



CASE STUDY



HULCHER EXCAVATOR, WHEEL LOADER, BACKHOE PERFORM BRIDGE MAINTENANCE

Scope

The railroad needed to perform major refurbishing on a 300-foot bridge, as part of its normal maintenance program. This bridge was located on an active stretch of right-of-way so the maintenance had to be completed as quickly as possible to minimize schedule disruptions.

The railroad needed a contractor with the equipment and expertise to remove the old rail, ballast and support ties and replace them with new materials within the tight time constraints of their traffic schedule.

Solution

Hulcher deployed a wheel loader, backhoe and excavator to perform the maintenance work. The excavator and backhoe removed the old track, ballast and bundles of connected ties (known as “tubs”) that provided the horizontal support for the bridge’s tracks. The wheel loader followed this work to bring in new tubs and place them on the bridge. This overlapping of steps expedited the process. Once the new tubs were in place, the railroad placed tote boards on the bridge. Hulcher crews then placed the replacement rail and dropped in ballast rock to complete the work.

Hulcher crews returned the next day with a wheel loader and dump trucks to separate and load the old materials for proper disposal.

Outcome

Completing the project within the allotted schedule window was crucial to ensure railroad operations were not affected. Because Hulcher’s experienced crew members overlapped the steps to remove and replace the tubs, they completed the maintenance tasks in 14 hours - a half-day early. The bridge was operational the next day when crews returned to clean up the old tubs and ballast.



KEY FACTS

PROJECT SUMMARY: Remove and replace ties, ballast and rail on 300-foot bridge.

OVERLAPPING SPEEDS THE PROCESS: The excavator and backhoe removed the old ties as a wheel loader followed to place in the new “tubs”, to compress the work schedule.

RESULTS: Bridge maintenance completed a half-day early, avoiding any disruptions to the railroad’s traffic schedule.

