

April 4, 1975

POOL REPORT - THE GEYSERS

The President's visit to the Geysers was marred temporarily by a heavy snowstorm that obscured the view of the area. "It's more like Vail," said Mr. Ford, as a heavy mixture of sleet and rain fell on him.

Making four stops for briefings, the President and his party trudged through mud and snow. Mr. Ford, unlike most of the others, wore rubber overshoes, but he had no topcoat.

The area is extremely hilly and the motorcade crept down the steep winding roads after visiting a production well on the top of the hill. During the two stops at the hilltops, the President's head was covered by sleet and snow, but he seemed to pay no attention other than making the comment about Vail.

The three commercial companies that operate the Geysers, with Union Oil Company of California holding the biggest interest, call it "Mother Nature's Boiler." Plumes of natural steam come up from the steep hillsides. The steam is collected by pipes on the surface and sent to a generating plant. The steam produces about 500,000 kilowatts of electricity, making it the biggest geothermal facility in the world.

The Ford Administration has budgeted \$29 million for research and development of geothermal technology for fiscal 1976, double the current year's amount (source: Greenspan).

The President's helicopter returned to Treasure Island in the Bay at 1:08 p.m. He was greeted by a big crowd of flag-waving school kids. It started raining while he was handshaking along the fence, forcing him to retreat to his car before finishing the line.

Arlen Large - Wall Street Journal

Rudy Abramson - L.A. Times

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