

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for July 29, 2018. Oh man, was it hot this week. But, your MOW Team kept cool heads as it continued on its quest of progress. So, let's heat things up right here by getting this update started before the cold weather sets in.

This was momentous week for the MOW Team as the A-6 motorcar was officially returned to service. You may recall that, about a year ago, the A-6 suffered a catastrophic transmission disaster. Damage was so bad that we actually considered scrapping the machine. But, Jim Bays of the SSRR Restoration/Mechanical Shop, knew he could fix it. So, with the blessing of Shops manager, Al DiPaolo, Jim put together a team that included Doug Schulze and Tom Cooley who removed the engine and transmission, separated the two, machined new parts, made the necessary repairs, and put the whole thing back together. It was a very complex project that required the total rebuild of the transmission. Late last week, they took it out on test runs, certified it ready for service, and handed it back to the MOW Team. It runs fantastic! The A-6 is an incredibly valuable part of our fleet and the entire MOW Team is eternally grateful to Al, Jim, Doug, and Tom, as well as Greg Kelsch, Will Dutton, and Russ McNeill who also helped with its restoration. Thank you, guys! You did a great job!

Tuesday evening, Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Gene Peck, Heather Kearns, Chris Howard, Joe Margucci, and Mike Harris were at the Shops and ready for what lay ahead. Alan returned from our track component supplier in Stockton with lots of new goodies for the storage track being built behind the Museum. Pat and Gene got it all unloaded from the truck and properly sorted. Joe arrived early and spent the afternoon installing shunting bands on the A-6 motorcar's wheels that will allow it to trigger the grade crossing warning systems. Then he, Mike H., Chris, and Heather got the A-6 back to Old Sacramento. But first, the Interpretive Handcar Program's (IHP) MT-14 motorcar had to come to the Shops to make room in the Central Pacific Passenger Station (CPPS). Mike H. handled the MT 14 and Chris took on the Kalamazoo would was used to trigger the interlocking system for crossing the UP Main (since the MT-14 doesn't). With the MT-14 at the Shops, the Kalamazoo and A-6 headed across the UP Main to Old Sac. The A-6 headed out onto the SSRR Mainline where it was put through its paces. Man, did it run well. It was an absolute joy to have it back out on the line.

The mighty Weed Team reconvened from its summer recess on Thursday. Despite the toasty conditions, Mike Taylor, Ed Kottal, and Dave Wolf had quite a successful day. The Weedies prepped the man-lift and chipper for the commencement of the upcoming tree-trimming season on August 9th. Then they headed to Hood where they changed the oil and filter in the A-4 motorcar before setting off on an inspection of the line to assess the effectiveness of the blue-brew application from a month ago. The consensus: it worked marvelously. The line is looking pretty darned good. Mike T. and the Weedies do a remarkable job of, not only preventing vegetation defects on the SSRR Mainline but, also, keeping the Hood dream alive. Without their vigilance, the Hood Line would have long ago disappeared into a distant memory. Many thanks to Mike T., Ed, Dave, and all the Weedies for your hard work and dedication!

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, it was hot. Not just hot but, sunny-side of Mercury hot! So, Heather, Ed, Chris, Joe, Samantha Houch, and Mike H. decided to stick around the Shops. Since being evicted from the CPPS, all of our on-track equipment is stored in the Erecting Shop. The Team decided to bring order from chaos. Mike H. and Chris moved the MT-14 to the south end of the building where it will be stored until the start of the IHP season. Joe got the A-5 motorcar started and coupled to the work-train. At the controls of the A-5, Samantha shoved everything out onto the transfer-table. The extra flatcars were pulled out of the consist and stored on the snap-track outside the north end of the building. It took a little time to get everything organized and in the right order. But now, it's all set for easy transport back and forth across the UP Main on Saturdays.

Saturday started in the pre-doughnut hour for Joe, Heather, and Chris who deployed the MOW Team's work-train from the Erecting Shops and got it over to Old Sacramento. So, it was ready and waiting for Alan, Pam Tatro, Michael Florentine, Bill Hastings, Clem Meier, Mike H., Ed, John Rexroth, Steve Nemeth, and Samantha when they arrived. The Team also had the pleasure of welcoming new volunteer, Tavish Thao, to the Team. Welcome aboard, Tavish! Following doughnuts, the Team headed to Old Sac. where they'd spilt up into two groups – on working with Alan up on the new switch and the other down at the dual-gauge switch on the Display Track in front of the Silver Palace at the CPPS. The Dual Gauge is rarely used. In fact, it's been years. But, this coming week, a graffiti-covered boxcar is being placed on the Display Track as a "urban-art" exhibit. It'll make Makes Old Sac. more "hip" or something like that. Therefore, the dual-gauge switch had to be serviced and inspected. Being a three-point switch, with three stock rails, it is a complicated mechanism to reactivate. Once Mike F. on the Big Green Machine removed the crates covering it, the grates were pulled-up to reveal a mound of garbage and debris fouling it. Clem, Bill, John, Steve, and Joe got to work cleaning it out. Bill donned the "huff-'n'-puff" machine and used wind power to the debris flying. They filled eight garbage bags full of debris. Meanwhile, up on the hill, Ed, Mike H., Pam, Samantha, Tavish, Chris, and Alan worked on fitting the east-point heel-block on the new switch we're building. It's really a tricky job fitting a heel-block – especially when the switch-points are only 10-feet long. The amount of arc needed to move the points is much greater than 16-foot points which make adjustment a bit of a challenge. But, the Team was up to the task and got 'er done. Manually, using lining-bars, they managed to move the points flush with the stock-rails. Soon the draw of switch-grease lured Samantha to dual-gauge project. Greasing a switch is a "rite of passage" for MOW Team members. Steve and Joe tutored Samantha in the art of switch greasing and she did a fantastic job! With switch cleaned out, serviced, and inspected, it was tested, adjustments made, and declared fit for the "urban-art" car to roll through over.

Next came the challenge of replacing the gratings that covered the switch. Due to its nature with three moving points and flange-ways for three rails, there are large gaps in the gratings. So, wooden crates, designed to look like cargo, were placed on top of the grates. Unfortunately, when the crates were removed, we discovered that someone at some time in the recent past had attempted to remove the grates, got them all caddywampus, and dislodged the supports that kept the grates stable. So, it was like a puzzle putting it all back together. Although it took much longer than expected, this remarkable Team figured it out, built a new support system, and replaced the grates. They're now stable to walk on – as they were designed to be. Later in the afternoon, the Team turned its attention to Track 2 leading into the CPPS. There are a couple of areas along Track 2 that needed to be re-spiked. Joe, Steve, Mike F., Bill, and John took on this job. Old spikes were removed, spike-holes plugged, and new spikes driven. Of course, this gave Steve and Mike F. the opportunity to demonstrate their world famous windmill spike driving technique. By now, it was getting pretty hot. The time had come to return our equipment to the Shops over in the Rail Yards. Bill fired up the Kalamazoo and Conductor Heather arranged the crossing. Indeed, it was a good day with more accomplishments under the MOW Team's belt.

This coming week, the MOW adventure continues on Tuesday and Thursday starting at or before 5 o'clock in the Erecting Shop. Saturday, the Team will keep doing what it does best starting at 8 o'clock a.m. From the Weed Team to the Mechanical Shops Team to the MOW Team and all SSRR and CSRM volunteers, thank you for your unparalleled dedication to the Museum and all its programs. You're all truly inspirational!

See you out on the line,

Alan and Richard.



Mike F. and Joe test the shunts on the A-6's wheels



Chris adds gas to the A-6



Joe brings the A-6 up to the circuit on the 560 Track as it prepares to return to Old Sacramento



In Old Sac., Mike H. and Joe take the IHP's MT-14 motorcar up the South Turntable Lead



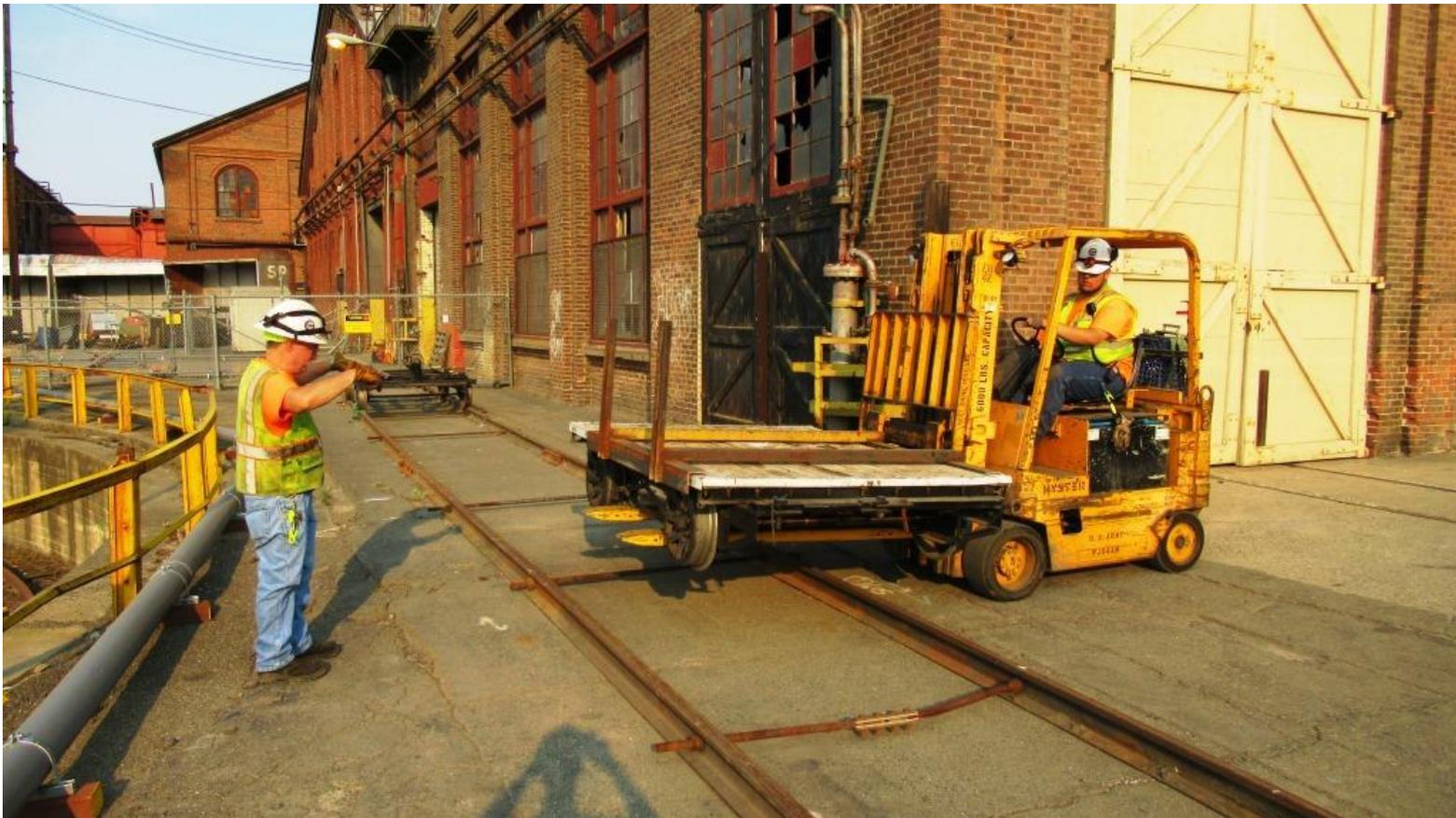
Man, it's a beautiful sight to see the A-6 back out on the line



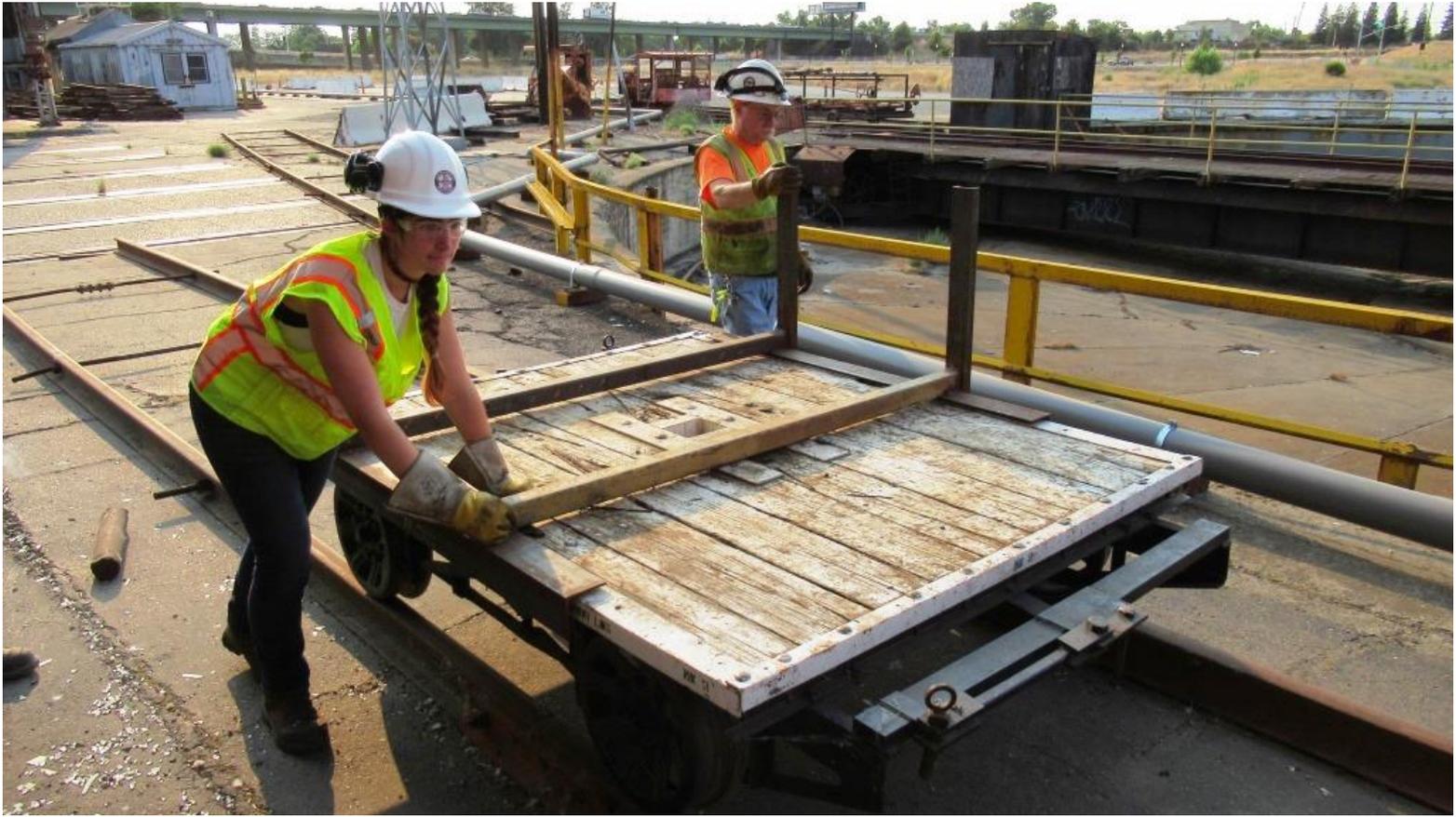
On a hot July Thursday in the Erecting Shop, Ed does a little clean-up work



Samantha and Mike H. make some adjustments to the MT-14 before it's moved into storage



Mike H. guides Chris on the Hyster forklift as a flatcar is positioned on the snap-track at the north end of the Erecting Shop



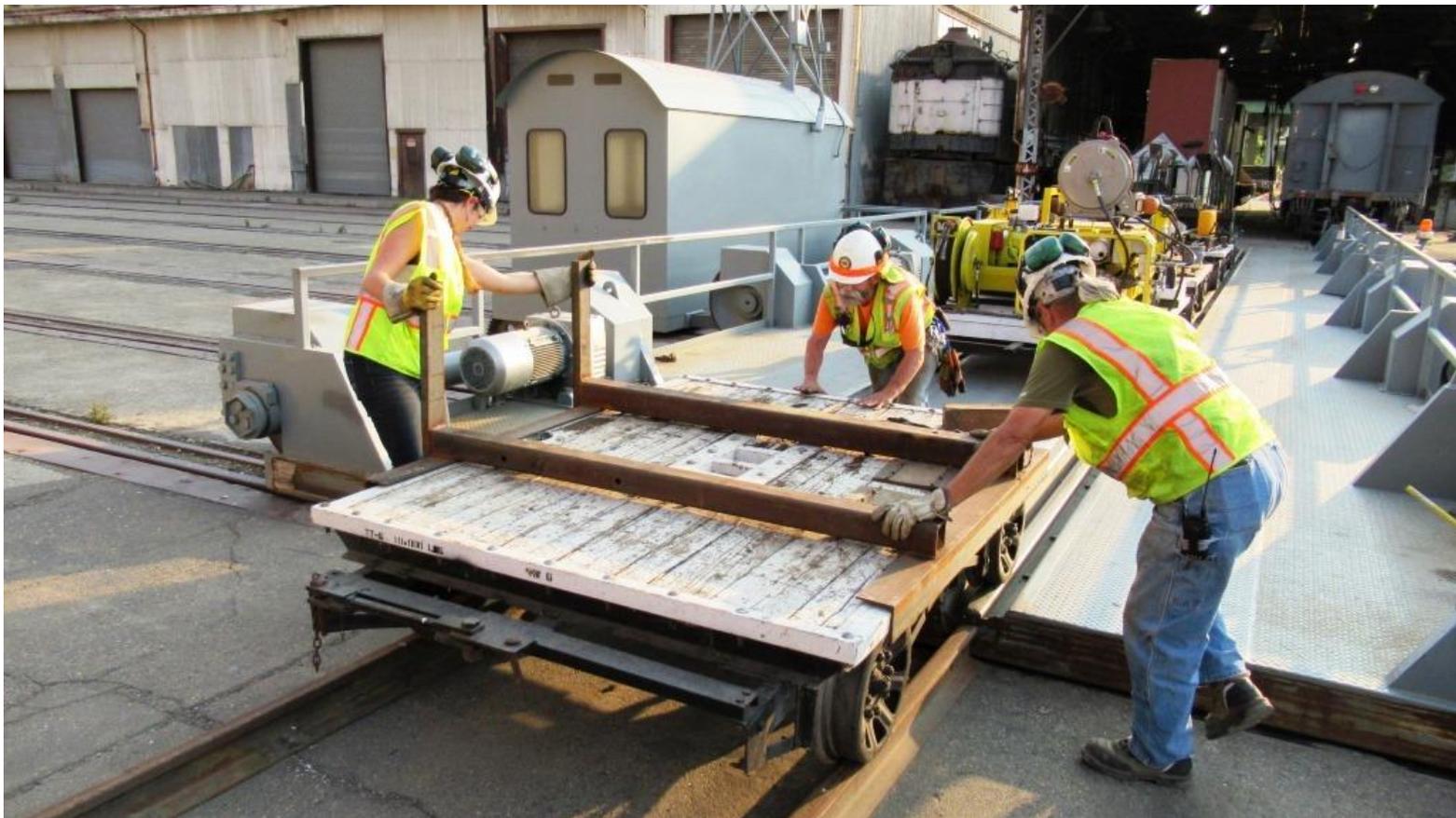
Samantha and Mike H. move the flatcar along the snap-track



Chris moves the MT-14 into storage



Samantha shoves the MOW Team's work-train out onto the transfer-table with the A-5 motorcar



Then, Samantha, Joe, and Ed switch-out the second flatcar



In the pre-doughnut hour of Saturday morning, Joe moves the MOW Team's work-train on the transfer table



Green signal indication: Engineer Heather pilots the Kalamazoo pulling the MOW Team's work-train across the UP Main



Mike F. on Big Green removes a pallet of track-materials from the consist



Mike H., Tavish, and Samantha fill in ballast around the head-blocks



Clem and Joe lift a crate over the dual-gauge switch for Mike F. on Big Green to come in and take away



Joe and Clem drop the crate onto Big Green's forks



John and Bill now move a crate onto Big Green's forks for Mike F. to haul away



Mike F. on Big Green now removes the grating



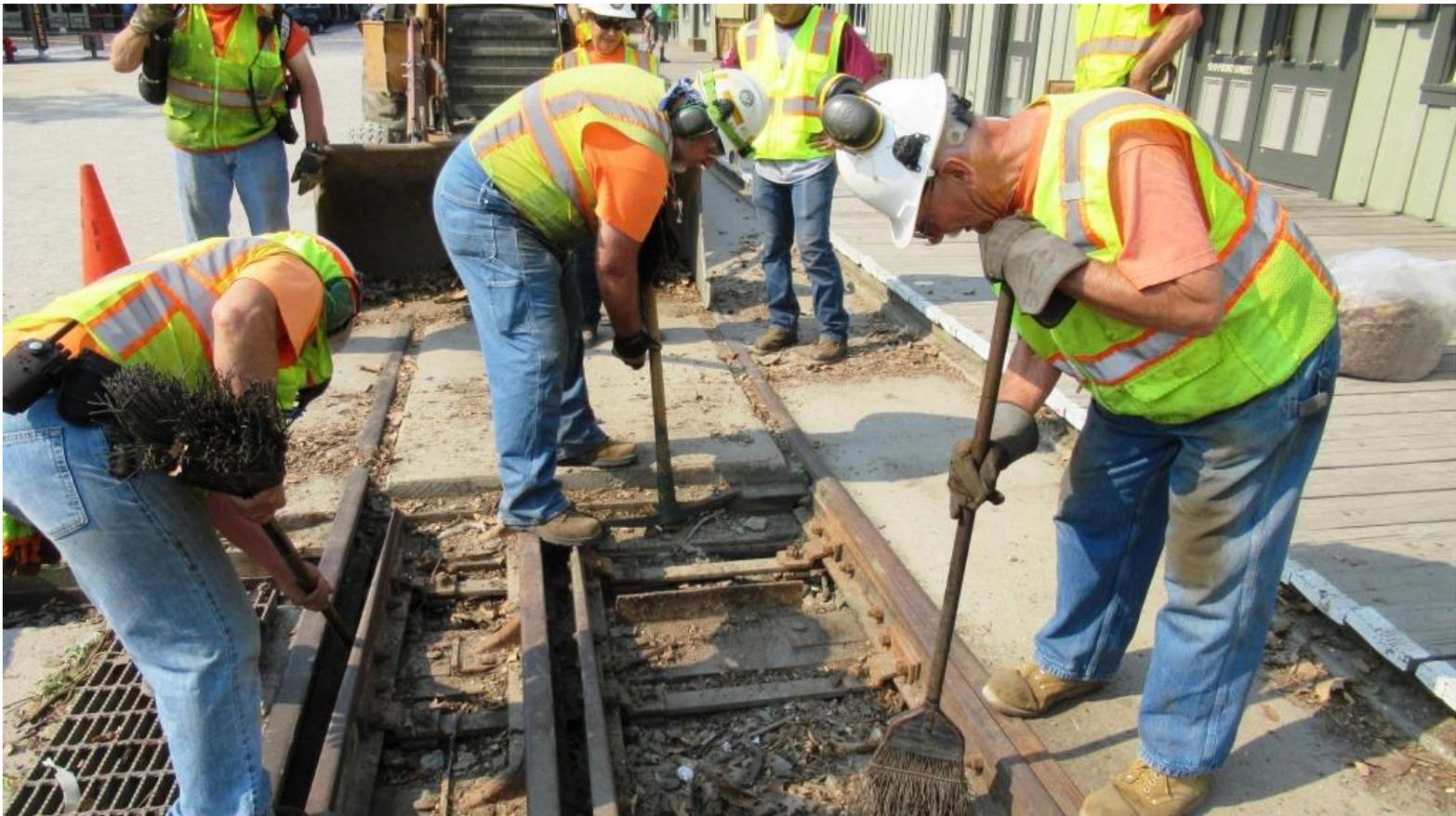
Meanwhile, back up at the new switch, Ed, Mike H., Alan, and Tavish work feverishly at getting this thing put together



Tavish and Mike H. work on installing the east heel-block while Samantha and Ed adjust the west heel-block



Mike H. and Alan adjust the placement of the east heel-block



At the dual-gauge switch, Joe, Mike F., and Clem clean out the garbage and debris



Bill employs the "huff-'n'-puff" machine and utilizes the power of the wind to clean out the switch



Samantha applies switch-grease to the dual-gauge under Steve's tutelage



Bill throws the switch while Mike F., Joe, Samantha, and Ed watch its movement and determine the proper adjustments



Mike F. uses a monkey-wrench to hold the bolt head as Tavish tightens down the nut on the heel-block



Mike H. uses a “cheater-bar” to provide better leverage on the monkey-wrench as Tavish tightens the nuts on the heel-block



Tavish and Mike F. switch sides and continue securing the east heel-block



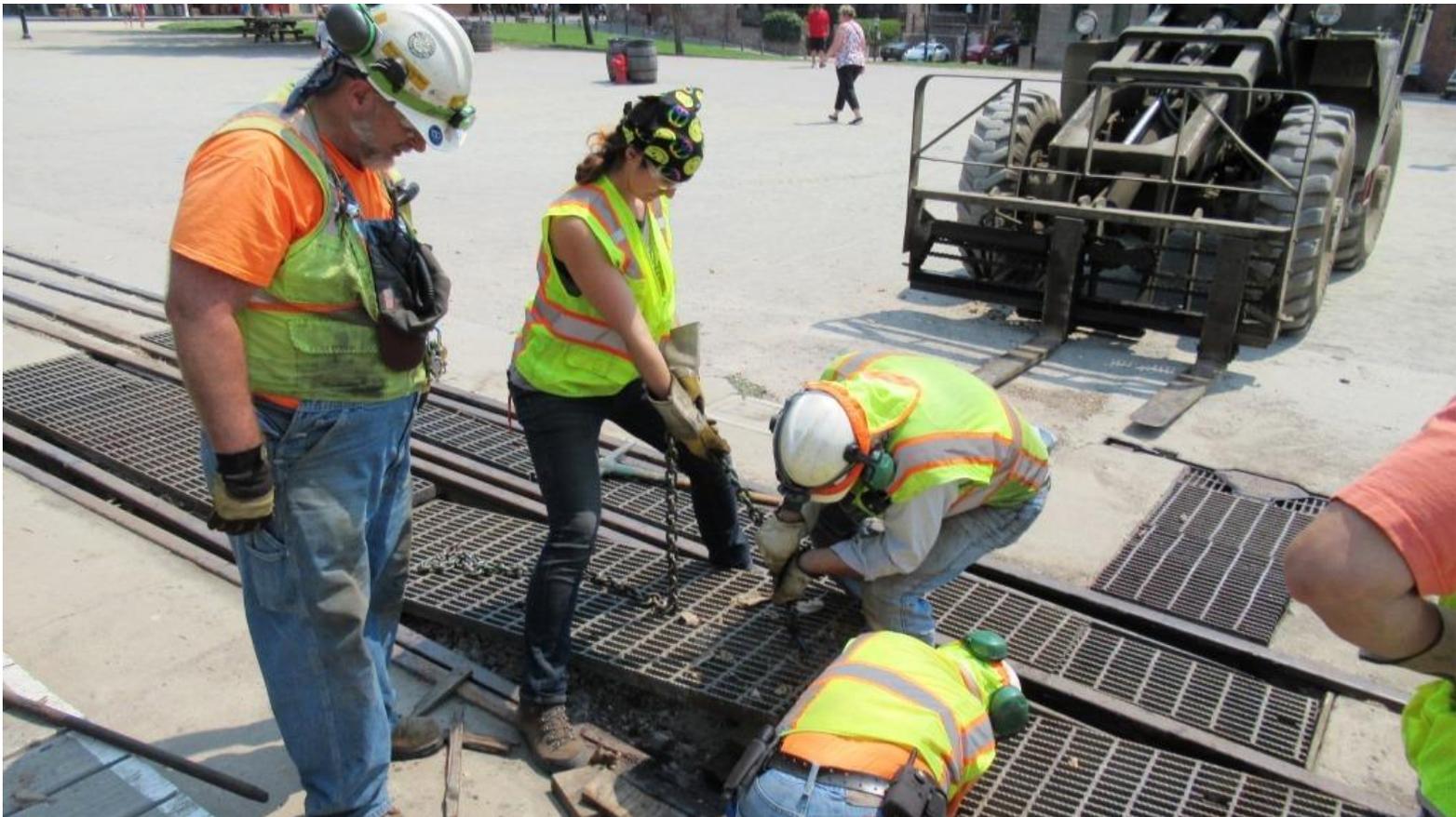
Joe, Clem, Bill, and Steve rebuild the support structures for the grates



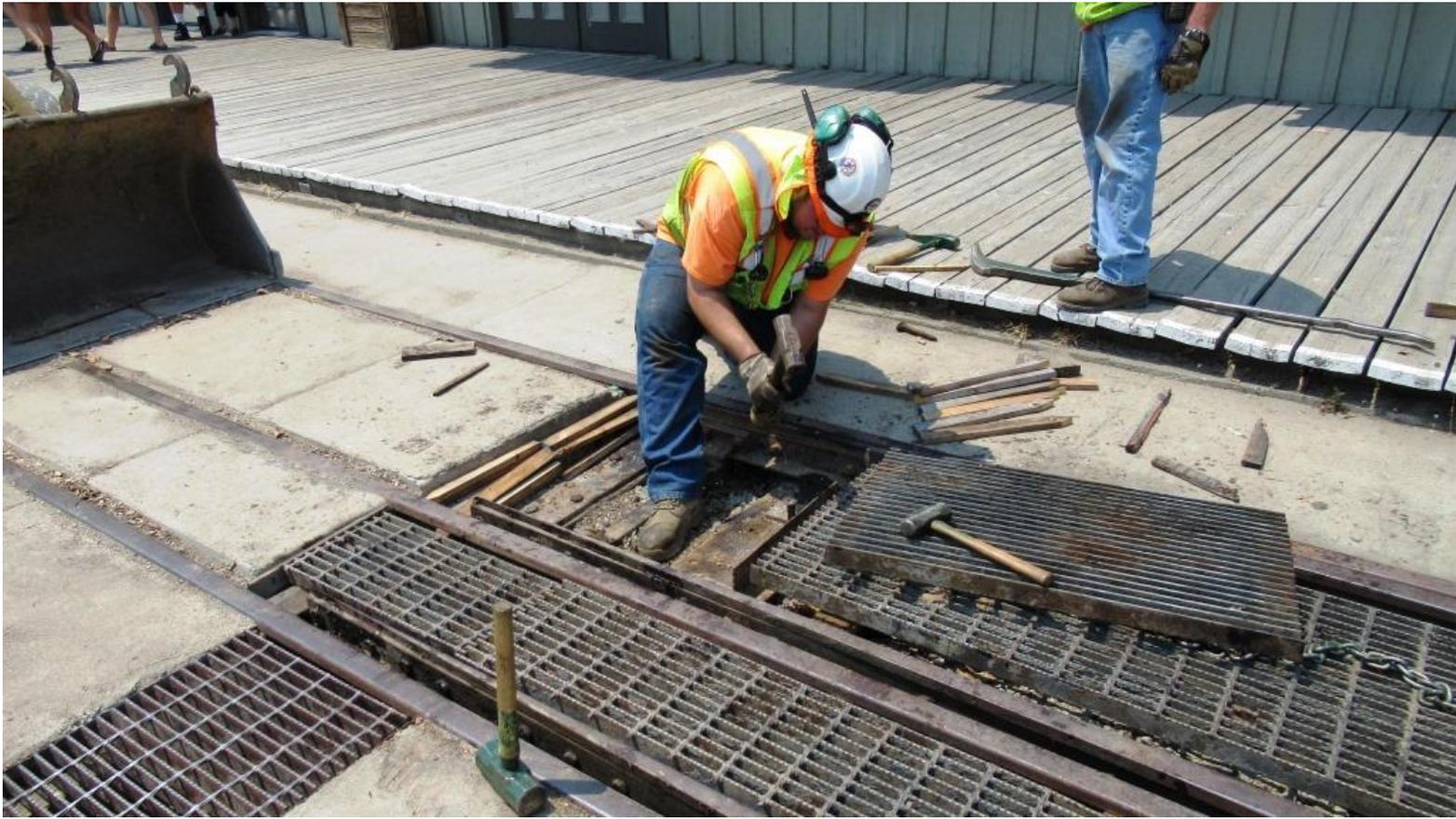
Clem and Bill lower the grate onto the new supports



Mike F. guides Steve on Big Green as another grate is brought in



As the grate was still wobbly, Samantha and Steve lift it up as Joe tries to adjust the supports



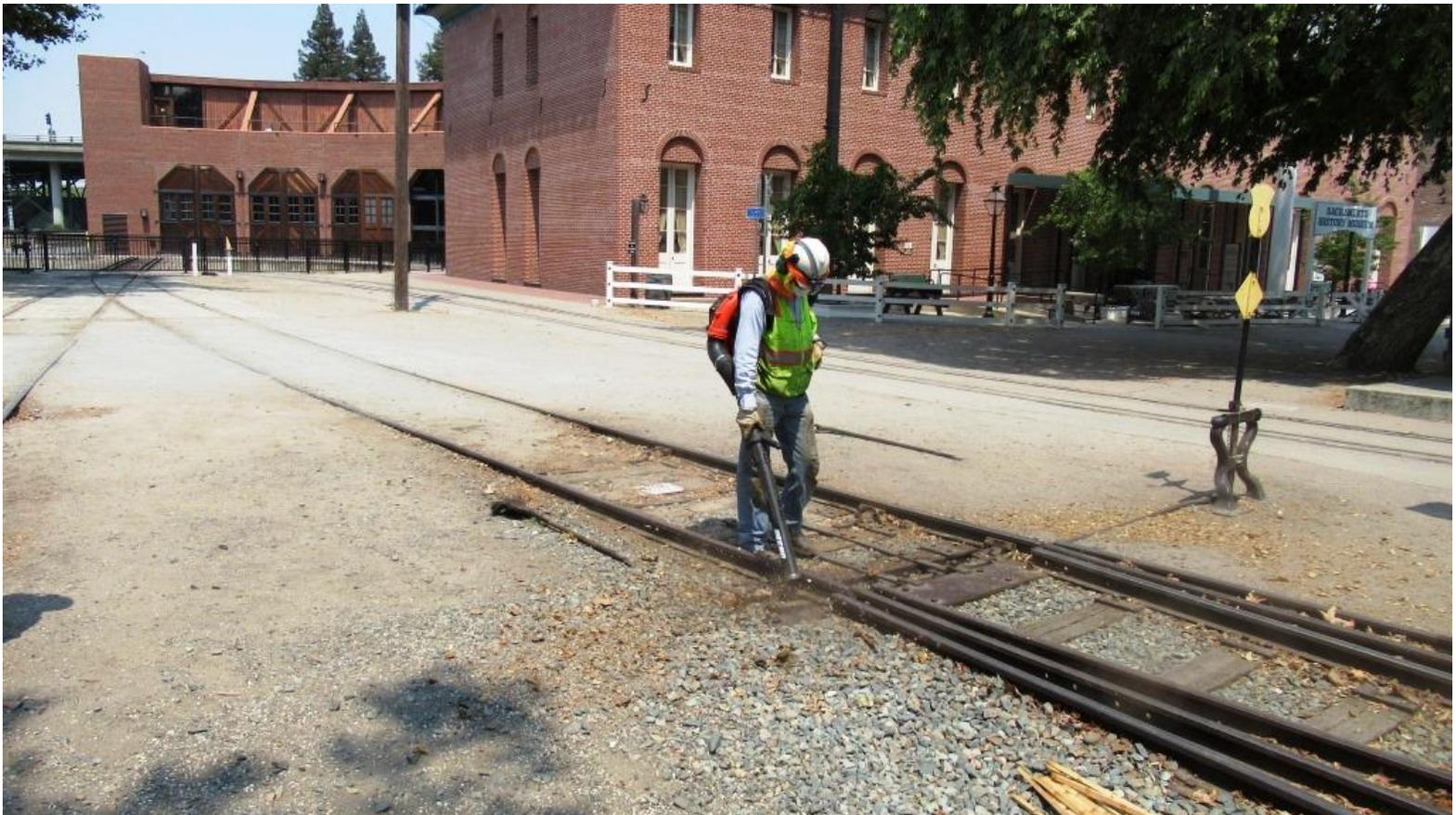
Chris spikes down the repositioned support for the grate



Steve uses a hack-saw on some stakes to make some shims



Up at the new switch, Ed and Chris use lining-bars to shove the points against the stock-rail



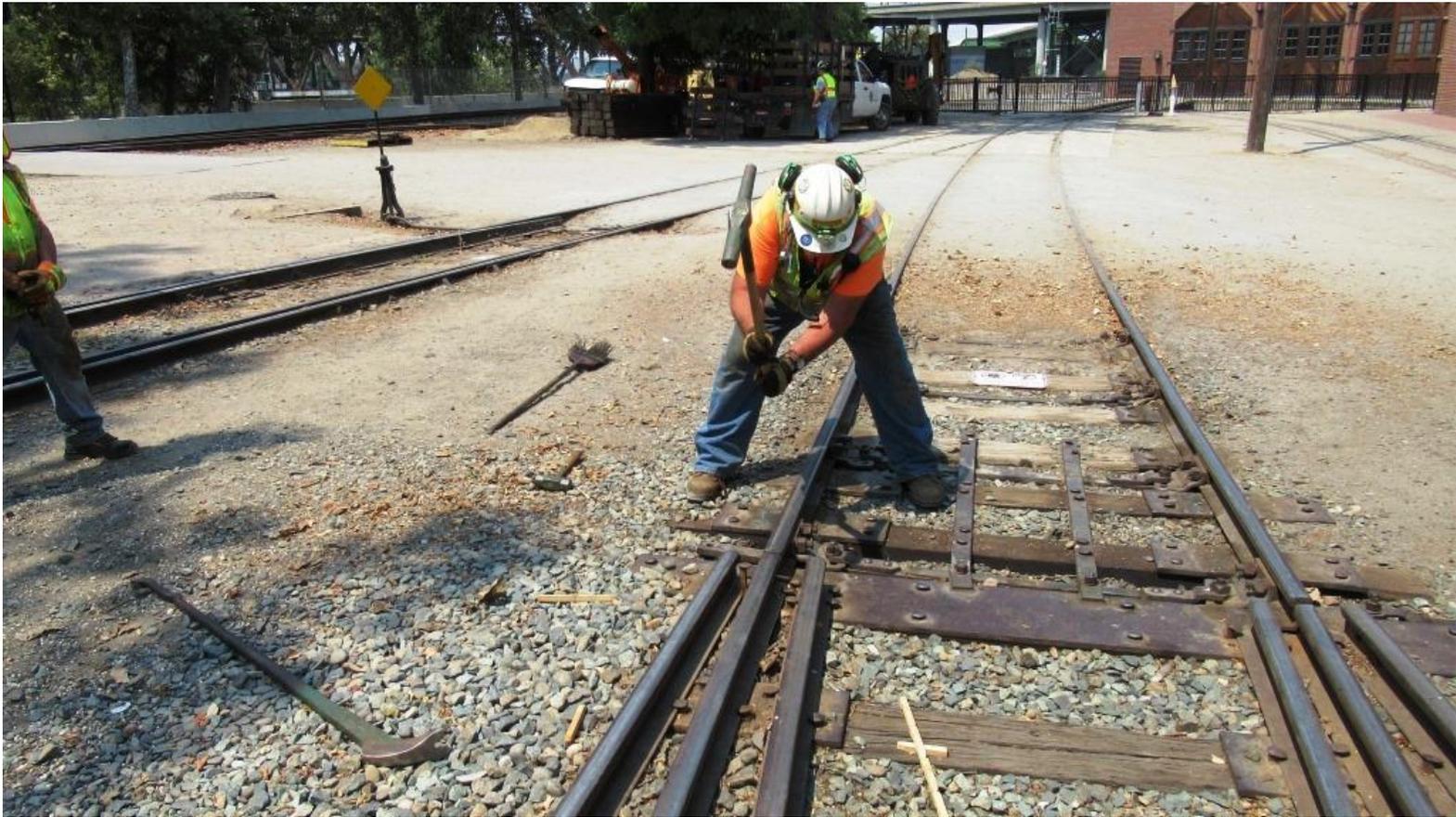
Steve uses the "huff-'n'-puff" machine to remove debris from the stub-switch



Bill and Joe plug and re-spike the problem area on Track 2 into the CPPS



Steve and Joe drive plugs into the head-block



Mike F. engages in precision spike-driving as he drives a spike between the rails (and he hit the head of the spike every time!)



Steve demonstrates his world famous, as seen on TV, windmill spike-driving technique



Engineer Bill in the Kalamazoo shoves the consist back to the Shops



You can take the boys out of the foam but not the foam out of the boys...