CPPS and lower the shields on the tamper, scarifier-inserter, and tie-shear. Weed Team perennial and Assistant DSLE, Dave Megeath, stepped away from the Granite Rock 10, and assisted the MOW Team. Many thanks, Dave! At the Shops, Alan, Michael Florentine, DJ Mandella, Bill Hastings, Clem Meier, Ed K., Frank, Heather, and Ed Moriarity made sure to save some doughnuts for Joe and Chris. Saturday, work commenced the restoration of the track on the I-5 Bridge. With trains making frequent treks down the Sutterville Line, the condition of the bridge track needed to be addressed. As such, the Team has developed a project plan to replace most of the ties on the bridge over three-phases. The new ties would have to be put in at an angle as they are eight-feet in length and there is only seven feet of clearance between the rails and the wall of the bridge. We weren’t sure how easy this process would be, so the Team was conservative in its planning. We did not want to get ahead of ourselves. Frank took out the shear, Alan piloted the scarifier, Heather handled the tamper, and Chris drove the Kalamazoo pulling the work-train. Out on the bridge, Clem, DJ, Mike F. and Bill pulled spikes with the hydraulic spike-puller. Heather and Joe headed to Sutterville Road to remove the red-flag at Mile Post 3.5 and moved it to Mile Post 3.05. With the spikes pulled, Frank brought in the tie-shear and began slicing the marked-ties. Frank made quick work of the first group of 19 ties to be removed. Next, Mike F. brought the front-end loader onto the bridge, straddling the track, into which Chris, Ed M., Ed K., Joe, Heather, and Bill loaded tie-debris. As Chris moved in the Kalamazoo shoving the tie-laden flatcar, DJ and Bill rolled new ties off the pile at each empty crib. Alan then scarified the cribs to give plenty of space for Joe, Ed M., Bill, and DJ to swing new ties under the rails at an angle. This process went faster and easier than expected. By lunchtime, all the cribs were scarified, and new ties installed.

Following lunch, Mike F. again brought the front-end loader. Bill, Joe, DJ, and Chris again loaded tie-debris into its bucket. Using hand-shovels, the Team next moved tons of rock around the newly installed ties. Mike F. climbed up on the wall of the bridge and cleaned any loose rock off of it that the scarifier might have thrown. With rock packed around the new ties, Heather brought in the tamper and, with Joe guiding from the ground, tamped the new ties. While waiting for the 3 o’clock train, which we would follow back into town, Mike F., Bill, Chris, and DJ repaired the bracing ties the Team installed along the curve at the north approach to the bridge some years ago. The bracing helps prevent the curve from “kinking” in the heat. One of the ties had become dislodged. Once the new tie was in place, Mike F. rolled the front-end loader over it to compress the rock behind it. With that, the Team headed back to Old Sac. and stowed the equipment. Folks, things went exceptionally well on Saturday – better than expected. Plus, nothing broke down! Also, we learned that we can be more ambitious next week as inserting ties by hand at an angle on the bridge was not as difficult as we thought. In the end, all credit goes to the fantastic volunteers of the MOW Team!

This coming week, the Team will gather extra early on **Tuesday, starting at 2 o’clock p.m.** to begin setting out the new MOW yard behind the Museum. Thursday, the Weed Team will head to Hood. Meet at the Shops at 8:30 a.m. In the evening, the Team will meet at its regular 5 o’clock time. Saturday, we start at 8 o’clock a.m. where we’ll continue our efforts out on the bridge. Again, many thanks to everyone!

See you out on the line,

Alan and Richard.



Chris interpreting ol'-fashion track-gang railroadin'



Next, Jack takes a shot a spikin' old-style



Matt and Joe set spikes



Alan marks ties to be sliced and diced on the bridge



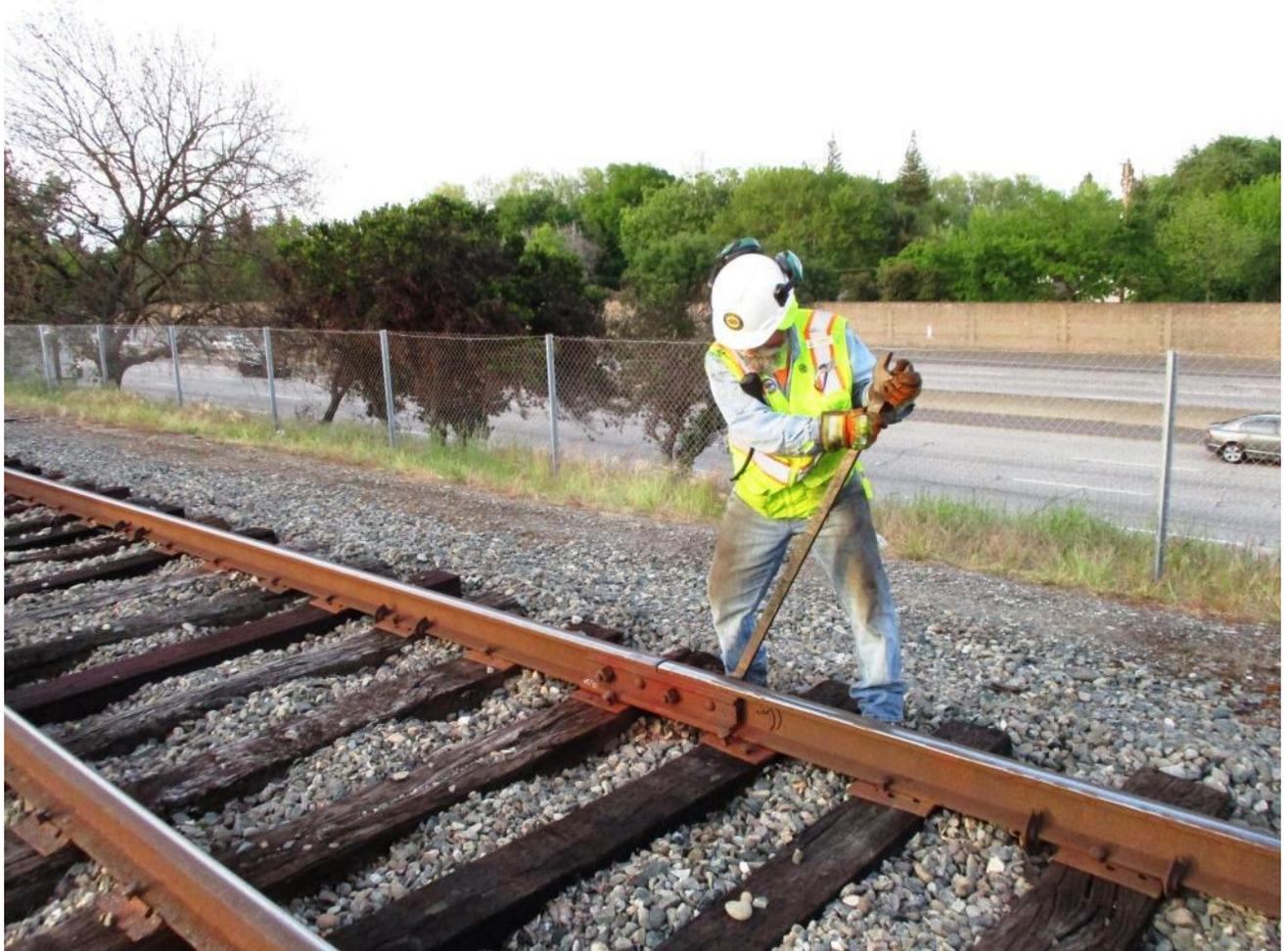
Brotherly, ahem, "love"...



Jack's had enough of the old fashioned stuff and, instead, deploys the hydraulic spike-driver



The Team has learned lessons from its EIC in how to watch other people work...



Joe checks for loose bolts at joints and tightens them down



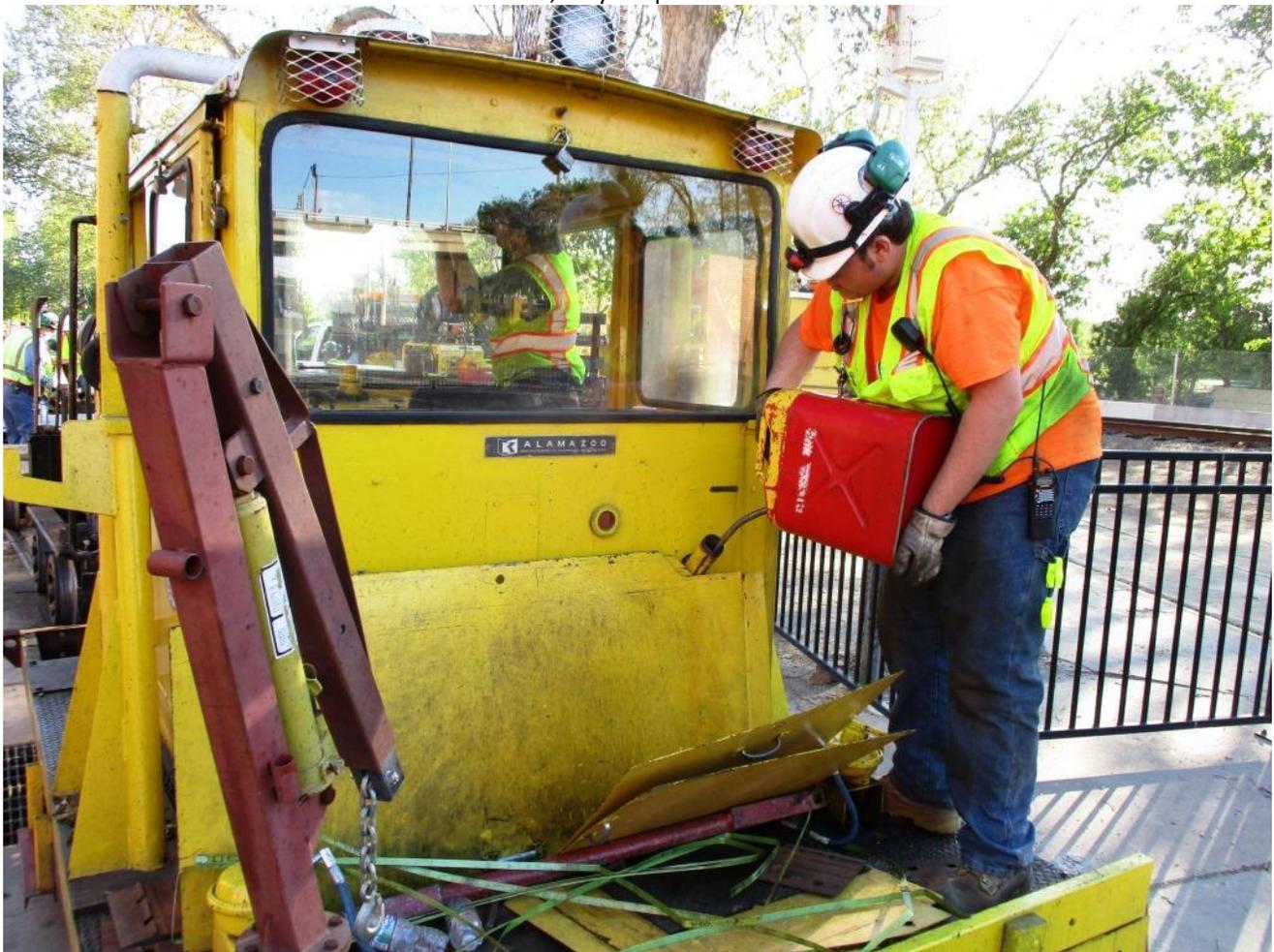
With Ed K. as brakeman, Jack moves the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger off the old 150-Track and onto the North Turntable lead



Ed K., Frank, and Jack arrange the loose bundle of ties on the flatcar...



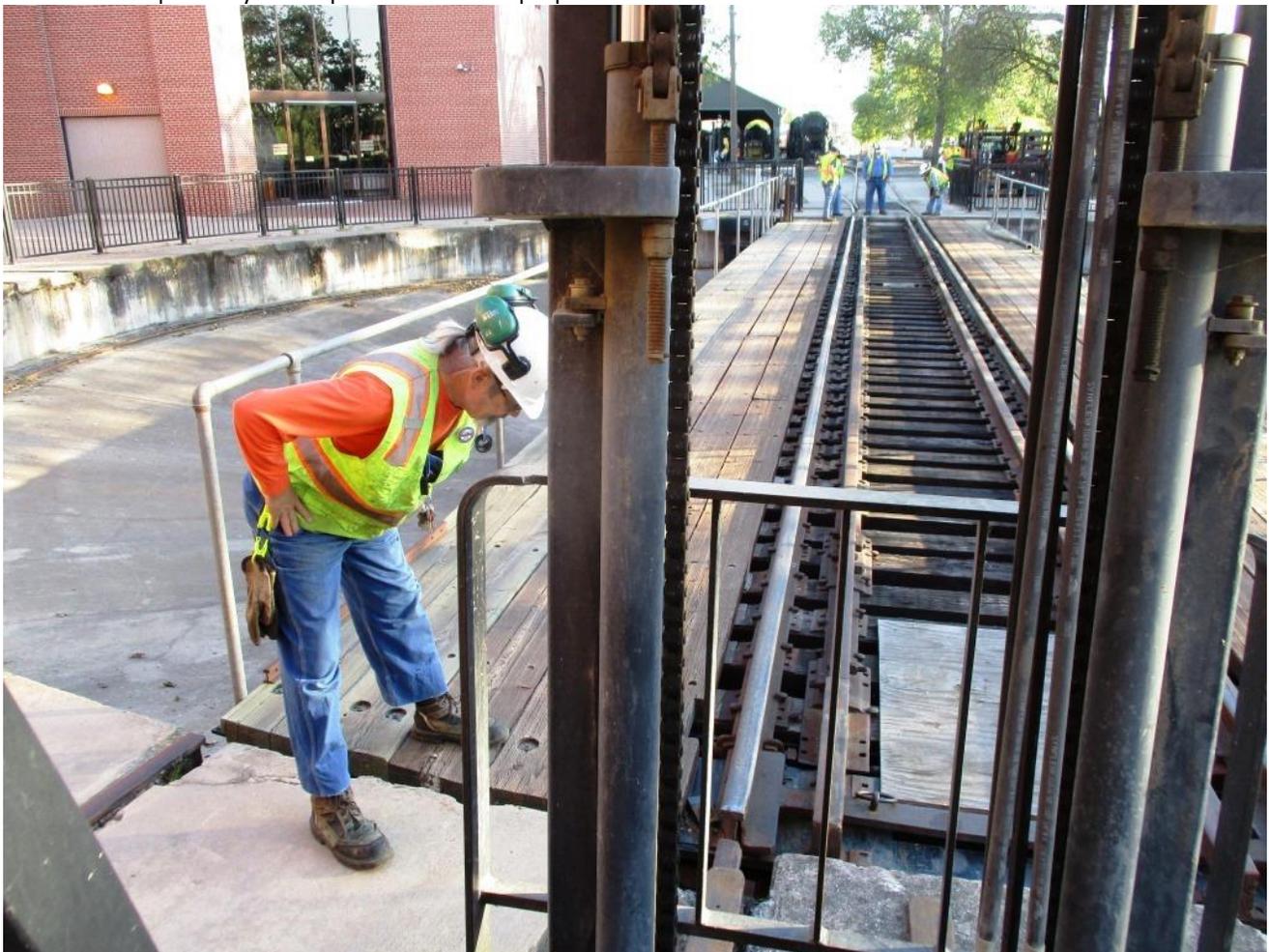
...Then, they strap them down



Chris tops-off the Kalamazoo tug's fuel tank with a little red-diesel



Joe straps the hydraulic power unit to the propane forklift so that it can be lifted from the truck to a flatcar



Ramming speed! the propane forklift which is used to shove the east rail about two inches south to keep it from contacting the turntable apron



Apprentice extraordinaire Kyle uses the voltage meter to test the wonky forward running lights switch on the tamper



Chris, Frank, and Ed K. use the hand-pump to transfer red-diesel from a 55-gallon drum into jerry-cans.



Saturday morning, Dave Megeath takes a break from duties with the Granite Rock 10 to help the MOW switch equipment



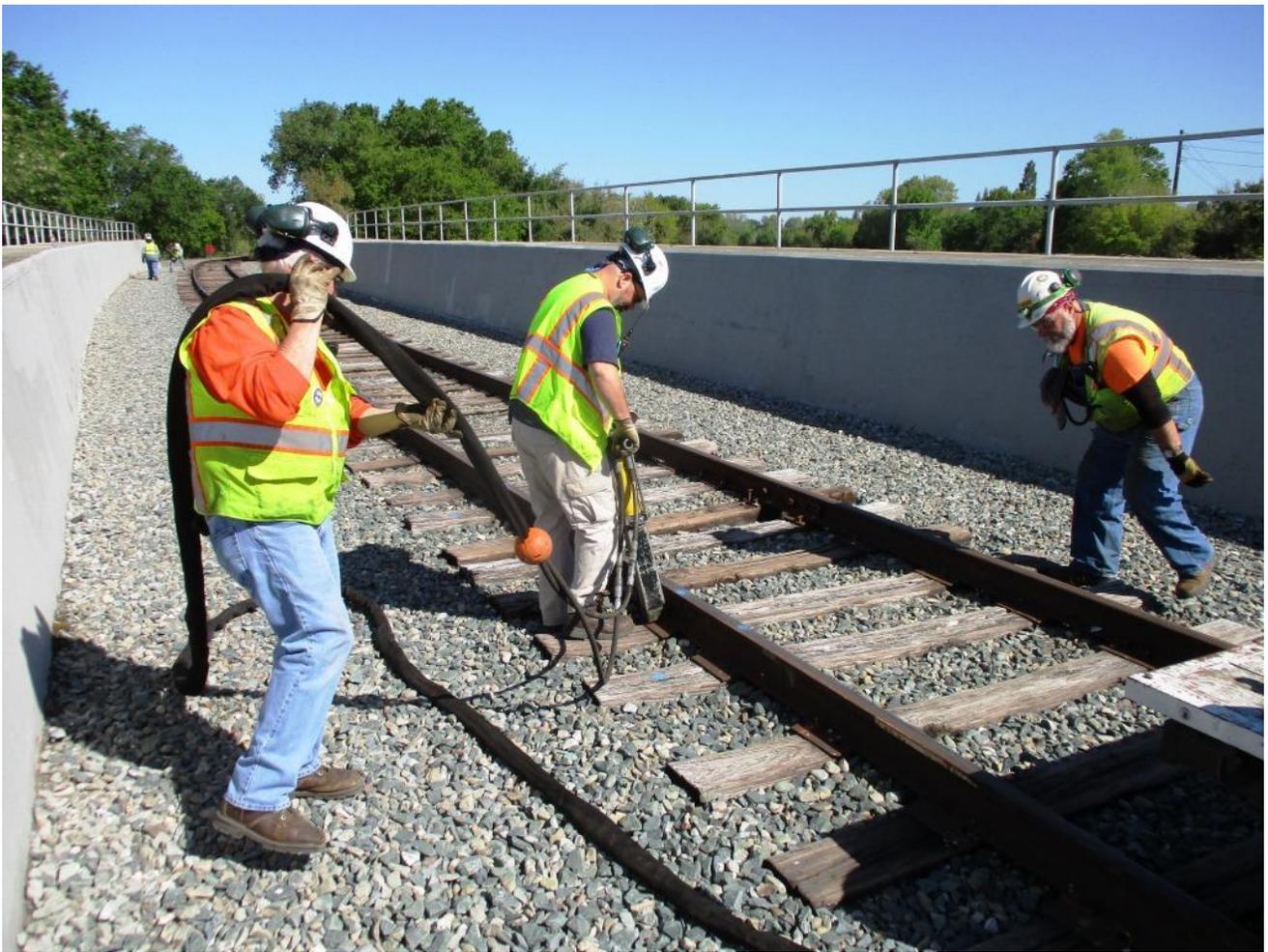
In order to get the equipment in the right order, Joe now spins three cars in the MOW Team's work-train consist



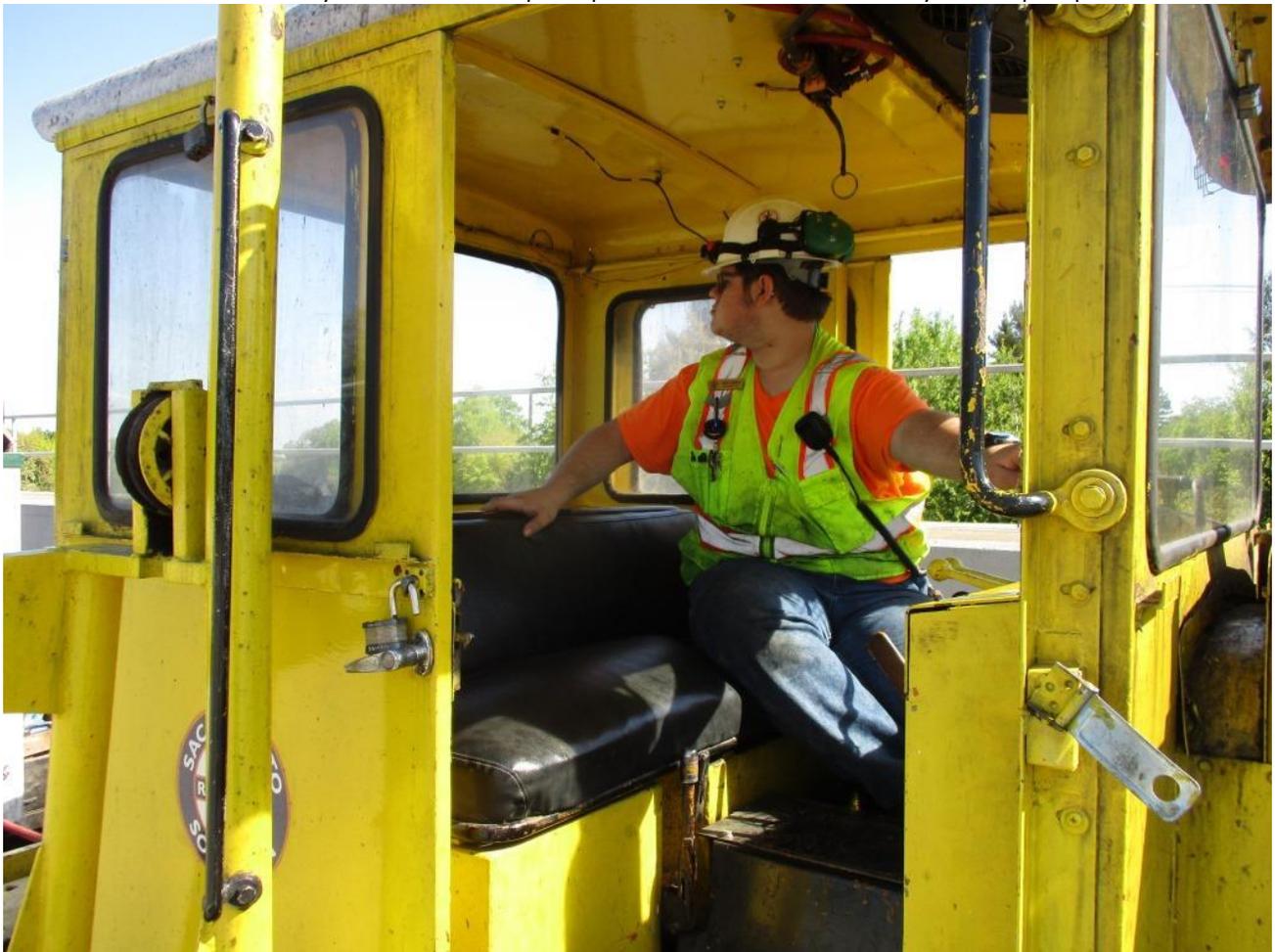
After retrieving the retractable red-flag from Sutterville Road, Joe take it to the new temporary “end of track” at MP 3.05



Mike F. demonstrates perfect hand-spiking form as he spikes down the red-flag at MP 3.05



Bill handles the hydraulic hose as DJ pulls spikes on marked ties with the hydraulic spike-puller



Chris, in the Kalamazoo, slowing shoves his train north as the Team progresses in pulling spikes



Clem nips-up the rail as Joe uses a sledge to thwack-out a tie-plate



As visibility is terrible from the cab, Heather guide Frank, who is running the tie-shear, into position over the first tie to be cut



The tie-shear slices and dices through ties like a Ginsu knife through a tomato...



Ed M. grabs the sliced tie-debris away from the track



Mike F. straddles the track with the front end loader for Bill, Ed M., DJ, and Chris to load tie-debris into its bucket for disposal



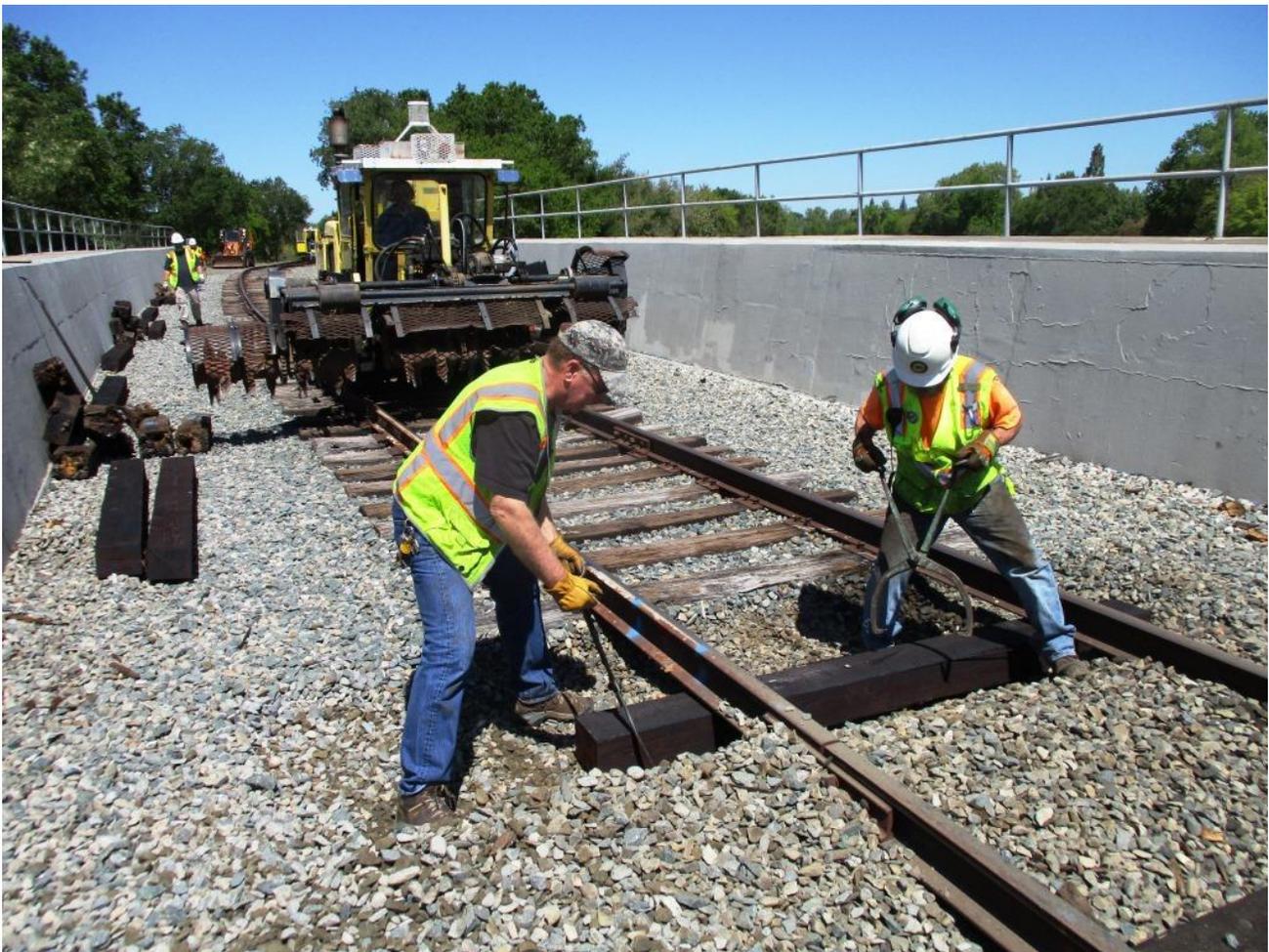
DJ and Bill deploy new ties for insertion



It's 11:30 and the Granite Rock 10 is brought to a stop by the all-powerful red-flag!



Alan, in the scarifier, digs-out a trench in the ballast-rock



Although we had intended to use the inserter on the scarifier to pull in the ties, Ed M. and Joe manage to get it under the rails by hand



It became clear that it was easier to pull the ties in this way rather than trying to swing the grapple of the inserter to pull the ties in at an angle



Lunch time! Alan and Ed M. appreciate Mike F.'s efforts to park the loader in the shade



Heather and DJ shovel rock back between the ties



Bill, Joe, and Ed K. get the last new tie of the day inserted under the rails



Mike F. sweeps debris off the wall of the bridge



Joe acts as guide as Heather used the tamper's work-heads to position the ties properly before tamping them up



While waiting for the 3:30 train to arrive, Mike F. and DJ dig out a trench for a tie to be used as a brace in the curve south of Switch 20



Chris and Bill place the bracing tie at the curve



Mike F. uses the loader to compact the rock behind the bracing ties