

Roadmaster Report

By Rod McClure

The last few months have been very busy for the MofW department. We have replaced upwards of 65 ties on the balloon along with assorted joint bars and gauge rods. We have about 35 more ties to replace and a dozen or so joint bars and gauge rods. After the balloon is done, we will be bringing in a car or two of ballast to dump and spread on the entire balloon so it can be tamped and leveled. This will ensure derailment free operation for some time and a much smoother ride. A work weekend will be announced shortly to finish the work on the balloon track and our "track gang" looks forward to meeting some of you who are available to assist.

The tamper arrived on property within minutes of the conclusion of our last Board meeting. Doug Morgan hauled it from Yreka, CA with our trailer. After Alan Hirasawa gave it some TLC it runs quite well and it is a great tool to use.

My crew has replaced the head ties on the 7 Rail switch which were infested with termites and also we replaced the switch stand itself due to a broken casting which caused the points to be loose in both directions. It was quite the nasty job but was done in 2 days. We replaced a bent throw rod on the East 3 Rail switch and re-spiked the stand, which was not secure. We will replace the East 3 Rail switch stand with a "flop-over" style stand that will allow it to be run through without.



The frog on the Rip Lead switch was noted as cracked in two critical locations and required immediate replacement. The cracks were on the guard portion of the frog which, had it broken, would likely have allowed a wheel to climb the point and derail. Upon removing the frog, we had to replace seven rotten switch ties which were ties in name only. The frog which we put in has a "dip" in it and will have to be changed out with another one soon, but is safe to operate on. We finished the loading ramp track switch by installing point bars and a switch stand, spiking and gauging the track.

We have begun the task of moving all the material involved with the MofW department to its new home inside the balloon track. We are creating a "lay-down" yard for all the rail, switch parts, spikes, bars, and other numerous items that are used

to build and maintain track. These materials will be organized for ease in locating them when needed. This is a huge task and will take some time but the next time you are at the museum we encourage you to come out and take a look!



The area between 7 Rail and the main line is now cleaned out with the exception of moving the weed burner. After a small amount of additional grading, construction of the new 8 Rail and completion of Dodgepole Siding will commence. This will give us about 15 car lengths of new storage we need and a place for "meets" during caboose train operations.



As Roadmaster, I realize we could not have completed nearly as much as we have without the constant and never failing help of my crew. My heartfelt thanks goes to my wife Gail, my sons Aaron and Eric, my adopted kids Charlie Walls and Sara Eidman and of course Steve Habeck and Frank Brehm. Eugene Vicknair, Alan Hirasawa, Chris Peakes, Charlie Spikes, Paul Disney, Greg Elems, Matt Elems, David Elems, Dave Foster, Ed Wagner, Danny Holzman were of great help as well. And a special thanks to Marta Egan for making sure the crew receives a meal when the time comes to "go to beans".

If any of you are interested in helping please contact me by e-mail at: RAM794@alpine.net