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When Bush hits the road, he brings the White House along

Advance scouts make sure there are no surprises

By **Brad Hem**
The Idaho Statesman

Getting President George W. Bush here next week, keeping him safe and keeping the country running while he's away from Washington requires a major behind-the-scenes effort.

The White House is still mum on trip specifics, citing security concerns. They won't say how many Secret Service guards are coming, whether he'll go mountain biking at Tamarack Resort, or much else, for that matter.

A spokesman said they'll probably announce today what time Air Force One will land Monday in Boise. Details for Wednesday's public appearance, reportedly at the Idaho Center in Nampa, won't be released until Monday at the earliest.

The president's plane

Boeing VC-25A
Began service: 1990

FRONT OF PLANE

President's suite
 ▶ Stateroom
 ▶ Office
 ▶ Dressing room
 ▶ Lavatory, shower
 ▶ Conference and dining room
 ▶ Leather seats, wood grain furniture and paneling

COLORS

Blue and white were originally chosen by President Kennedy

CENTER, REAR

Senior staff
 ▶ Guests
 ▶ Journalists

Facilities for:

Security staff
 and Secret Service agents
 Computers, copiers and fax machines

Range: 9,600 miles
 Speed: 700 mph
 Passengers: 76
 Crew: 26



OTHER FACTS

- ▶ Medical equipment, supplies and operating table for emergencies
- ▶ Two kitchens can feed 100 people; can carry three-week supply of food
- ▶ More than 200 miles of electronic wiring
- ▶ 85 telephones
- ▶ Six lavatories
- ▶ Every passenger seat is first-class size

Sources: U.S. Air Force, Airman magazine

KRT

But White House reporters who cover the president full-time aren't bound by the same rules of secrecy, and their insight provides a glimpse into presidential travel.

"Basically, when the president travels, he takes the White House with him," said Ron Hutcheson, White House correspondent for Knight Ridder Newspapers. "If the president is in town

Coming Sunday: 5 pages of your letters
 What can Bush do for Idaho? That's what we asked our readers. Find out what they said in Sunday's Local section.

Get online updates on Bush's visit

Visit IdahoStatesman.com for the latest on Bush's first trip to Idaho. We'll post news and photos as we get them.

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Bush's Tamarack stop may boost resort's good buzz

Visit could also create a curiosity about Idaho

By Joe Estrella
The Idaho Statesman

The White House confirmed Thursday that President Bush will spend three days at the Tamarack Resort near Donnelly.

Bush will be at Tamarack Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, during which time access to the resort will be limited to homeowners, club members, lodging guests and season pass holders.

Tamarack officials said the visit is a "private event," meaning the president will not make any public appearances and media will not have access to the site — not even the White House press pool.

Resort officials said there will be just one White House still photographer on site and



Tamarack's ski lifts offer a quick lift to the top for summer recreational activities.

no White House videographers.

Photos of Bush at Tamarack will be available through the White House press office "approximately 7-10 days after the event," a Tamarack official said.

Public relations professionals say the president's visit to Tamarack is a pro-

motional coup for Tamarack. Bush's stay will establish the resort's credentials in the public's mind, these professionals say.

"By association, your star immediately shines more brightly," said Russ Stoddard,

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TAMARACK FACTS, Main 6



A creek runs by the green at the second hole of Tamarack Resort's golf course with a nice view of the members lodge in the background.

Statesman file photos



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Tamarack

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president and founder of Oliver Russell LLC, a Boise advertising agency.

Stoddard said if he were handling advertising for Tamarack, he would use as many pictures of Bush's visit as possible to promote the resort.

Marc Johnson of The Gallatin Group public relations firm in Boise, said a presidential stay at Tamarack would generate the same kind of buzz Sun Valley enjoyed in the 1930s and '40s when it was the playground of choice for many Hollywood celebrities.

"That was certainly good marketing for them," Johnson said.

The president's visit to Tamarack had been a badly kept secret.

Stoddard said he was told during a visit to Tamarack earlier this week that most of the available rental housing in the area had been snapped up by the Department of Homeland Security.

The public relations value to Tamarack would be even greater

Facts about Tamarack resort

Concept: billed as the first new all-season ski and golf resort built in America in 22 years.

Size: 1,500 acres of private land and 2,124 acres of state land leased to the resort's ski hills.

Cost: Estimated at \$1.5 billion over 10 years of development.

Location: 100 miles north of Boise on the northwestern shore of Lake Cascade.

Skiing: 2,800-foot vertical drop. **Golf:** 18-hole golf course.

Resort hotel: Under construction. **Residential units:** About 2,000 planned.

Who can visit?

Access to Tamarack will be limited to employees, homeowners, lodging guests and season pass holders. Season pass holders must register prior to visiting the resort while the president is there. Registration information is available at (208) 325-1000.

if the president were to become a regular visitor to Tamarack, Stoddard said. That would elevate the resort to the same status as Hyde Park, N.Y., when it was the favored retreat of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, or Hyannis Port, Mass., when it was the favorite vacation spot for the Kennedys.

"Of course, that will depend on whether he comes back or is just a one-time flyer," Stoddard said.

Bush's visit will be seen as an endorsement of Tamarack, said Carl Wilgus, administrator of the division of tourism for Idaho Commerce & Labor.

"People will be thinking, 'If it's

good enough for the president, it's good enough for us,'" Wilgus said.

The state of Idaho will benefit as well, Wilgus said, when the White House press corps begins filing stories with a Donnelly, Idaho, dateline.

"That's not going to hurt us," Wilgus said. "It's going to create a curiosity about why he (Bush) is coming to Idaho."

The residents of the Jackson, Wyo., area know about the interest generated by a presidential visit. In the 1990s, former president Bill Clinton vacationed in the area two years in a row.

Steve Duerr, director of the Jack-

son Hole Chamber of Commerce, recalls how local residents would congregate around The Snake River Grill, a local establishment owned by actor Harrison Ford, where Clinton had his birthday party.

"The locals knew Clinton was having his birthday party there and would stick around and wave to him when he left. Over time, that kind of thing enhanced Jackson Hole's image."

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Joe Estrella at jestrella@idahostatesman.com or 377-6465.



Bush

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for 15 minutes, it took 15 days to prepare for it."

On Monday, the president and some reporters will fly into Boise from Salt Lake City, where Bush is scheduled to speak at the Veterans of Foreign Wars conference. Other reporters will charter a plane. A U.S. Air Force cargo plane will bring at least two limousines (one real, one decoy), and other planes will be used if needed to carry Secret Service vehicles, staff

and other equipment, possibly including Marine One, the presidential helicopter that will likely take Bush to Donnelly because no airport near there can handle a cargo plane or Air Force One.

The Secret Service will bring its "war wagon," a van or SUV loaded with weapons and communications equipment. Close to Bush at all times will be the "football" — the package of top-secret nuclear launch codes.

Taxpayers are footing the bill for Bush's vacation because his speeches in Salt Lake City and Nampa are considered official

business.

Before the president even sets foot in Idaho, an advance team of Secret Service will have walked every possible step Bush might take while he's here.

"They scout everything out so there are no surprises," said Ken Walsh, chief White House correspondent for U.S. News and World Report. And then there are the image people who will determine where the president should stand and where TV and newspaper photographers will film so that Bush appears in the most photogenic light possible.

Bush's trip to Donnelly is unusual, said Walsh, who has covered the White House since 1986 and has written books on Air Force One and presidential vacations.

It will be just the third time since he took office that he has vacationed somewhere other than his ranch in Texas or his parents' compound at Kennebunkport, Maine. Bush's other vacation destinations were Jackson, Wyo., and Santa Fe, N.M.

Although there is always a small press pool with the president in case of an emergency, most of the

reporters who come to Idaho will stay in Boise while Bush goes to Donnelly, White House spokesman Allen Abney said. Many of them might drop out of the pool after Salt Lake City. Hutcherson said, because Bush is not expected to make any news in Idaho. The only reason some will stick around is "body watch" — being on call in case of an assassination attempt or some other surprise — and to see whether he says anything interesting or surprising about the war on terrorism when he speaks in Nampa.

The White House has Bush's plans so well scripted that most of his appearances will be photo opportunities with little interest to the national press corps. Sometimes when the president vacates, senior White House staff are available for interviews, but those people aren't coming to Idaho, removing another reason why reporters might be interested, Walsh said.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Brad Hem at bhem@idahostatesman.com or 377-6402.