

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team Update for July 2, 2017. With July upon us, half of 2017 is officially over. That's 26 weeks of hard work by MOW Team so far this year. This last week was no different. So, before the rest of the year disappears, let's get this update started.

Week 26 of 2017 for your MOW Team began on Tuesday evening. Alan Hardy, Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Joe Margucci, Kyle Blackburn, Heather Kearns, and Gene Peck were all on hand for more MOW fun. You may recall that one of the big mechanical projects your MOW Team plans to accomplish this year is the replacement of the Kalamazoo tug's 60-year old Detroit Diesel engine. Part of the fantastic deal for the acquisition of a rebuilt replacement engine that Heather arranged is that we need to supply the vendor with an old engine core. We happen to have one, which has been stored in the Shops for years. Last week, Kyle and Weston Snyder started dismantling it for trade-in. This week, Pat and Gene fished up the work by taking off the remaining parts that needed to be removed. Over in Old Sacramento, Joe and Kyle fired-up the Kalamazoo and brought it over to the Shops for an inspection which would occur on Thursday. After it was secure in Bay 5 of the Erecting Shop, Kyle hopped on the forklift and headed out to the west side of the Boiler Shop where he and Alan brought inside the wing-rails for the Switch 19 frog. The rails need some grinding work in order to make them fit properly in the frog. Cliff and Joe worked on designing anti-vandalism shields for the new super-horn on the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger. It was a busy evening with a great deal being accomplished.

Thursday started early for Heather and Alan. They arrived at the Shops in the morning to take the engine-core that Pat, Gene, Weston, and Kyle had prepared for the vendor supplying us with a newly rebuilt engine for the Kalamazoo. She and Alan loaded it in the trusty MOW Chevy Truck. Heather then drove it to Stockton to deliver it to the vendor. Trading-in this old engine core will save us about \$3,000. In the evening, Alan and Heather were joined by Joe and Chris Carlson. Also joining us was a representative from Holt-Caterpillar, which specializes in the rebuilding of heavy equipment, and has volunteered to provide us with advice and counsel on complex nature of the rebuild. Again, this was another fantastic deal arranged by Heather. After a thorough inspection of the Kalamazoo and a very positive discussion, the fellow from Caterpillar believed that they can provide assistance with the rebuild. Following the meeting, Joe installed rear-view mirrors on the Jackson 125. Lots of work is being done on the 125 to bring this rather simple yet antiquated machine into compliance with modern track-machine regulations. It had been a good day with lots of positive developments for your MOW Team.

For three summers now, the MOW Team has been working on the storage track in the Rail Yards extending from the Firing Line (adjacent to the north end of the Boiler Shop) out into the Yards. There are several old Santa Fe diesels locomotives and a few other cars currently trapped on it. In 2015, we built the track from the Boiler Shop out to the I-5 freeway overpass. Then, in 2016, we extended the track under the freeway to the west. Then, the company conducting the environmental mitigation of the Rail Yards removed part of the track to complete its mission. This left an 80-foot discontinuity between the Firing Line and the storage track to the west. Now, in 2017, we're back out there, reconnecting it. No doubt about it, Alan, Joe, Clem Meier, Heather, Steve Nemeth, Harry Voss, Chris, Michael Florentine, and Weston were anxious to work on this project which is why they arrived at the Shops bright and early on Saturday morning. Don't let anyone fool you into thinking that they showed-up simply because of the doughnuts. No, not the MOW Team. They're not that shallow. Well, maybe the EIC...

So, Saturday, it was back out to the Firing Line. Last week, we completed most of the excavation of the roadbed. But, there were still some high spots so, Harry brought the back-hoe to life and began digging. Weston, Joe, Steve, Mike, and Clem used shovels removed most of the loose dirt around the rail-ends of the firing line. Then Clem moved several of the loose ties out of the way for more excavation. They're oak hardwood ties and weigh a ton! Chris brought out the blue tractor and graded the roadbed. Next, the time had come to bring in the last panel of track needed to reconnect the line. As the front-end loader, Big Green Machine, and Green Machine 2 (GM2) are all out of service due to mechanical problem (what else is new?), Chris commandeered the 15,000 forklift from the Shops. Heather loaded up a pallet with track-jacks and chains which we would need to position the panel. After Chris got the forks around the panel, Clem and Alan chained it to the machine. Chris lifted the unwieldy beast and placed it in the excavated roadbed. Using their strong backs and lining bars, Steve, Joe, Mike, Weston, and Clem managed to move the panel around a bit to get the rail-ends to line up. Then, Alan, Mike, Joe, and Steve got the joint-bars in place and began bolting the track together. It's a rather cumbersome operation getting all the holes to line-up when the materials being bolted together weigh tons. But, of course, they were successful. Next, Mike and Chris grabbed more heavy oak ties from our old tie-pile. Joe and Chris laid them out for the final section of rail. Harry, on the back-hoe with rail-tons chained to the bucket, lifted the last piece of rail we needed to make the connection. But, first it had to be cut to size. Weston, Steve, and Mike grabbed the rail-saw and began slicing through the hardened steel. The rail-saw is another of our "marvelous" machines that's never quite lived up to its promise. Even with a new blade, it takes forever to cut rail. So, to save their backs, Steve, Mike, and Weston traded off sawing duties. With the rail cut, Harry lifted it with the back-hoe and positioned it. Mike, Joe, and Steve then bolted it to the track. By now, it was getting late and hot so the Team packed up and returned to the Shops. The north rail is now connected. There's still one short piece needed to finish the south rail which Alan cut using the band-saw inside the Boiler Shop. But, we're almost there. Next Saturday, plating, spiking, and ballasting will be done. It was very busy and productive day by your MOW Team. Having this track available will mollify greatly the anxiety of trying to find places to store stuff in the buildings and in Old Sacramento.

As this is Independence Day week, there will be no MOW activities on Tuesday so that the Team can enjoy celebrating our great nation, instead. Thursday, however, we'll be right back at it. Meet at the Shop at or before 5 o'clock. Saturday, we'll make more progress on the Firing Line track. 8 o'clock a.m. is the call time. As always, tremendous thanks are in order for the dedicated personnel of the MOW Team!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Joe and Kyle retrieve the Kalamazoo. Clearly, we'll soon have another Blackburn as brakeman on the SSRR...



And, they're off!



Alan and Kyle grab the wing-rails for the Switch 19 frog



Joe installs a rear-view mirror on the Jackson 125 tie-exchanger



Clem moves a heavy oak tie out of the way



Weston and Joe widen the roadbed



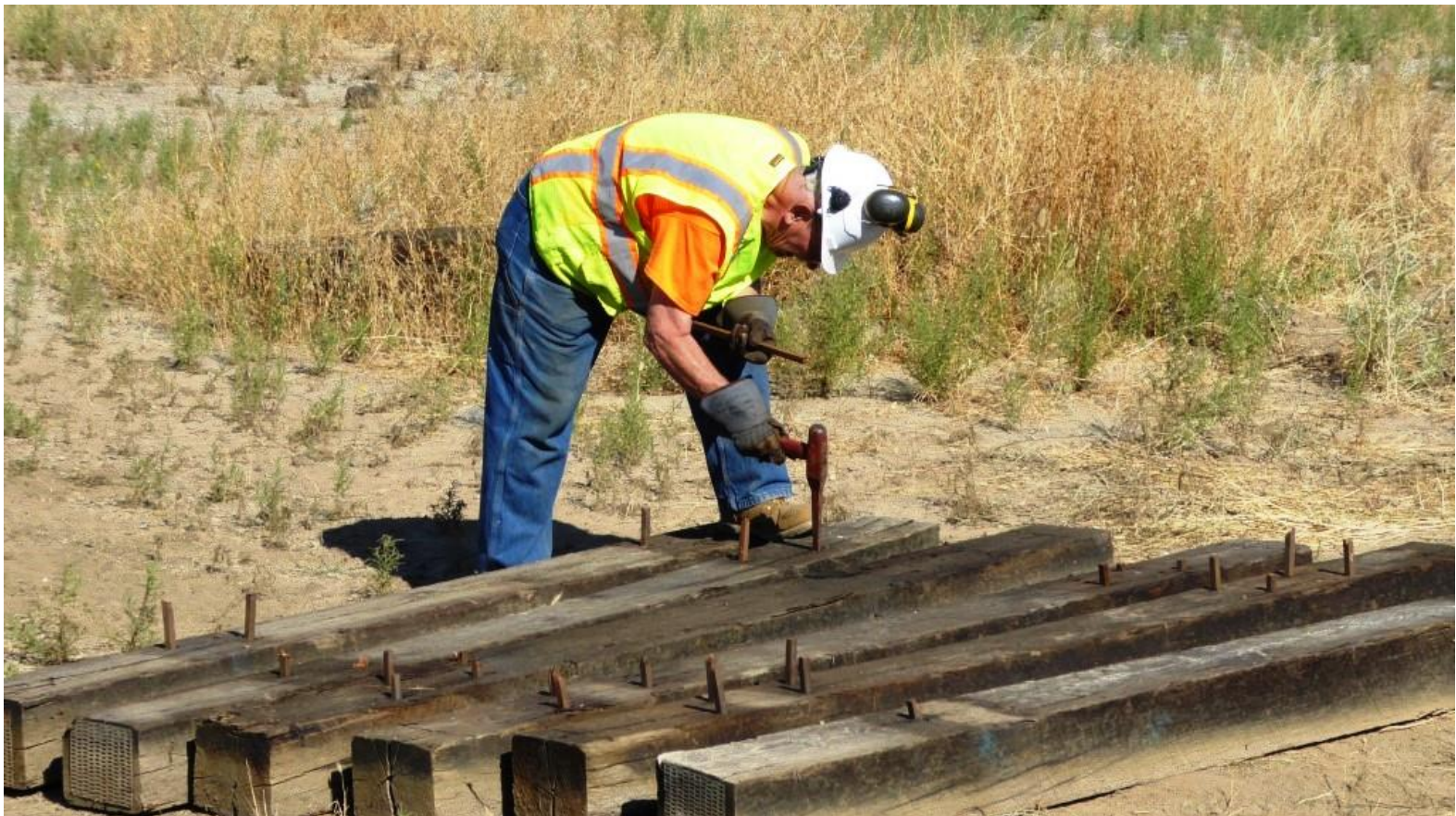
Thanks to Clem, the ties were out of the way for Harry on the back-hoe to come in and lower the roadbed



Wheelies with the back-hoe! Harry uses the bucket as a grader to level the roadbed



Harry deploys the extenda-hoe to dig out a little more



Clem plugs the spike-holes in the ties that he pulled to the side



Mike and Steve remove dirt and debris from the end of the Firing Line track where the connection with the storage track will be made



Harry uses the extendahoe to break away a large chunk of concrete from the end of the rail



Mike and Steve remove a rotten tie that had been half-buried in concrete for 50 years



Chris brings in the blue tractor to grade the roadbed



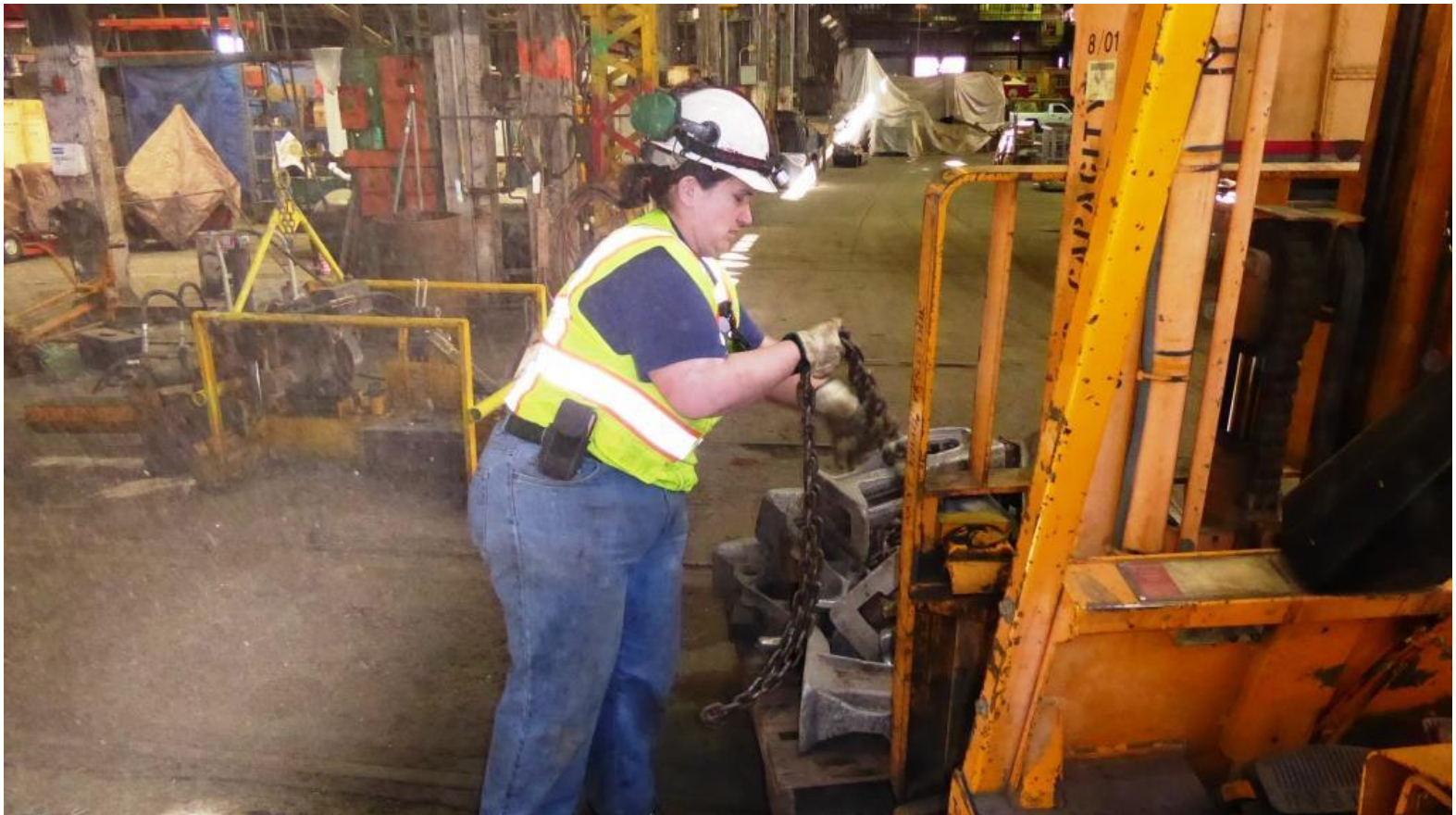
Joe, Steve, Weston, Mike, and Clem: your MOW Team at work!



Alan, Mike, Steve, and Joe shove that big chunk of concrete into the back-hoe's bucket



With wily coyotes roaming the Rail Yards, Clem keeps a close eye on the sacred pink box...



Heather loads a pallet with track-jacks and chains



In a scene somewhat reminiscent of Dickens's Christmas Carol, Alan drags a chain to the panel of track to be moved



Clem and Alan chain the panel to the forklift



Chris, on the 15,000-pound forklift, moves the track panel to the prepared roadbed



The track-panel is ready for placement



Mike and Alan work to attach joint-bars



With a little help from the back-hoe, the track is shimmied about a bit to get the rail-ends to match up



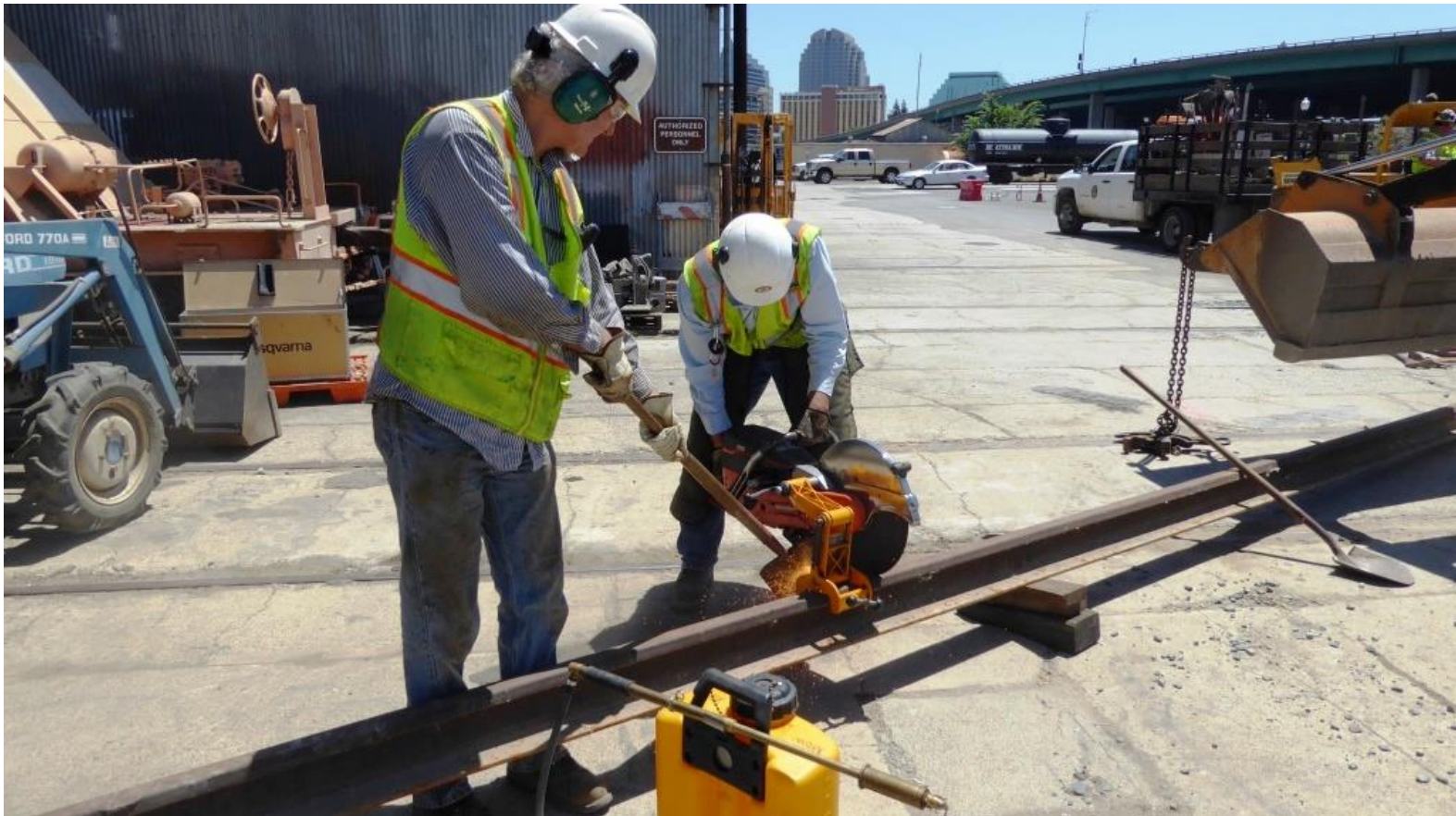
Steve raises the track vertically with a jack as Clem pushes it horizontally to line up the rail-ends for Alan and Mike to bolt in a joint bar



Weston tightens the bolts as Joe and Clem hold the rail in place with lining-bars



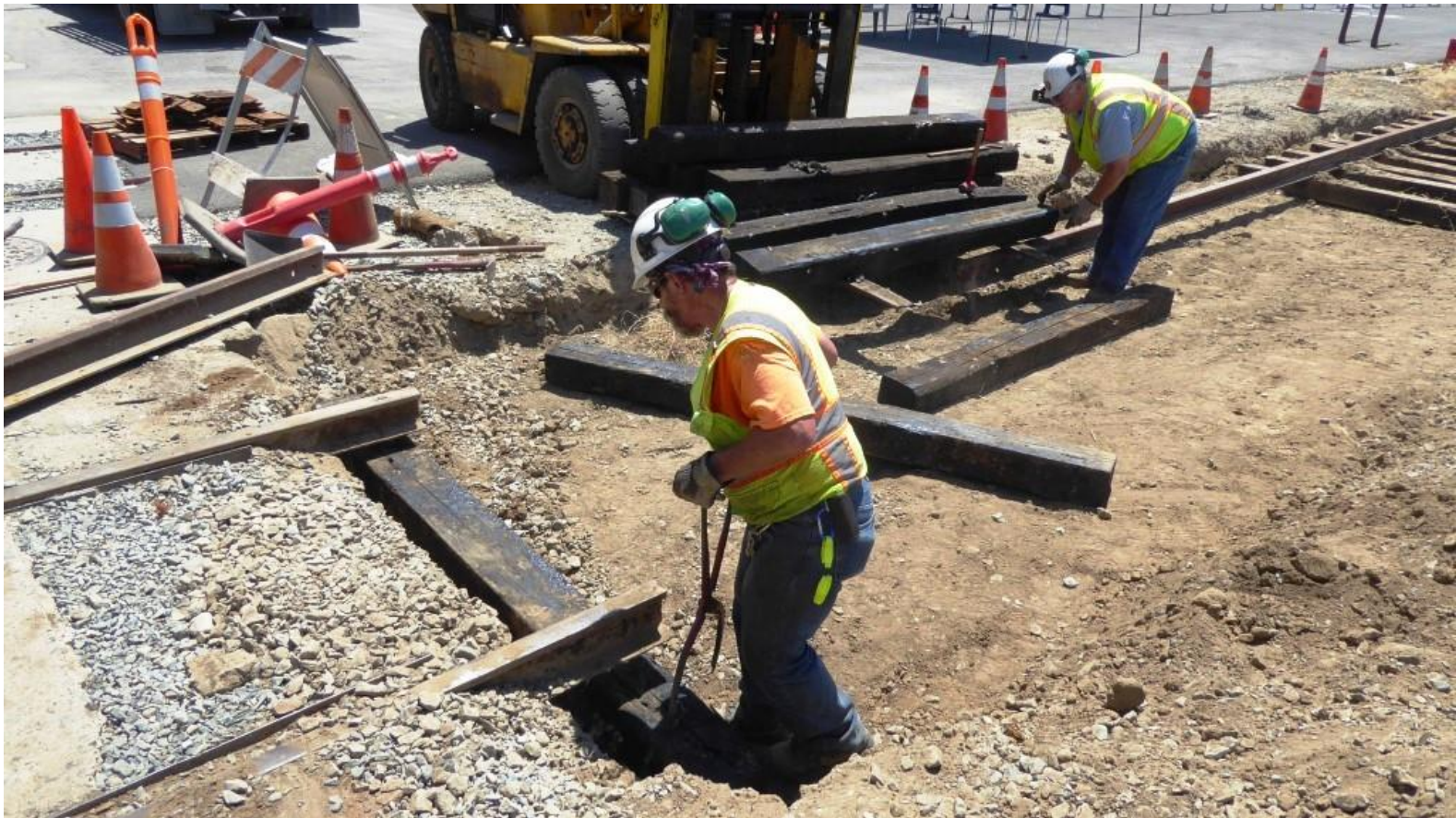
Harry on the back-hoe brings in the next stick of rail which needs to be cut



Weston saws away at the rail as Steve uses a shovel as a spark-shield



Mike at the ready with the Indian Pump as Steve cuts and Weston handles the spark-shield



Joe starts laying ties as Chris plugs old spike-holes



Weston, Steve, Harry, and Mike using one of their six ten-minute breaks per hour to which they are entitled...



Steve and Joe arrange ties under the rail



Mike and Joe position the freshly cut gap-rail into position



Well, it's starting to look like a real track – a little leveling, surfacing, ballasting, spiking, and tamping is all it needs...