

Winter did indeed impact the museum besides the entrance road problems. Between Malfunction Jct and far end of the balloon, we did not fare well either. A major tie replacement project has begun and the balloon is out of service with red flags/boards posted at the limits of work being done.

So far 3 dozen ties have been identified as must replace with work starting on that May 20<sup>th</sup>. It has been decided we will use the new 10' ties from the tie piles in bone yard. While they are big, they're in excellent shape and will be an excellent start at getting the whole balloon ready for the steam engine. As of Monday May 29th we have staged 12 ties on a speeder flat waiting to replace ties at the west end of the limits. On the east end towards Malfunction Jct 11 ties were staged with 9 ties pulled and replaced, spiked and gauged. Tamping started on east end as well. A test run of the new ties showed no appreciable movement Monday afternoon.

Work has been carried out by the following volunteers. Ethan Doty, David Elems, Rick Gruninger, Leisa Wesch, Loren Ross, Charlie Spikes, Bil Jackson, Steve Habeck and myself.

Future work will entail tie inspection and probable replacement at all rail joints. Tamping will be held to a minimum till all ties identified are replaced. A standing 5 mph slow order will continue to be in effect till I feel the roadbed is stable enough. It must be noted that the ground is still damp in most areas and downright wet in some spots.

Greg Elems