

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for June 12, 2016. This week, your MOW Team was out and about reveling in the wonders of nature – and then chopping it to tiny bits. So that the big picture can be made clear, let's get this update honed and ready to roll.

Pat Scholzen, Anthony Filamor, Cliff Hayes, Frederick Carr, Joe Margucci, Frank Werry, Gene Peck, Steve Nemeth, and Mike Harris all managed to find their ways to the Shops on Tuesday for some MOW fun. They began the process of reattaching the ballast regulator's pivot-arm so that the wing can be reassembled. Cliff, Fred, Gene, Anthony, Pat, and Frank moved the unwieldy pieces into place. When taking it apart initially, several of the specialized bolts had to be torch-cut in order to remove them. Bolts of a similar nature were procured but, similar wasn't good enough. They didn't quite work. So, Al Dipaolo of the Mechanical and Restoration Shops kindly offered to order the proper specialty bolts from his supplier. Many thanks to Al! In the meantime, Frank began scrapping the dried grease and grit off of the pivot arm. Over in the Boiler Shop, the Big Green Machine was low on hydraulic fluid. Anthony grabbed a 55-gallon drum of hydraulic fluid with the forklift. Steve and Mike H. restored it to the proper levels. But, a slight incident occurred when the pump's draw-pipe fell into the drum as the pump was removed. Fortunately, Mike H. saved the day by quickly devising a plan to remove it from deep inside the drum using a telescoping magnet. Joe continued with electrical work on the back-hoe and front-end loader. He's moving the battery-switch to a place where it won't get crushed when the articulating machine articulates. All in all, an outstanding evening of great progress.

Thursday, the Weed Team's Mike Taylor, Heather Kearns and Ed Kottal headed down the Suterville Line below the I-5 Bridge with the official State Parks' ornithologist surveying potential ornithological habitations. The survey was needed in order to alleviate potential collateral bird damage from the upcoming sortie against the green invasion of the Suterville tracks. No nests were found and the Weedies were given the green-light to proceed with "*Operation Chop-and-Chip*" on Saturday. Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Fred, Anthony, Joe, Frank, Harry Voss, and Mike H. picked up where they had left off. Heather was back amongst us after a week away on family business. We're absolutely lost without her. So, her return was heralded with great hosannas! Joe continued working on the wiring of the loader. He removed the malfunctioning work-lights which need to be rebuilt. The specialty bolts that Al had ordered for us had arrived and Anthony and Fred were able to get the pivot arm properly bolted in place. Frank and Mike H. began fixing the centrifugal clutch of the Rail-Rod which tends to engage at the most inconvenient times. Then the Team staged for Saturday's *Operation Chop-and-Chip*, a joint-venture of the MOW and Weed Teams. Our trusty Chevy Truck was loaded with everything we'd need including chainsaws, pole-saws, and jerry-cans of red-diesel for the man-lift. Now armed and ready, the Team was prepared for a quick deployment in the morning.

On Saturday, a Joint Convention of the MOW Team and Weed Team convened. Proceedings opened with the appropriate blessing of the pink box which greeted Harry, Clem, Dave Megeath, Ed, Joe, Heather, Steve, Anthony, and Michael Florentine. Mike T. would serve as Chairman and EIC for the day. Also, it was a pleasure to welcome Alan Hardy back to our ranks after his extended cross-country adventure searching out endangered squirrels and prairie-dogs! Welcome back, Alan! With all the doughnuts disbursed, the order to launch "*Operation Chop-and-Chip*" was issued. The Team mustered in Old Sacramento to deploy the man-lift, chipper, A-6 motorcar, and a couple of flatcars. But first, the chipper's blades needed to be honed. Dave climbed into the deep recesses of the machine to conduct this operation. With Ed piloting the A-6 motorcar and Heather handling the man-lift, the Team set course for the Suterville Track below the I-5 Bridge where a full-fledged counter assault on the growing green threat would be initiated. First, Mike T. provides a safety briefing on how to work with the chipper – which, if operated incorrectly, poses many dangers. Then, Dave took flight in the man-lift's bucket and entered enemy territory high up in the boughs. As he sliced and diced at offending branches, Clem, Mike F., Steve, Ed, Anthony, Joe, and Frank used loppers and saws to cut them into more manageable sizes. Then, in succession, they'd ram the limbs into the gaping maw of the chipper reducing them to tiny bits. This process continued for quite some time. Joe and Anthony traded off with Heather operating the man-lift. Harry and Mike T. wielded hand-held chainsaws and cut many of the larger limbs down to fire-wood sized logs. Steve, Frank, Mike F., and Ed loaded them onto the flatcars. Dave was chopping away at branches in the boughs so fast that Team Chipper was having a tough time keeping up. As Dave took the battle to the enemy overhead, the Team dealt with the low-hanging branches and bushes from the ground. As the day progressed, so did the Joint Convention. Chairman and EIC Mike T. summed it up nicely: "Significant progress was made today. We are now well into the overhanging tangle of tree limbs with Suterville Road within our grasp. Looking back northward the track now appears acceptably clear of encroaching vegetation. Gold stars for everyone." Indeed, gold stars and extra doughnuts for everyone!

Ramsay from the All Aboard Desk has released the list of Hour Bar Award recipients for the month of June. Amongst the honorees were MOW Team regulars, Anthony Filamor and Jose Gomez who have earned their first hour-bars with 250 hours each. And then there's Heather with a whoppin' 14,000 hours. Now that's called dedication! Congratulations and many thanks to Anthony, Jose, and Heather, as well as to all who volunteer and give their time, not just with Maintenance of Way, but with every program within the Museum family.

The Weed Team will be on hiatus until Thursday June 30th. But, the MOW Team will meet as usual this coming week on Tuesday and Thursday in the Erecting Shop at or before 5 o'clock p.m. Saturday, the MOW Team will come to order at 8 o'clock a.m. for the weekly revelation of the doughnuts. As always, many thanks to all the volunteers and supporters of the MOW Team as we strive to build a better railroad. Whether it's fixing the track or keeping the trees at bay, your efforts are invaluable. After all, as they say, no track, no trains!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



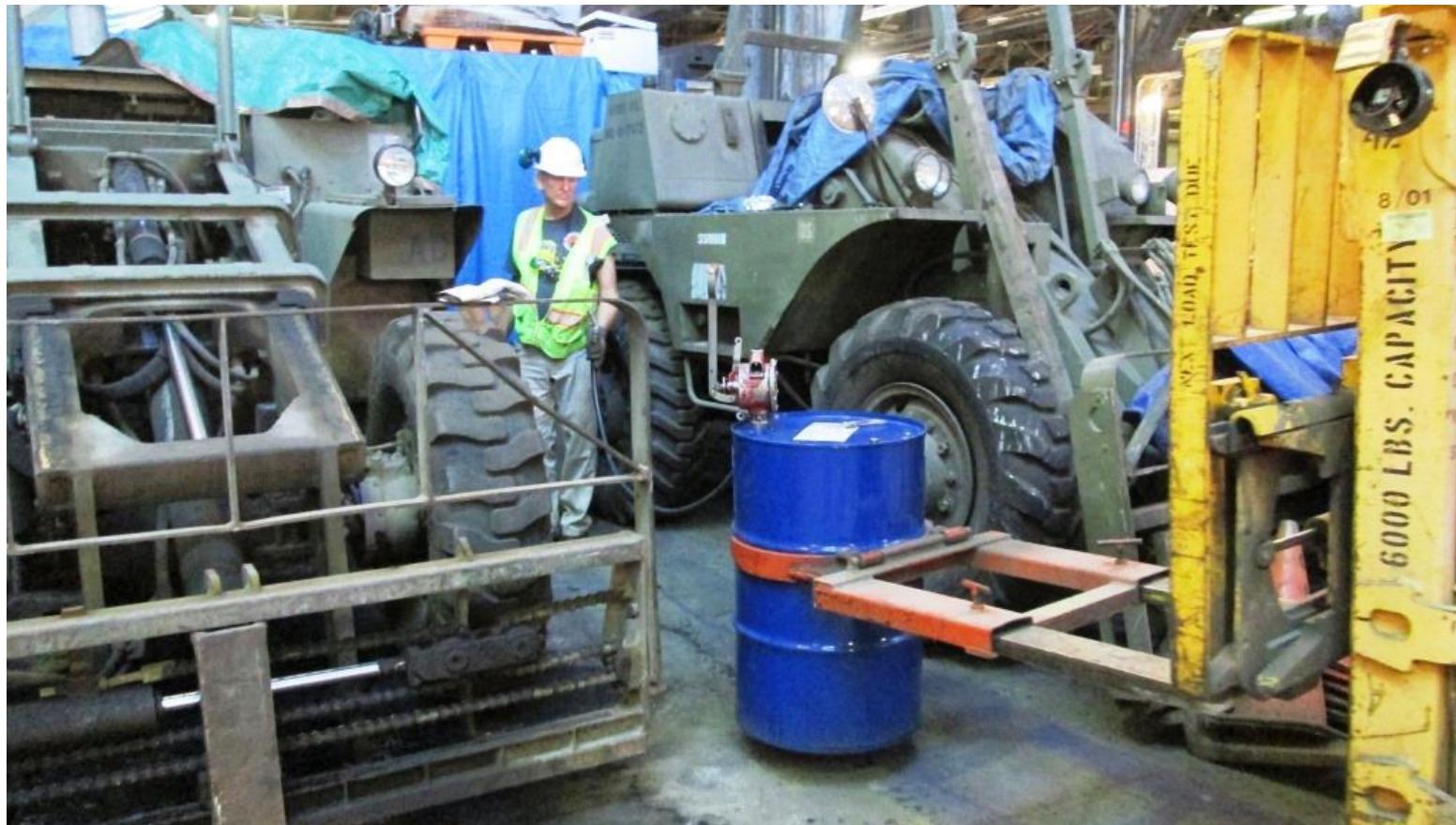
Frank scraping old grease and grime off the pivot arm of the ballast regulator



Joe restoring order to the hour-meter in the back-hoe



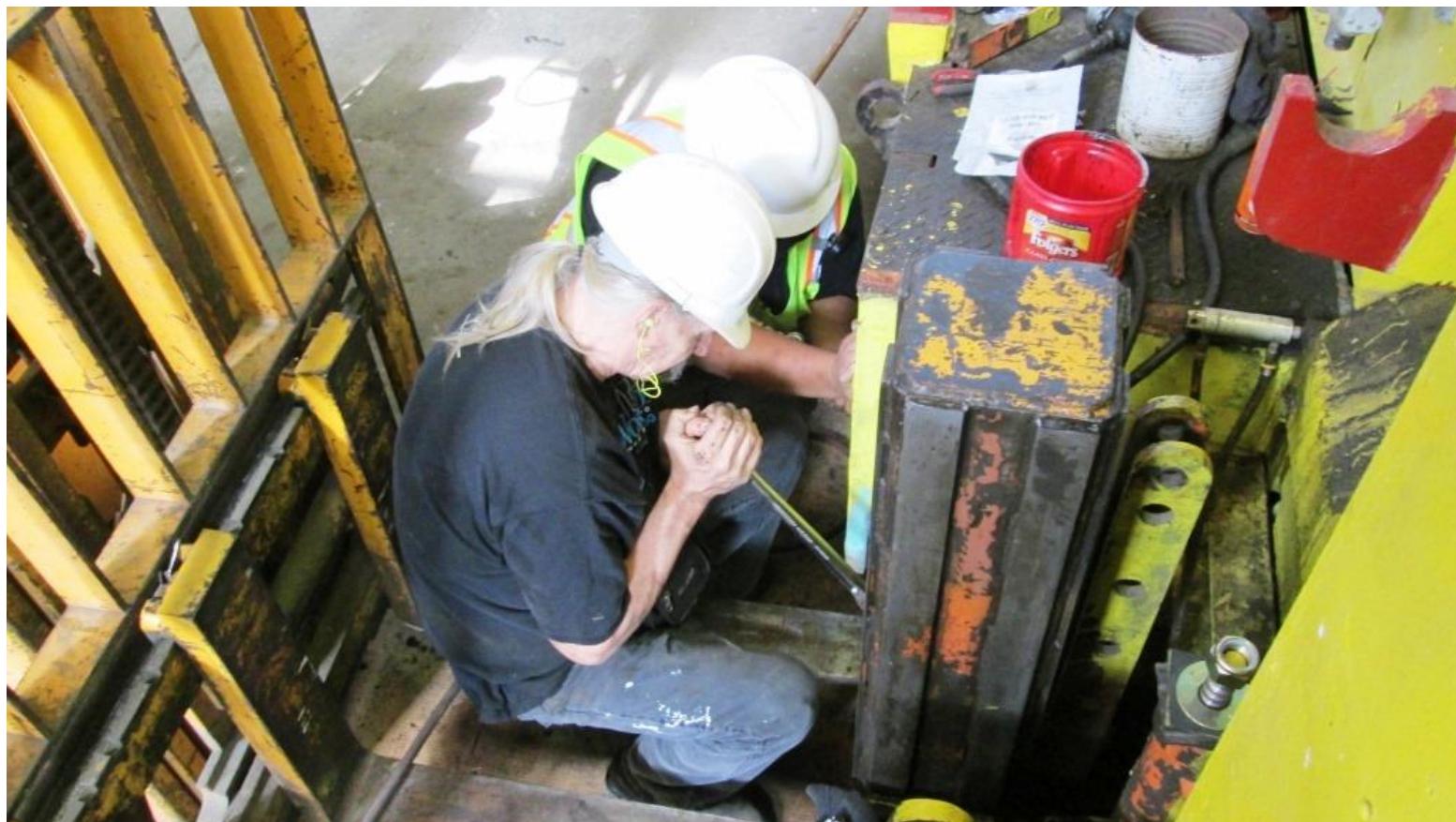
Anthony on the forklift grabs a barrel of hydraulic fluid...



...Which Steve prepares to pump into the Green Machine



Mike H. contrives a method to remove the pump-pipe from inside the barrel



Fred and Anthony tighten-down new specialized bolts on the regulator



Mike H. and Frank get the Rail-Rod working and begin investigating what's going on with the centrifugal clutch



A chimney sweep? Nope, it's Frank cleaning out the slide pocket of the regulator's wing



Joe and Fred drilling a new hole in the engine compartment casing on the loader for the installation of a new battery switch



Anthony filling jerry-cans of red-diesel



Dave pops up in the most interesting places. He and Mike T. get the chipper all ship-shape and Bristol fashion for deployment on the line



Alan, having returned from his grand adventure realizes that MOW is much more fun than chasing prairie-dogs!



Look! Up in the sky! Is it a bird? Is it a plane?



No, it's Super Dave flying about in the mighty man-lift bucket!



Clem removing tree debris



Clem, Frank, and Joe gather up the debris from Dave's air-war overhead



Mike F. is a bit surprised by how fast the hungry jaws of the chipper grab a branch and yank it out one's hands...



Mike F. and Steve are amazed at the chomping power of the chipper



Mike T. uses the gas-powered chainsaw on a stick to cut away at offending branches closer to ground



Alan, Joe, and Frank load logs onto the flatcar



Heather operating the man-lift chauffeurs Dave further down the line



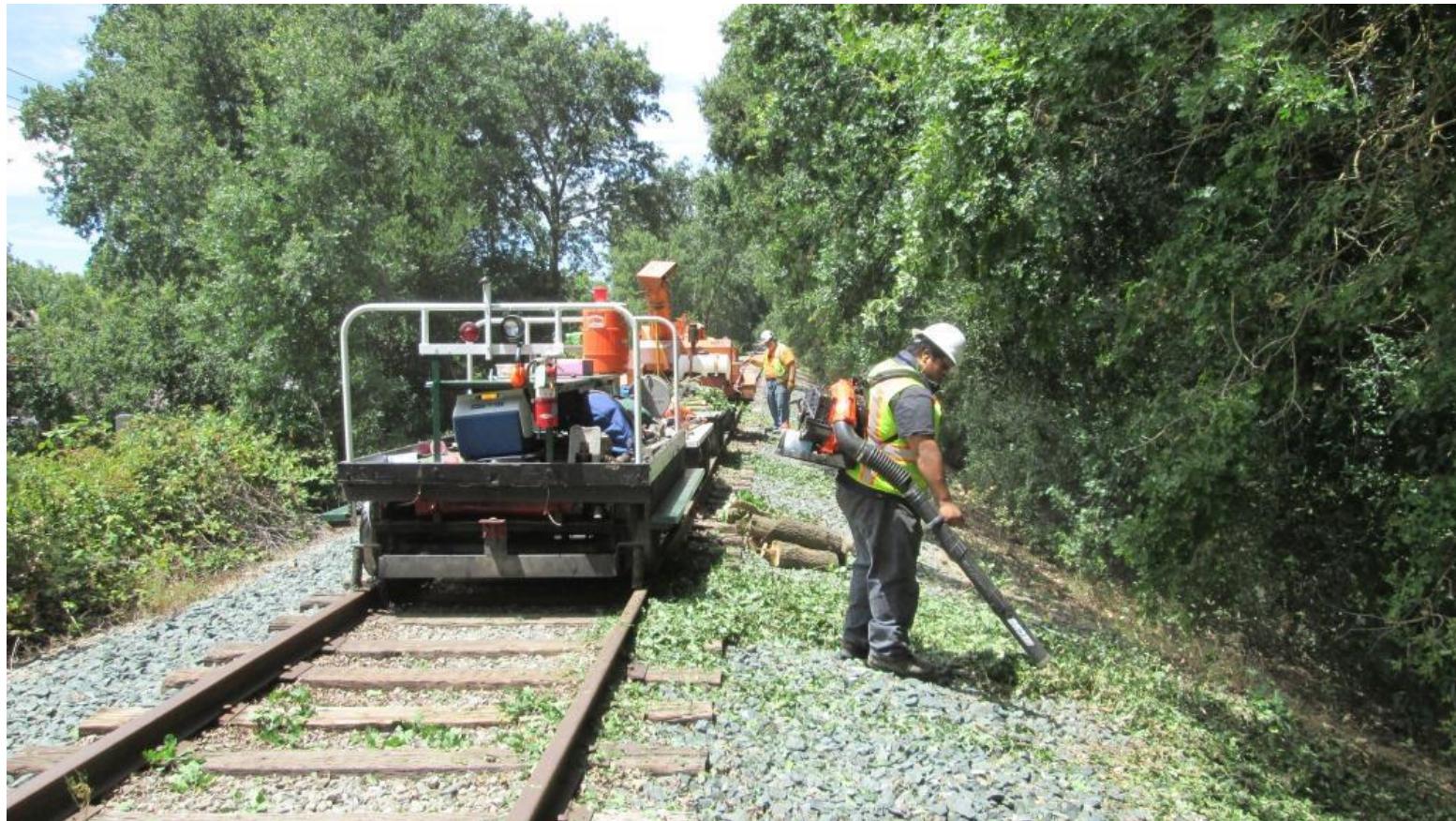
Ed piloting the A-6 motorcar keeps it close – but not too close – to the man-lift



Using the chainsaw, Mike T. cuts limbs to manageable sizes



Dave takes the battle to the enemy



Anthony dons the “huff-‘n-puff” machine to clean up leaf debris



The Joint Convention of the MOW Team and Weed Team is hereby convened: From left, Anthony, Frank, Alan, Chairman Mike T., Dave, Joe, Harry, Ed, Steve, and Mike F.