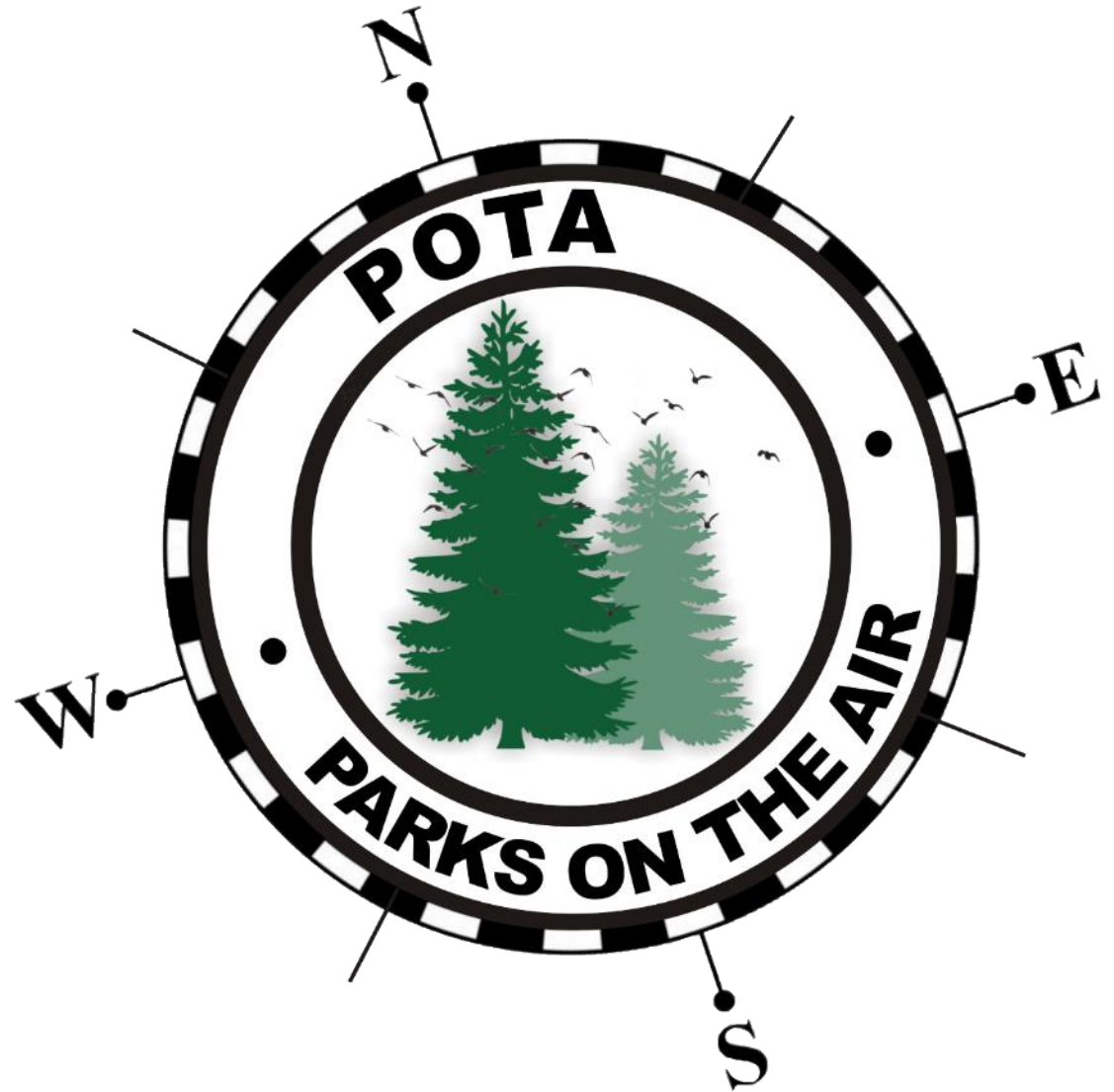


Getting Started with Parks On The Air® (POTA)

“Deep Dive”

Dennis Boyé - AH2O

Ham Radio University
10 January 2026



POTA – Keeping it Simple

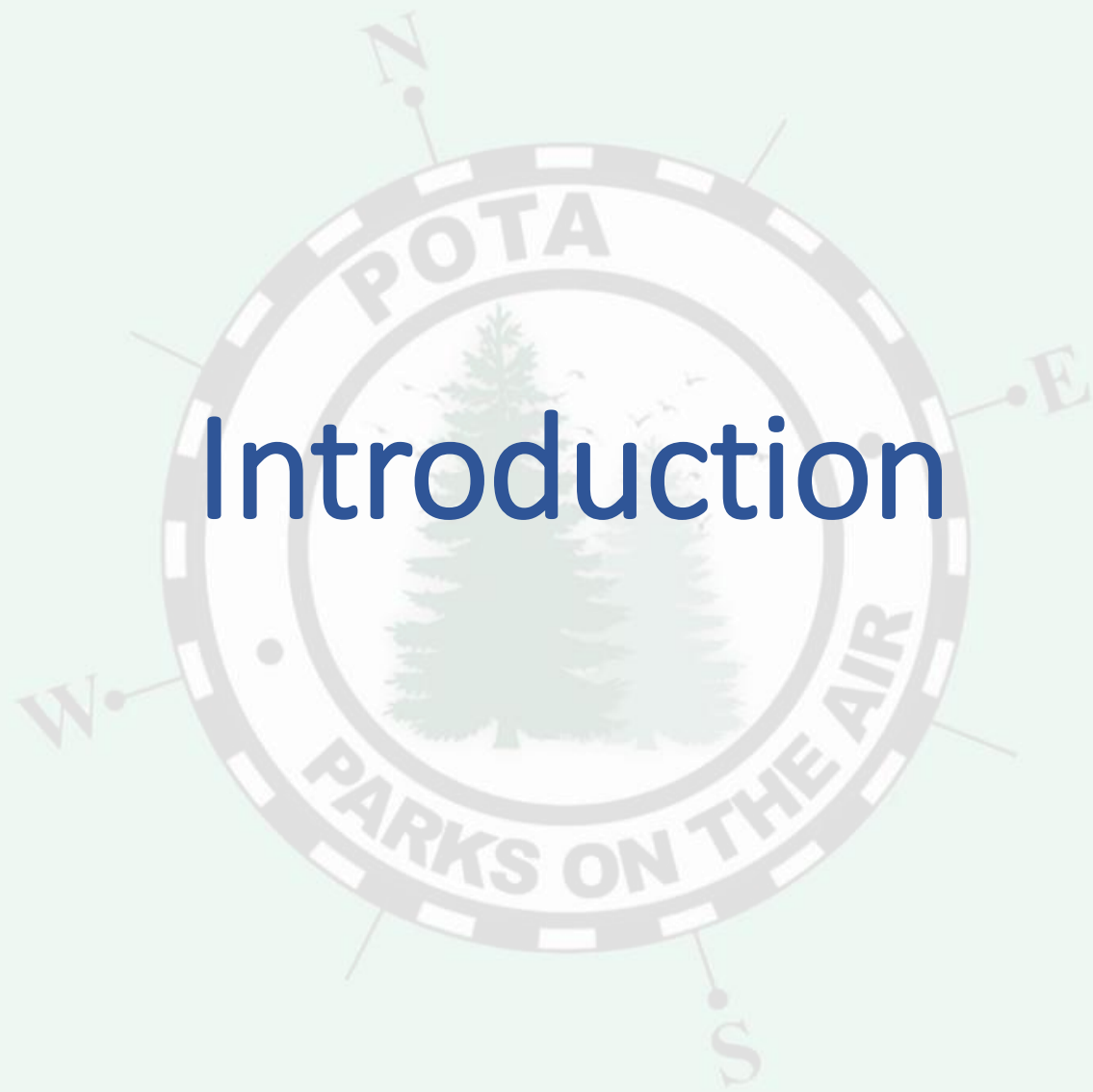
- Introduction
- Creating a POTA Account
- Getting Started
- Operations
 - Hunter
 - Activator
 - Log Submittal
- My POTA Gear
- My Activator Logging Software
- Awards
- Special Events
- Social Media Platforms
- References
- Q&A



Coke vs Pepsi

- Some people like Coke, some like Pepsi
 - It's a manner of opinion
 - Like the views in this presentation!





Introduction

Introduction

- Parks on the Air® (POTA) is a Radiosport program that encourages communications to, and portable operations from, designated parks
 - All Bands and Modes
- POTA started in 2017 when the ARRL's National Parks on the Air special event ended
- A group of volunteers wanted to continue the fun beyond the one-year event, and thus, POTA was born
 - Field Day all year long



Introduction

- Originally US National Parks, it has expanded to include National Forests, National Trails, State Parks, etc.



- POTA has also expanded to almost every country worldwide



POTA – Very Popular!



November 2025

David A. Minster, NA2AA, ARRL Chief Executive Officer, na2aa@arrl.org

Second Century

Amateur Radio On The Air

Jason Johnston, KCSHWB, recently featured "30 Days of Ham Radio" on his YouTube channel, Ham Radio 2.0. I have always felt that ham radio is a hobby of hobbies. There's plenty to learn and use within amateur radio, and not everything is for everybody. But Jason did a great job of taking viewers from working 2-meter simplex, to using APRS along with fellow YouTuber Jason Oleham, K4MACK, for something I had never heard of before — Beaches On The Air!

It has become abundantly clear that amateur radio operators love operating from portable locations, most of which are outdoors. These operations have moved far from the annual planning and operation of a Field Day station. Some of the getting-on-the-air programs include Beaches On The Air, Islands On The Air, Get On The Air (ARRL Field Day), Lighthouses on the Air, Parks on the Air® (POTA), Summits on the Air, and even Walmart Parking Lots On The Air (WMPLOTA). I accidentally stumbled into the WMPLOTA event one year when the stations were making contacts via satellite and received bonus points for building their antennas entirely from parts purchased at the Walmart they were operating from.

We are very proud of the work that the team at POTA has done with their program. You will remember that, in 2016, ARRL created and conducted the popular National Parks on the Air program. Little did anyone at ARRL know how big the POTA program could potentially become. POTA is supported by an outstanding website (parksontheair.com), and we were proud to partner with them on ARRL's *The Parks on the Air*® Book. POTA has become an international program with activity all over the world.

POTA has also created a resurgence of interest in using Morse code! A typical POTA station consists of a low-power transceiver running off a battery. Stations use temporary antennas that are typically simple vertical or end-fed wires that are lightweight and easy to deploy. Running a modest station can make voice contacts difficult to achieve, whereas CW contacts are more likely to complete. At an activation at nearby Windsor Locks Canal State Park Trail (US-7544) in Connecticut, we were having poor results on 10-meter

phone. We tuned down to the beacons segment and copied stations from Europe, to South Africa, South America, Central America, and Western Canada. Moving farther down the band and getting on CW rewarded us with a pileup from Europe.

Going portable doesn't have to be complicated. Another YouTube phenom, "Salty" Walt Hudson, K4OGO, has shown on his channel, Coastal Waves & Wires, that vertical push-up masts with various lengths of wires can lead to differing multi-band results. We partnered with Walt on his ARRL book, *Salty Walt's Portable Antenna Sketchbook*, to illustrate the many configurations he's deployed by working DX from beach locations. We also introduced an End-Fed Half-Wave Antenna Kit some 4 years ago, to inspire hams to build an antenna that they could use for Field Day or for portable operation. Putting together some simple-to-deploy antennas and having them ready to go is a fun and easy project.

Whether or not operating portable — activating locations like parks, summits, islands, or beaches — appeals to you, you should know that's where the action is on the bands these days. Be radio active! You can be an activator or a hunter! Be a connector! Inspire others in your club to activate local entities to build up excitement and experience. And look for me on the air from SA-006 or BQ-0001.

David A. Minster
David A. Minster, NA2AA
Chief Executive Officer

www.arrl.org QST November 2025 9

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David A. Minster, NA2AA, ARRL Chief Executive Officer, na2aa@arrl.org

Second Century

A POTA Activation on a Volcano

With an EFHW, IWØHK operated on 20 meters from the iconic Vesuvius National Park.



The author's portable setup along the crater of Mount Vesuvius.

Andrea Borgnino, IWØHK

For me, ham radio is a portable activity. Whether I'm activating a mountaintop for Summits on the Air (SOTA) or operating SSB or CW from a Parks on the Air® (POTA®) park, the most important thing is that there is no roof over my station. I find myself transmitting almost exclusively when I'm away from home.

I had dreamed about my next activation idea for a long time. In short, I wanted to climb — strictly on foot — to the top of a volcano, and then transmit from either a POTA or a SOTA reference. I live in Rome, so I knew the most convenient volcano for me to access would be Mount Vesuvius, which is part of the larger Vesuvius National Park (POTA reference IT-0675). After settling on this location, I spent the next several months researching how to make my dream become a reality. In March 2024, I succeeded in making it happen.

Planning Phase

My portable activity is strictly shortwave — no VHF/UHF — because I love the crackle of HF and want to hear it everywhere. This means that I have to come up with a different antenna solution for each activation, depending on the summit or park. I typically choose between a classic vertical antenna, which requires me to install several radials on the ground, or a simple end-fed half-wave (EFHW) wire antenna, which requires less space and can be extended on a fishing pole. For my Mount Vesuvius activation, I chose a wire antenna because I anticipated limited space and a lot of people around the edge of the volcano. A vertical antenna with radials can be dangerous at sites with many visitors, so I knew a wire stretched out on a fishing pole would be a better option.

Thanks to Wikiloc (www.wikiloc.com), an excellent website that allows users to share trails and GPS tracks, I was able to find the best way to climb the volcano and, most importantly, the best place to set

www.arrl.org QST September 2025 61

September 2025

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Parks on the Air, In the Air



QST Reviews

Alinco DR-CS10HT 2-Meter FM Transceiver

APC Schneider Electric Pro BN1500M2 UPS

CyberPower CP1500PFCLCD UPS

Tripp-Lite SMART1500PSGLCD UPS

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POTA Hot-Air Ballooning over US-1015

A ground-breaking plan results in a successful activation from above 75 feet.

Ron Ochu, KOØZ

In late October 2023, a couple of radio buddies from the Macoupin County Amateur Radio Club, K9MCE — Dan Hough, WX9EM, and Mark Lewis, KD9EFO — notified me about an upcoming Parks on the Air® (POTA®) event that was set to take place at Pere Marquette State Park, US-1015, near Grafton, Illinois. Earlier, the event organizer, Dennis McGlasson, AD9WM, had invited a small group of POTA activators to participate in the upcoming event. This small, dedicated group of radio amateurs was hoping to make a park-to-park contact from a hot-air balloon.

As Dennis later wrote on his QRZ profile, "On November 1, 2023, five others and I POTA activated Pere Marquette State Park, US-1015, from a hot air balloon! Operators were AD9WM, N9VFR, K0OMD, K0KST, KD9LON, and KD9EFO. The pilots were Lynn Brownell and Floyd Thornton, and the balloon and crew were provided by Scott Wooge, representative of Lindstrand Balloons USA."

Planning for POTA

First, Floyd and Dennis needed to check Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements regarding radios and antennas on a balloon. If the equipment isn't permanently attached to the balloon, FAA certification isn't required. Scott reviewed the plan and gave his approval. We also learned that Scott is a ham! Scott provided the balloon, his piloting advice, and his sponsorship.

Next, our POTA team needed to obtain permission from the park. Pere Marquette State Park Superintendent Nate Goetten was all for the idea. He explained the online permit process, which required a signed waiver and a \$25.00 application fee. Three weeks later, both were approved.

The group needed the following equipment for the hot-air balloon POTA activation: an Icom 7300 transceiver with a dual microphone splitter, Heil headsets, a 20 Ah Bioenno LiFePo4 battery, a Pactenna 40-through 10-meter end-fed half-wave antenna with a tennis ball attached to its free end, and 25 feet of RG-8X coax.



The POTA balloon at 75 feet. The tether lines and the end-fed half-wave antenna draped straight down off the basket. [Ron Ochu, KOØZ, photo]

Day of Activation

The POTA operators and balloon crew arrived at the park around 6:00 AM. It was a chilly, sunny day, with very little wind. Early morning is a prime time to launch a balloon. Wind speeds of more than 10 knots can scuttle a hot-air balloon launch. The balloon's basket held the pilot, Lynn Brownell, and two POTA operators.

The balloon was tethered to three pickup trucks, approximately 120 degrees apart, in the field to keep it from drifting. Lynn took two POTA operators up to 75 feet, and each ham made at least 10 contacts to qualify for park activation. After both hams made their contacts, Lynn descended the balloon so the next team of two could go up; there was a total of three teams. The same rig and end-fed antenna were used for each team. Team members used headsets to

SOTA and POTA Holidays

One ham's journey operating portable across Europe.

Andrea Borgnino, IW0HK

Recently, my family and I spent 2 weeks in Spain, in the EA3 call district area. I took the opportunity to hunt for new Summits on the Air (SOTA) and activate Parks on the Air (POTA). Before the journey to Spain, we stopped for a few days in my hometown of Turin, Italy, and I started my activations there.

Activations in Italy

I began at La Mandria Regional Park (POTA reference IT-0632), a huge green lung of more than 3,000 hectares (about 11.5 square miles) located northwest of Turin. It was extremely hot, so I tried to find a shaded area to set up. I was lucky to find a table between two huge trees. I erected my wire antenna using the classic stone-throwing method. The propagation wasn't optimal, but I made 13 contacts in the end, and thus the park was activated.

Excited by this first outing, I attempted a double activation by moving to the Stura di Lanzo river (POTA reference IT-0063) located in a Natura 2000 protected area a few kilometers from La Mandria. I quickly set up my loaded vertical antenna on the riverbed, but propagation didn't assist me, and I couldn't make the required

10 contacts. I've certainly learned that activating takes time, and you can't expect to start your operation at the end of the day.

After 2 days, my two sons and I decided to climb the mountain Rocciameleone (SOTA code IPM-311), the highest peak in the Susa Valley at 3,538 meters (11,607 feet). The ascent took us more than 3 hours with a 1,480-meter (4,855-foot) elevation gain, and we were rewarded by the splendor at the summit. I activated this SOTA peak on HF, leaning my wire antenna against the tower at the summit. I made only 21 contacts, but the beauty of operating with a glacier view was worth it.

Activations in Spain

After these activations in Italy, the journey to Spain began. I tried to find SOTA summits close to cities and within parks to simultaneously activate for both POTA and SOTA. The first activation was the Cap de Creus Natural Park (POTA reference ES-0331), located on a promontory of Mediterranean vegetation near the town of Cadaqués. With limited time available, I activated from my car within the park boundaries. I strung my wire antenna between my vehicle and a small tree, aiming for maximum height. With this easy and fortunate setup, I managed to make 14 contacts on 20 meters to confirm the POTA activation.

The first SOTA summit was a 466-meter (1,528-foot) mountain south of Barcelona called La Coscollada (SOTA code EA3/BC-081). I hiked through a beautiful, large pine forest, and at the top was a tall fire tower lookout, which was very useful because it provided the necessary shade to operate comfortably as I made 27 contacts. During these days, temperatures never dropped below 33 degrees Celsius (91 degrees Fahrenheit).

The second summit was Turó de Can Pasqual (SOTA code EA3/BC-080) at 470 meters (1,542 feet), located in the Collserola Natural Park. I made 42 contacts with my end-fed half-wave (EFHW) wire antenna on 20 meters.

The third summit was Turó de l'Home (SOTA code EA3/BC-008), which was quite different from the Italian Apennine peaks I was used to. With an elevation of 1,705 meters (3,526 feet), the ascent took about an hour with a 500-meter (1,640-foot) elevation gain. De-



SOTA on Rocciameleone mountain in Italy.

56 October 2025 QST www.arrl.org

www.arrl.org QST October 2025 63

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Get Ready for Contest Season

- Propagation tools
- What it takes to run 2
- Planning band and mo
- And more!



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Steve Goodgame, K5ATA, sgoodgame@arrl.org

Ham Media Playlist

Ham Radio Duo

Amateur radio has something for everyone, and most often it is enjoyed as an individual hobby. Every now and then, however, ham radio is enjoyed as a family activity. This is the case with Mike, N4FFF, and Becky, N4BKY, Spiceland.

Discovering Ham Radio

The Spicelands were introduced to amateur radio about 10 years ago, when a tornado outbreak knocked out power and cell phone communications for an extended period of time. When things began to return to normal, Mike researched how to be prepared should another similar event occur. This led him to purchase a Beafeng radio, watch YouTube videos, and find ways that amateur radio could be enjoyed. He fondly recalls finding YouTubers like Adam Kimmerly, K6ARK, doing QRP CW operations and wanting to experience that sort of adventure. That was all it took for Mike to begin studying for his Technician license.

Becky's experience with amateur radio involved sitting with Mike and watching a TV show that had a bit of Morse code in it, which Mike decoded. Becky was surprised that Mike knew Morse code and asked about it. Mike suggested that Becky download an app to learn CW — and that was all it took! Becky quickly learned the letters. The pair found a YouTube channel of a married couple enjoying CW together, and Becky wanted to do the same, so she started studying for her license.

Enjoying CW and the Outdoors

The Spicelands were shocked by how much fun CW was and how well it paired with their love of the outdoors. They decided to launch a YouTube channel, Ham Radio Duo (www.youtube.com/@HamRadioDuo), to share their enjoyment with others. Mike and Becky tend to do things that they can do



Mike, N4FFF, and Becky, N4BKY, make a CW contact from the Smoky Mountains with Ron, W2RAL, in New York.

together — hence the channel name. Creating great content on YouTube is one of the many things they do together.

Mike and Becky enjoy Parks on the Air®, and in the video titled “Morse Code in the Smoky Mountains” (<https://tinyurl.com/duo-mountains>), the couple hike the Smoky Mountains in search of a spot to activate Great Smoky Mountains National Park (US-0034). Starting out with a QRP rig, small battery, and antenna only a few feet off the ground, they make their first contact with K4NYX in Florida. It is enjoyable to watch them as they work together to activate the park. The video makes you feel like you are sitting with them in the park as they casually talk about the contacts,



Mike, N4FFF, shows viewers the QCX mini transceiver he uses to operate QRP CW.

88 November 2025 QST www.arrl.org

An Optimized 6-Meter Array | 32

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Anatomy of a POTA Rove

A seasoned portable operator explored the natural beauty and history of eastern North Carolina on a 2-day, nine-park radio adventure.

Marc P. Sullivan, W4MP5

At age 78, I still have a desire for adventure. Parks on the Air® (POTA®) fills that need by offering opportunities to visit beautiful locations, many of which I never knew existed. Exploring historic sites and wildlife refuges, coupled with the fun of portable operating, speaks volumes of the richness of our hobby.

I was anxious to hit the road. Several of my ham buddies recommended the Lake Mattamuskeet area in the eastern part of North Carolina. So, I began studying POTA maps in that area and decided on a 2-day, nine-park rove.

The most important part of a POTA activation is planning; there are many ways to set up for an activation, depending on the logistics at the target location. Thanks to the wide array of available online resources, you can easily determine the rig, power source, and antenna that offers the best combination of comfort and signal efficiency for each park.

For my trip, I used the POTA website (<https://pota.app>) to pick locations that I could reasonably activate over 2 days. The nine parks in my planned route varied greatly, from wide-open areas with few other people, to congested areas with limited deployment options.

Day 1: The Road to Mattamuskeet

Bonner House Historic Site (POTA US-10263), located in Bath, North Carolina, is just over 2 hours from home along the route to Mattamuskeet — the perfect place to start my rove. Originally owned by a prosperous naval-store merchant in the 1800s, Bonner House is a great choice for combining history with ham radio.

I left home around 8:00 AM and was on the air at Bonner House by 10:30. I operated from the back seat of my vehicle, as there was limited space to set up a freestanding antenna. The best option was hamsticks for 40 and 20 meters mounted on the roof of the car. I used an Elecraft KX3 situated on a lightweight piece of plywood and powered by a small 4.6 Ah LiFePO4 battery. The hamsticks and backseat shack accommodated a quick setup and takedown. I made 27 contacts here over 45 minutes. Several buddies tracked my progress during this trip, and they were ready for me when I called CQ. Chris, W7AMD, and Rich, N4EX, were the first two in my log. The biggest surprise was a call from Chris, F6EAX, from Dijon, France.

The next stop was Swanquarter National Wildlife Refuge (POTA US-0419), in Swan Quarter, North Carolina. This 16,000-acre reserve borders the Pamlico Sound. My good friend Paul, AA4XX, had previously activated this location, so I was able to draw upon his experience to help with my plan. With his tips and some help from Google Earth, I found a dirt road leading to Bell Island Pier. The road went on for what seemed like forever. When I finally arrived at the pier, my clean car was covered in road dust.

There wasn't another person to be seen. I had plenty of room to erect an antenna, so I deployed my homebrew 40-meter doublet, with the center attached to a 30-foot extendable mast mounted on a drive-on base. I set it up as an inverted V with a 300 Ω twinlead feeder attached to a 4:1 balun. A run of RG-8X coaxial cable completed the setup. I was on the air at 12:15 PM as planned. Propagation conditions on this trip were up and down,



Marc, W4MP5, operates from Gull Rock Game Land (POTA US-6908) using his elevated 20-meter quarter-wave vertical antenna.

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December 2025

November 2025

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Bill Hewitt, W3FRB, w3frb@comcast.net

Club Station

Hosting a Successful POTA Event

The Pottstown Area Amateur Radio Club (PAARC), K3ZMC, is in the Delaware Valley (also known as the Philadelphia metropolitan area) in Pennsylvania. This region offers an abundance of parks, affording radio enthusiasts many opportunities to activate a park for Parks on the Air® (POTA®).

PAARC has provided its members with several club presentations on POTA, but we wanted to take the training a bit further by hosting a live POTA demonstration, called PAARC in the Park.

Recruiting the Experts

POTA traces its roots to the National Parks on the Air (NPOTA) program, which ARRL ran in 2016 to help the National Park Service celebrate 100 years. PAARC is fortunate to have top performers from NPOTA — PAARC President Walt Skavinsky, KB3SBC, and Pete Kobak, K0BAK — as members. Joel Rubincam, NF3R; Greg Malone, WA3GM, and I are also POTA advocates. We were all eager and willing to be the event's instructors. An additional incentive was that we could activate the park that day.

Event Goals

PAARC in the Park stressed the importance of activators and hunters, and how many hunters transition into activators. The goal was to show how to activate a POTA station with minimal special equipment, using what's already available to most hams. POTA allows participants to pursue their interests in their own way, emphasizing the importance of skills and adaptability in dealing with various elements. This event not only showcased the excitement of POTA, but it also fostered learning and a sense of community among amateur radio enthusiasts in the region.

We promoted the event via the email list server, groups.io (<https://groups.io>), as well as PAARC's web page (www.paarc.net) and the ARRL Eastern Pennsylvania Section web page (<https://epa-arrl.org>). It cost \$70 to rent a pavilion at the park, and we provided hot dogs and refreshments.

A Successful Turnout

We held PAARC in the Park on April 28, 2024, at Evansburg State Park, an area centrally located to several local radio clubs. The program was organized

Walt Skavinsky, KB3SBC, adjusts a Buddipole for 17-meter operation during the inaugural PAARC in the Park event at Evansburg State Park in Collegeville.



by Walt, KB3SBC, and PAARC Secretary Melody Bowers, KB3SJR.

It was a wonderful event! We had 36 hams from five different local clubs as well as six guests visit, for a total of 42 people. Weather for the outdoor event was excellent, and, despite less-than-favorable band conditions, all operators were successful in providing a lot of contacts for eager POTA hunters. One of the most beneficial aspects of the event, other than chatting with fellow hams, was being able to see various equipment configurations. It's always educational to witness how different field antenna systems are deployed and how other operators stow and carry their gear.

We are incredibly grateful to our operators who shared their talents and were so generous with their time in answering guests' questions while activating the park. There was an impressive array of antennas and radios on display.

Given the success of the event, I emailed Mike Dahlhofer, K8MRD, of the YouTube channel Ham Radio Tube, about our recent PAARC in the Park POTA event. To my surprise, Mike featured our club and event in his video "My Definition Of A Great Ham Radio Club!" (www.youtube.com/watch?v=zm9coLuFR5s).

December 2025

86 December 2025 QST www.arrl.org

On the Air

JUL/AUG 2025
ARRL.ORG/OTA

Decision: Activators

Bu

Ha

POTA Activators and Hunters: The Great Symbiosis

The overwhelmingly popular Parks on the Air® (POTA®) operating program involves taking your radio gear to state parks, national monuments, national trails, state wildlife areas, etc., and getting on the air from there — an activity called *actio*ing. Let's look at activating as well as its counterpart activity, *hunting*, to see how the roles complement each other.

Colin Wheatley, WSUPK



Activating from a POTA-designated park makes for an exciting time on the radio as POTA hunters do their best to contact you. It's also a great way to spend time in nature.

The POTA organization has created a robust website (parksontheair.com) to help you find POTA parks near you, as well as a system of awards for honoring your POTA achievements, whether you're an activator or a hunter. Because, let's face it, activators and hunters can't exist without each other.

All About Activators

POTA activators are the hams who go out into the field, set up their rigs, erect antennas where the public won't trip over cables or guywires, and begin making contacts. Depending on the season, activators struggle with cold temperatures, oppressive heat, rain, and bugs. They may drive a few miles or hundreds of miles to get to their chosen park. Some activators make the experience part of their vacations, and drive from place to place, camping out and enjoying time in the outdoors. Activators can publish their activations on the POTA website — a practice known as *spotting* — to let POTA hunters know that they're set up and ready to make contacts. POTA has assigned unique alphanumeric designators to each park, such as "US-9768" for Bearskin State Trail in Wisconsin. When the activator makes a contact, they'll include the park designator as well as their call sign.

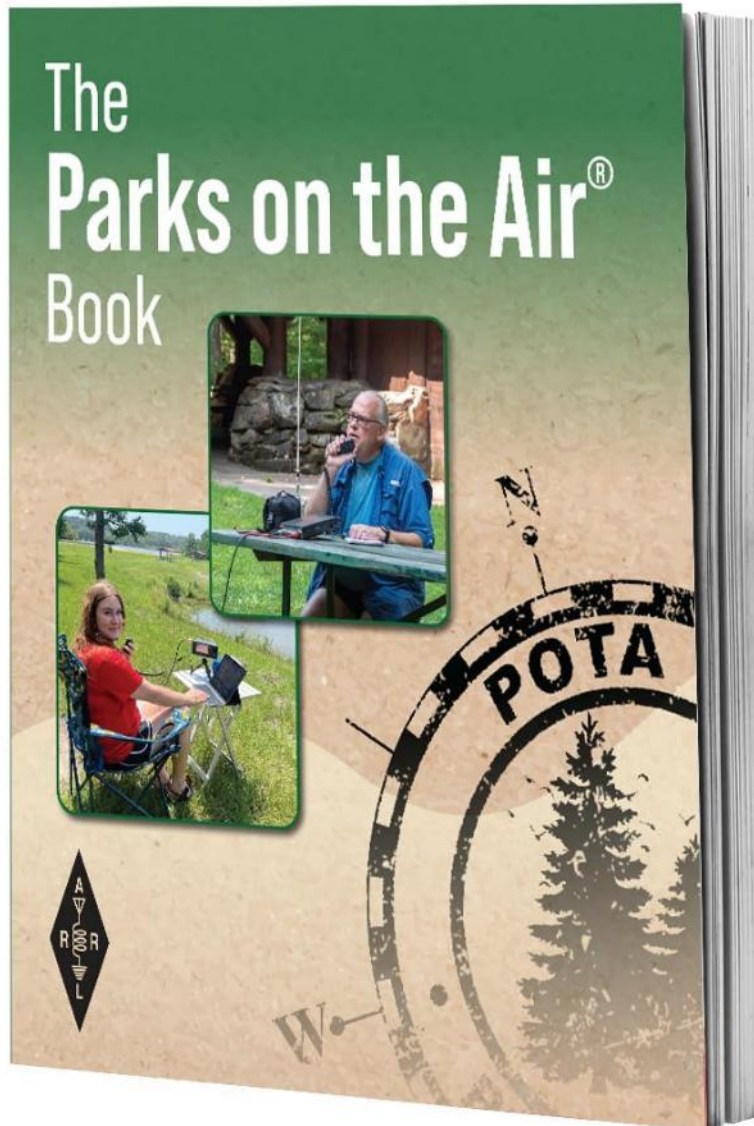
Homing in on Hunters

POTA hunters sit in the comfort of their radio shacks and check the POTA website for activations. If they see an activation in a park they haven't already contacted, they jump into action. Even though hunters aren't usually dealing with weather and insects, POTA hunting is not always easy. When an activator puts their call sign and park designator out there, there may be dozens of hunters trying to make that

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Get Started with POTA (Parks On The Air) – Beginners Guide!



... pota-operations/ Get your ham radio license fast and easy with our ... POTA logger! Available on web, iOS and Android. Create your free ...

YouTube · Ham Radio Prep · Mar 15, 2024

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POTA for Beginners: Everything You Need to Know Start Today

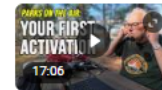


This is a comprehension Beginners Guide on how to start POTA. From Account creation, a walkthrough of the site, defining definitions, ...

YouTube · Tank Radio · Jun 2, 2025

www.youtube.com › watch

Your first POTA ACTIVATION can be this EASY!



Your first Parks on the Air activation can feel intimidating, but starting out can be as simple as setting up and hunting other POTA ...

YouTube · KB9VBR Antennas · 1 month ago

www.youtube.com › watch

10 things you always wanted to know - POTA and Ham Radio



... POTA QSOS:https://youtu.be/t0qzZPpHE7k Better Logging with Smart ... POTA #ParksOnTheAir #PortableHamRadio #qanda #hamradioquestions #

YouTube · KB9VBR Antennas · Feb 12, 2025

www.youtube.com › watch

EASY Start: Parks On The Air! #POTA



... POTA Book Just Dropped (Coupon: "KI6NAZ" for free shipping) http://home.arrl.org/action/Store/Product-Details/productId/2013464221...

YouTube · Ham Radio Crash Course · Nov 9, 2023

www.youtube.com › watch

How I do it! A complete POTA activation from start to finish



Watch me, in real time, as I deploy an end fed half wave antenna, set up my station on a picnic table, and do a QRP (5 watt) POTA activation ...

YouTube · KB9VBR Antennas · Jan 3, 2024

5 key moments in this video

Definitions

- ***Activators***

- Individuals that pack up their portable gear and head out to a park, and set up a station



- ***Hunters***

- Individuals located anywhere, who contact the *Activators* in a park
 - If you hear someone calling “CQ POTA”, and you respond, you're a *Hunter*



Why Activate POTA?

- Get out of your shack - Explore new places
- Introduce Amateur Radio with passersby
- Practice setting up a station and operating at various locations and conditions
- Experimenting with different antennas
- Typical lower noise floor
- Gain experience operating
- Hone your operating skills for contesting / pileups

Creating a POTA Account





Add Spot



Add Activation



Spots



Activations



Map



Park List



Top Activators



Top Hunters



Official Events



My Awards



My Stats



My Activations



My Hunter Log



My Log Uploads



My Account



Sign Out



Rules & Documenta...

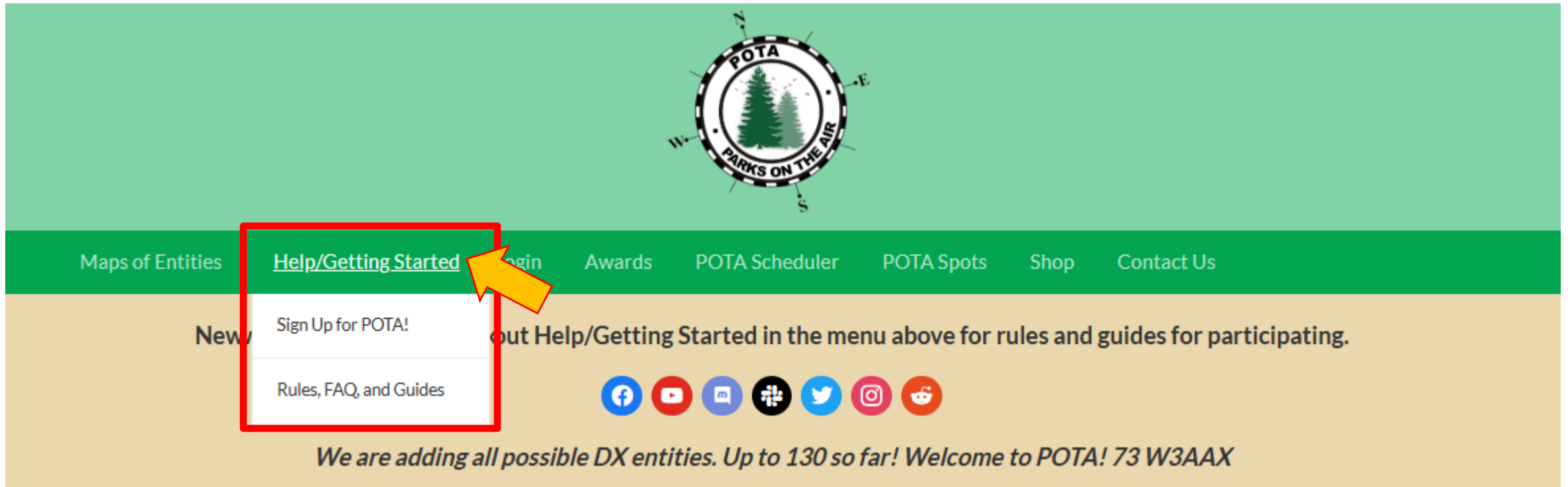


Privacy Policy

First – You need a POTA Account

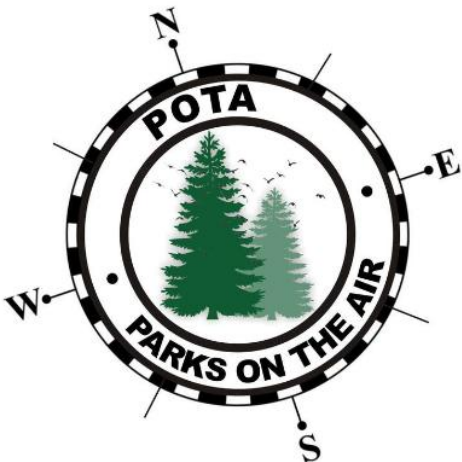
- One stop shop for all things POTA
- Account menu highlights:
 - “Spots” – Shows *Activators* currently operating in parks
 - “Map” of all POTA parks, including park details
 - “My Awards” – Shows progress towards certificates and awards
 - Based on the logs *Activators* you contacted submit
 - As a *Hunter* no logs submittals or QSO confirmation is required
 - “Rules & Documentation” – POTA details, documentation, video
- Creating an account is simple
 - <https://parksontheair.com/>

Creating a POTA Account





- Follow the easy “Sign Up for POTA” instructions


Creating a POTA Account, Continued



Sign In with your social account

 Continue with Login with Amazon

 Continue with Google

 Continue with Facebook

We won't post to any of your accounts without asking first

or

Sign in with your email and password

Email

Password

[Forgot your password?](#)

[Sign in](#)

Need an account? [Sign up](#)

- POTA Account Passwords
 - Authenticated against accounts you already have
 - Amazon, Google, or Facebook
 - Or create a unique username and password just for POTA

Getting Started

- Getting started with POTA can happen via one of two paths
 - *Activator*
 - *Hunter*
- The easiest way to participate in POTA is as a Hunter, so let's start there



Hunters

Hunter

- The first place to start as a *Hunter* is to go to <https://pota.app>
- The landing page will be the Spots page, which shows *Activators* on the air, what parks they are in, and what frequencies and modes they are operating

The screenshot displays the POTA app interface. At the top is a green header bar with a menu icon, the text "Parks on the Air", a search bar labeled "Search for Callsigns & Parks", and navigation tabs for "SPOTS", "ACTIVATIONS", "DOCS", and "AH20". Below the header, four spot cards are shown. The first card, for K7TPK @ US-9980, is highlighted with a red border. Each card lists the park name, state, frequency, mode, and last heard time, along with "RE-SPOT" and "REPEAT" buttons.

Call Sign	State	Park Name	Frequency	Mode	Last Heard	RE-SPOT	REPEAT
K7TPK	US-OR	US-9980 Willamette River Greenway and Water State Trail	14324 kHz	CQ SSB	22:13 UTC	1	1
N7SWE	US-IL	US-1000 Illinois Beach State Park	14321 kHz	N1ECT	22:12 UTC	8	8
W5ALE/2	US-TX	US-3030 Lake Somerville State Park	14340 kHz	W3ENK	22:11 UTC	34	34
KE5OLI	US-TX	US-3030 Lake Somerville State Park	14284 kHz	K8IKO	22:10 UTC	17	17

- Call them, if you make a contact, you've officially started in POTA!

Hunter

- The first place to start as a *Hunter* is to go to <https://pota.app>
- The landing page will be the Spots page, which shows *Activators* on the air, what parks they are in, and what frequencies and modes they are operating

The screenshot shows the 'Parks on the Air' interface. A red box highlights the spot details. Blue arrows connect the following text to the corresponding fields in the app:

- Activator Callsign - Park # (points to K7TPK @ US-9980)
- Park # - Park Name (points to US-9980 Willamette River Greenway and Water State Trail)
- Park Location (points to US-OR)
- Operating Frequency (points to 14324 kHz)
- Last Spotted by – himself! (points to K7TPK)
- Spotter entered notes (points to CQ SSB)
- Last heard – Last spotted (points to Last heard 2 mins ago at 22:13 UTC)

At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'RE-SPOT' and a button with a circular arrow icon and the number '1'.

- Call them, if you make a contact, you've officially started in POTA!

Hunter – Active Spots Page

- The “Active Spots” page can be filtered; Band, Mode, etc.

The screenshot shows the 'Parks on the Air' website's 'Active Spots' page. The interface includes a top navigation bar with 'SPOTS', 'ACTIVATIONS', 'DOCS', and 'AH20' tabs. Below the navigation bar, there are filters for 'Band' (20M), 'Mode' (SSB), and 'Program' (All). A red arrow points to the 'Band' filter dropdown. Two yellow callout boxes highlight the '20M' band and the 'SSB' mode. The '20M' band is selected, and the 'SSB' mode is selected. The page displays a list of active spots, including 'US-3178 Daroga State Park' and 'US-11388 Indian Creek Reservoir State Fishing Lake'. The 'US-3178 Daroga State Park' spot is highlighted with a red arrow. The 'US-11388 Indian Creek Reservoir State Fishing Lake' spot is also highlighted with a red arrow. The page includes a 'RE-SPOT' button and a '50' timer.

Band: 20M 25

Band	Count
All	58
60M	2
40M	14
30M	2
20M	25
17M	10
15M	2
10M	2
6M	1

Mode: SSB 27

Mode	Count
All	57
CW	17
FT4	2
FT8	11
SSB	27
DATA	13

Filter "20M"

Filter "SSB"

- Another Spot view
 - In addition to Filtering, there are various Sort options

- Sort

23

Filter by SSB, Sorted by Time

Parks on the Air

<

FT8 – WSJT & JTAlert Software

AA5HH B4
U.S.A.

EA1DME
Spain

K3WTT MD
U.S.A.

KF0JOE MO
U.S.A.

N6TRT
U.S.A.

W7PK WA
U.S.A.

AE6CH CA
U.S.A.

EA8CPE
Canary Is.

K5LJC TX
U.S.A.

KJ5CAS NM
U.S.A.

N6ZDH CA
U.S.A.

W9MDM IN
U.S.A.

AF3J NC
U.S.A.

EC5M
Spain

KC3EF B4
U.S.A.

KQ4EX0 FL
U.S.A.

N7KB AZ
U.S.A.

WB9HLA B4
U.S.A.

AI4ZD B4
U.S.A.

HB9EFK
Switzerland

KC8SKY OH
U.S.A.

KE9DQM
U.S.A.

N8XDG FL
U.S.A.

ZL1VAH
N. Zealand

CT7AIU
Portugal

IK4LZH B4
Italy

KE9DQM
U.S.A.

N1JUR NH
U.S.A.

VE3TKB ON
Canada

ZS1WH
S. Africa

CT7AUT
Portugal

K1CXS VT
U.S.A.

KF0IBB MN
U.S.A.

N3GHO PA
U.S.A.

W5DUI B4
U.S.A.

Callers : Alert

19:12:53 42 0 DT+0.2 20m FT8

WSJT-X v2.7.0 by K1JT et al.

File Configurations View Mode Decode Save Tools Help

Band Activity

UTC	dB	DT	Freq	Message
190915	-13	0.3	1707	CQ EC5M IM98 Spain
190915	-6	0.3	1014	CQ POTA AI4ZD EM95 U.S.A.
190915	-10	0.3	284	CQ IK4LZH JN54 Italy
190915	-10	0.3	769	CQ VE3TKB EN92 Canada
190915	-16	0.2	2862	KC2HFQ ZL1VAH -11
190915	-6	0.2	1607	CQ N8XDG EL86 U.S.A.
190915	-9	0.3	1871	CQ AE6CH CM97 U.S.A.
190915	-4	1.3	2417	KE8WCR KJ5CAS 73
190915	5	0.4	1175	KG5QPI AA5HH EM21
190915	-19	0.2	904	VA2HMD N3GHO EN90
190915	7	-0.6	1181	KB2DJJ EA8CPE R-11
190915	-9	0.2	2401	WA8S W5DUI R+07
190915	-6	0.2	813	W6AER N1JUR 73
190915	-9	0.2	826	CQ CT7AIU IM67 Portugal

Rx Frequency

UTC	dB	DT	Freq	Message
185300	-11	-0.7	750	KE0SMR KR0ES 73
185715	-15	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185745	-13	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185815	-17	-1.2	749	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185845	-13	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185915	-10	-1.2	749	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185945	-15	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190015	-16	-1.2	751	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190100	-17	0.2	749	KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190130	-17	0.2	749	KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190145	-9	-1.2	749	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190200	-16	0.2	750	KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190615	-15	-1.2	750	NE9U KE0SMR DM78
190815	-17	-1.2	750	NE9U KE0SMR DM78

CQ only

Log QSO

Stop

Monitor

Erase

Decode

Enable Tx

Halt Tx

Tune

Menus

20m

14.074 000

H

FT8

FT4

MSK

Q65

JT65

DX Call

DX Grid

Lookup

Add

2025 Dec 17

19:09:39

Tx even/1st

Hold Tx Freq

Tx 1251 Hz

Rx 753 Hz

Report -8

Auto Seq

CQ: First

Generate Std Msgs

Next

Now

Pwr

Tx 1

Tx 2

Tx 3

Tx 4

Tx 5

Tx 6

KG5QPI AH20 73

CQ AH20 FN30

Receiving

FLEX

FT8

Last Tx: KG5QPI AH20 73

35

9/15

WD:0m

JTAlertV2 2.80.4 AH20 [20m,FT8,ACL+,#1] (Updates)

Alerts Settings View Msgs ON Sound ON Help

WSJT-X - Wide Graph

Controls

500 1000 1500 2000 2500 3000 3500

19:12:00 20m

Bins/Pixel 4

Start 100 Hz

Split 2500 Hz

N Avg 1

Palette Adjust...

Default

Cumulative

Flatten

Ref Spec

Spec 25 %

Smooth 1

25

WSJT-X v2.7.0 by K1JT et al.

File Configurations View Mode Decode Save Tools Help

Band Activity

UTC	dB	DT	Freq	Message
190915	-13	0.3	1707	~ CQ EC3M IM98
190915	-6	0.3	1014	~ CQ POTA AI4ZD EM95 U.S.A.
190915	-10	0.3	284	~ CQ IK4LZH JN54 Italy
190915	-10	0.3	769	~ CQ VE3TKB EN92 Canada
190915	-16	0.2	2862	~ KC2HFQ ZL1VAH -11
190915	-6	0.2	1607	~ CQ N8XDG EL86 U.S.A.
190915	-9	0.3	1871	~ CQ AE6CH CM97 U.S.A.
190915	-4	1.3	2417	~ KE8WCR KJ5CAS 73
190915	5	0.4	1175	~ KG5QPI AA5HH EM21
190915	-19	0.2	904	~ VA2HMD N3GHO EN90
190915	7	-0.6	1181	~ KB2DJJ EA8CPE R-11
190915	-9	0.2	2401	~ WA8S W5DUI R+07
190915	-6	0.2	813	~ W6AER N1JUR 73
190915	-9	0.2	826	~ CQ CT7AIU IM67 Portugal

Rx Frequency

UTC	dB	DT	Freq	Message
190915	-11	-0.7	750	~ KE0SMR KR0ES 73
185715	-15	-1.2	750	~ CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185745	-13	-1.2	750	~ CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185815	-17	-1.2	749	~ CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185845	-13	-1.2	750	~ CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185915	-10	-1.2	749	~ CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185945	-15	-1.2	750	~ CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190015	-16	-1.2	751	~ CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190100	-17	0.2	749	~ KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190130	-17	0.2	749	~ KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190145	-9	-1.2	749	~ CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190200	-16	0.2	750	~ KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190615	-15	-1.2	750	~ NE9U KE0SMR DM78
190815	-17	-1.2	750	~ NE9U KE0SMR DM78

☐ CQ only

Log QSO

Stop

Monitor

Erase

Decode

Enable Tx

Halt Tx

Tune

☐ Menus

20m

14.074 000

☐ Tx even/1st ☒ Hold Tx Freq

Tx 1251 Hz

Rx 753 Hz

Report -8

☐ Auto Seq

CQ: First

Generate Std Msgs

Next

Now

Tx 1

Tx 2

Tx 3

Tx 4

KG5QPI AH20 73

Tx 5

CQ AH20 FN30

Tx 6

63 dB

80

60

40

20

0

H

FT8

FT4

MSK

Q65

JT65

DX Call

DX Grid

Lookup

Add

2025 Dec 17

19:09:39

Receiving

FLEX

FT8

Last Tx: KG5QPI AH20 73

35

9/15

WD:0m

CQ POTA

FT8 – WSJT & JTAlert Software

Callsigns #1

All decodes

AA5HH B4 U.S.A.	AE6CH CA U.S.A.	AF3J NC U.S.A.	AI4ZD B4 U.S.A.	CT7AIU Portugal	CT7AUT Portugal
EA1DME Spain	EA8CPE Canary Is.	EC5M Spain	HB9EFK Switzerland	IK4LZH B4 Italy	K1CXS VT U.S.A.
K3WTT MD U.S.A.	K5LJC TX U.S.A.	KC3EF B4 U.S.A.	KC8SKY OH U.S.A.	KE9DQM U.S.A.	KF0IBB MN U.S.A.
KF0JOE MO U.S.A.	KJ5CAS NM U.S.A.	KQ4EX0 FL U.S.A.	KQ4JZB NC U.S.A.	N1JUR NH U.S.A.	N3GHO PA U.S.A.
N6TRT U.S.A.	N6ZDH CA U.S.A.	N7KB AZ U.S.A.	N8XDG FL U.S.A.	VE3TKB ON Canada	W5DUI B4 U.S.A.
W7PK WA U.S.A.	W9MDM IN U.S.A.	WB9HLA B4 U.S.A.	ZL1VAH N. Zealand	ZS1WH S. Africa	

Callers : Alert

19:12:53 | 42 | 0 | DT+0.2 | 20m FT8

WSJT-X v2.7.0 by K1JT et al.

File Configurations View Mode Decode Save Tools Help

Band Activity

UTC	dB	DT	Freq	Message
190915	-13	0.3	1707	CQ EC5M IM90 Spain
190915	-6	0.3	1014	CQ POTA AI4ZD EM95 U.S.A.
190915	-10	0.3	284	CQ IK4LZH JN54 Italy
190915	-10	0.3	769	CQ VE3TKB EN92 Canada
190915	-16	0.2	2862	KC2HFQ ZL1VAH -11
190915	-6	0.2	1607	CQ N8XDG EL86 U.S.A.
190915	-9	0.3	1871	CQ AE6CH CM97 U.S.A.
190915	-4	1.3	2417	KE8WCR KJ5CAS 73
190915	5	0.4	1175	KG5QPI AA5HH EM21
190915	-19	0.2	904	VA2HMD N3GHO EN90
190915	7	-0.6	1181	KB2DJJ EA8CPE R-11
190915	-9	0.2	2401	WA8S W5DUI R+07
190915	-6	0.2	813	W6AER N1JUR 73
190915	-9	0.2	826	CQ CT7AIU IM67 Portugal

Rx Frequency

UTC	dB	DT	Freq	Message
185300	-11	-0.7	750	KE0SMR KR0ES 73
185715	-15	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185745	-13	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185815	-17	-1.2	749	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185845	-13	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185915	-10	-1.2	749	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185945	-15	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190015	-16	-1.2	751	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190100	-17	0.2	749	KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190130	-17	0.2	749	KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190145	-9	-1.2	749	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190200	-16	0.2	750	KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190615	-15	-1.2	750	NE9U KE0SMR DM78
190815	-17	-1.2	750	NE9U KE0SMR DM78

☐ CQ only ☐ Menus

20m ☒ 14.074 000 ☐ Tx even/1st ☒ Hold Tx Freq

Tx 1251 Hz

Rx 753 Hz

Report -8 ☒ Auto Seq CQ: First

H DX Call DX Grid

FT8

MSK

2025 Dec 17 19:09:39

Last Tx: KG5QPI AH20 73 | 35 | WD:0m

JTAlertV2 2.80.4 AH20 [20m,FT8,ACL+,#1] (Updates)

Alerts Settings View Msgs ON Sound ON Help

WSJT-X - Wide Graph

Controls 500 1000 1500 2000 2500 3000 3500

19:12:00 20m

Bins/Pixel 4 Start 100 Hz Split 2500 Hz N Avg 1 Palette Adjust... Flatten Ref Spec Spec 25 % Smooth 1

Callsigns #1

All decodes

AA5HH B4 U.S.A.	AE6CH CA U.S.A. CQ	AF3J NC U.S.A.	AI4ZD B4 U.S.A. PO	CT7AIU Portugal CQ	CT7AUT Portugal
EA1DME Spain	EA8CPE Canary Is.	EC5M Spain CQ	HB9EFK Switzerland	IK4LZH B4 Italy CQ	K1CXS VT U.S.A.
K3WTT MD U.S.A.	K5LJC TX U.S.A.	KC3EF B4 U.S.A. 73	KC8SKY OH U.S.A. CQ	KE9DQM U.S.A.	KF0IBB MN U.S.A. CQ
KF0JOE MO U.S.A.	KJ5CAS NM U.S.A. 73	KQ4EX0 FL U.S.A. 73	KQ4JZB NC U.S.A.	N1JUR NH U.S.A. 73	N3GHO PA U.S.A.
N6TRT U.S.A.	N6ZDH CA U.S.A.	N7KB AZ U.S.A.	N8XDG FL U.S.A. CQ	VE3TKB ON Canada CQ	W5DUI B4 U.S.A.
W7PK WA U.S.A. CQ	W9MDM IN U.S.A. 73	WB9HLA B4 U.S.A.	ZL1VAH N. Zealand	ZS1WH S. Africa CQ	

CQ POTA

FT8 – WSJT & JTAlert Software

Callsigns #1

All decodes

AA5HH B4 U.S.A.	AE6CH CA U.S.A.	AF3J NC U.S.A.	AI4ZD B4 U.S.A.	CT7AIU Portugal	CT7AUT Portugal
EA1DME Spain	EA8CPE Canary Is.	EC5M Spain	HB9EFK Switzerland	IK4LZH B4 Italy	K1CXS VT U.S.A.
K3WTT MD U.S.A.	K5LJC TX U.S.A.	KC3EF B4 U.S.A.	KC8SKY OH U.S.A.	KE9DQM U.S.A.	KF0IBB MN U.S.A.
KF0JOE MO U.S.A.	KJ5CAS NM U.S.A.	KQ4EXO FL U.S.A.	KQ4JZB NC U.S.A.	N1JUR NH U.S.A.	N3GHO PA U.S.A.
N6TRT U.S.A.	N6ZDH CA U.S.A.	N7KB AZ U.S.A.	N8XDG FL U.S.A.	VE3TKB ON Canada	W5DUI B4 U.S.A.
W7PK WA U.S.A.	W9MDM IN U.S.A.	WB9HLA B4 U.S.A.	ZL1VAH N. Zealand	ZS1WH S. Africa	

Callers : Alert

19:12:53 42 0 DT+0.2 20m FT8

WSJT-X v2.7.0 by K1JT et al.

File Configurations View Mode Decode Save Tools Help

Band Activity

UTC	dB	DT	Freq	Message
190915	-13	0.3	1707	CQ EC5M IM50 Spain
190915	-6	0.3	1014	CQ POTA AI4ZD EM95 U.S.A.
190915	-10	0.3	284	CQ IK4LZH JN54 Italy
190915	-10	0.3	769	CQ VE3TKB EN92 Canada
190915	-16	0.2	2862	KC2HFQ ZL1VAH -11
190915	-6	0.2	1607	CQ N8XDG EL86 U.S.A.
190915	-9	0.3	1871	CQ AE6CH CM97 U.S.A.
190915	-4	1.3	2417	KE8WCR KJ5CAS 73
190915	5	0.4	1175	KG5QPI AA5HH EM21
190915	-19	0.2	904	VA2HMD N3GHO EN90
190915	7	-0.6	1181	KB2DJJ EA8CPE R-11
190915	-9	0.2	2401	WA8S W5DUI R+07
190915	-6	0.2	813	W6AER N1JUR 73
190915	-9	0.2	826	CQ CT7AIU IM67 Portugal

Rx Frequency

UTC	dB	DT	Freq	Message
185300	-11	-0.7	750	KE0SMR KR0ES 73
185715	-15	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185745	-13	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185815	-17	-1.2	749	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185845	-13	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185915	-10	-1.2	749	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
185945	-15	-1.2	750	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190015	-16	-1.2	751	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190100	-17	0.2	749	KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190130	-17	0.2	749	KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190145	-9	-1.2	749	CQ KE0SMR DM78 U.S.A.
190200	-16	0.2	750	KE0SMR K5MGY EM12
190615	-15	-1.2	750	NE9U KE0SMR DM78
190815	-17	-1.2	750	NE9U KE0SMR DM78

☐ CQ only ☐ Menus

20m 14.074 000

☐ Tx even/1st ☐ Hold Tx Freq

Tx 1251 Hz

Rx 753 Hz

Report -8

☐ Auto Seq CQ: First

DX Call DX Grid

FT8 FT4 MSK Q65 JT65

2025 Dec 17 19:09:39

Receiving FLEX FT8 Last Tx: KG5QPI AH20 73 35 9/15 WD:0m

JTAlertV2 2.80.4 AH20 [20m,FT8,ACL+,#1] (Updates)

Alerts Settings View Msgs ON Sound ON Help

WSJT-X - Wide Graph

Controls 500 1000 1500 2000 2500 3000 3500

19:12:00 20m

Bins/Pixel 4 Start 100 Hz Split 2500 Hz N Avg 1 Palette Adjust... Flatten Ref Spec Spec 25 % Smooth 1

Hunter - Spotting

- After you work a park *Activator*, it is considerate to “Re-Spot” them so other *Hunters* know they are still currently active

The image shows a screenshot of the 'Parks on the Air' web application. A modal window titled 'Re-Spot' is open, allowing a user to re-spot an activator. The modal contains the following information:

- Activator Callsign:** K7TPK
- Spotter Callsign:** AH20
- Frequency (kHz):** 14324
- Park Reference:** US-9980
Willamette River Greenway and Water State Trail
- Comments:** A text field for additional information.
- Instructions:**
 - Wrong mode?** Mention a mode in the Comments field to change the mode for this spot (e.g. "QSY CW", "RTTY" or "Switching to FT8").
 - Mention QRT** if this activator is no longer on the air to mark this spot as finished.
 - This spot will be **marked hunted** for this band and mode.
- Buttons:** CANCEL and SPOT

In the background, the 'Parks on the Air' interface is visible. It shows a list of spots for K7TPK at US-9980. A yellow arrow points to the 'RE-SPOT' button in the bottom left corner of the spot entry. To the right, another spot entry for KE5OLI at US-3030 is visible.



Activators

Activators – Simple Rules



- After you've done some hunting, you might want to try activating
- *Activator* rules are simple:
 - You must have an account registered at <https://pota.app>
 - Pick a park near you
 - You and all your equipment must be within the boundaries of the park
 - POTA trails – within 100 ft of trail edge
 - Follow any instructions from park rangers you encounter
 - Be courteous of others using the park – *you're an ambassador of our hobby*
 - *Others have a right to be in the park too*
 - Leave no trace behind
 - You must upload your ADIF log to the POTA site after your activation is complete
 - Minimum of 10 contacts within a UTC day required to be a valid activation


Activators – What do you need to activate a POTA site?

- Any portable VHF/UHF radio
 - Any portable antenna
 - Wire on a self-supporting mast, Wolf River Coils, Alpha Antennas, SotaBeams, Buddipole, etc.
- Note: National Parks do not allow wires in trees or stakes in the ground*
- Portable power or access to AC power
 - Any logging program that will export ADIF format
 - Phone – to post your spot
 - Checklist
 - Don't leave home without all your gear!
 - Pack Essentials: Water, snacks, sunscreen, bug spray, hat

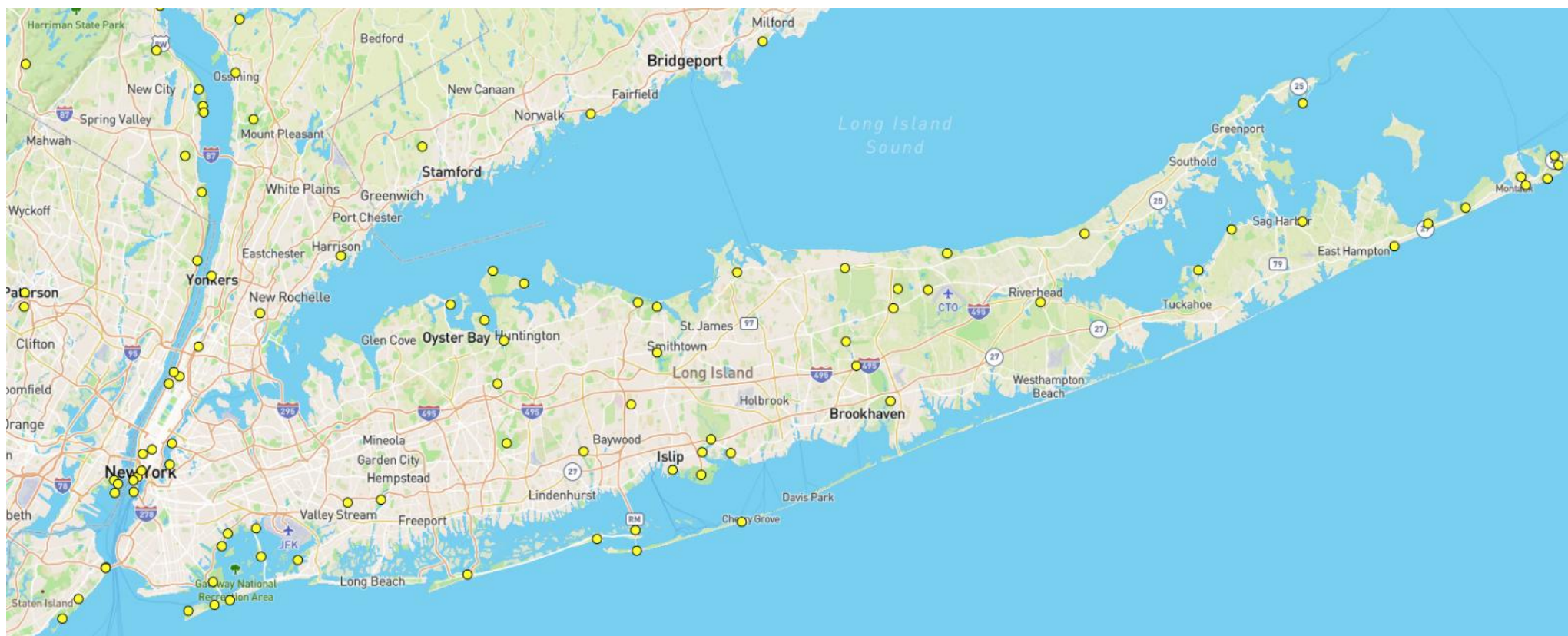
Activators – Park Selection

- Go to POTA site <https://pota.app>
- Pick a park!
- The yellow dots are park locations in your area

  Park List

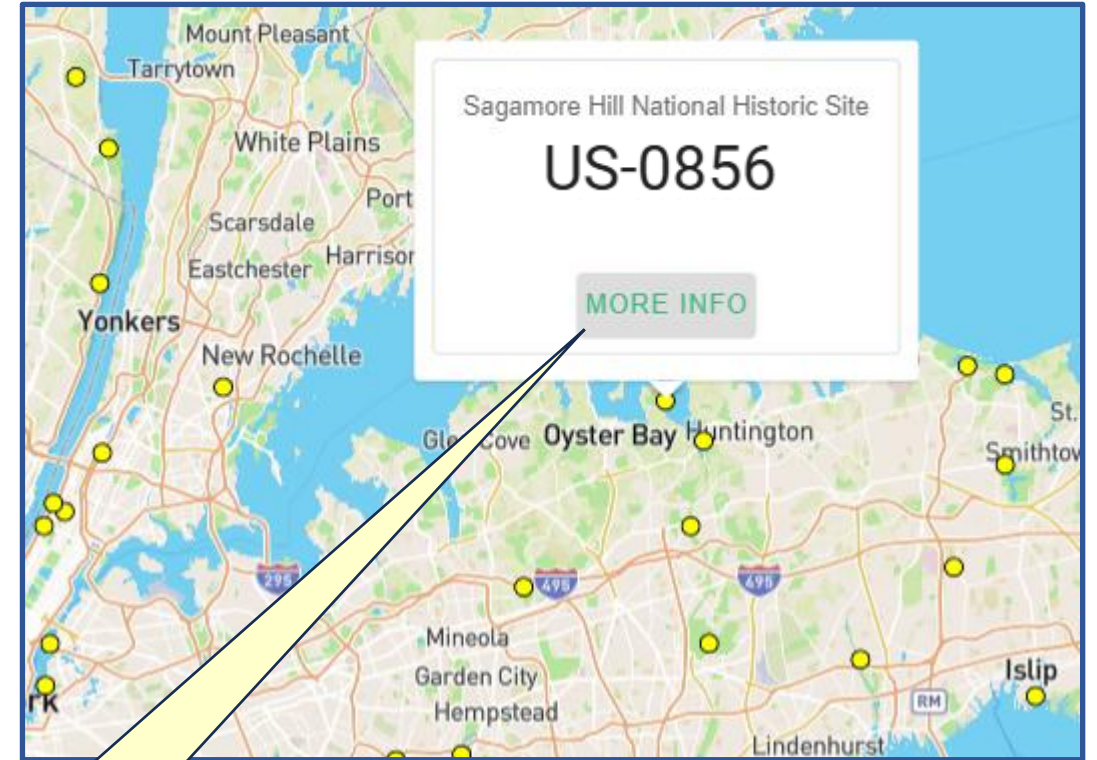
  United States of America 12222

 New York (US-NY) 849



Activators – Pick A Park

- You can search / move around the map for other locations
- Click on yellow dots for park information
- Once you chose a park, consider surveying the park in advance
 - Quiet spot
 - Close parking
 - Park bench
 - Restrooms, etc.


















Click
More Info

Sagamore Hill National Historic Site







Reference:	US-0856
Entity:	United States of America
Location(s):	US-NY
Latitude / Longitude:	40.8855, -73.4896 (FN30gv)
Early Shift Award Times:	7:00 UTC to 13:00 UTC
Late Shift Award Times:	23:00 UTC to 7:00 UTC
Website:	https://www.nps.gov/sahi/index.htm
Is Active?	ACTIVE
First Activation:	KC2SYF on 2016-04-08
Stats:	83 activations / 86 attempts (4058 QSOs)

Park Leaders

	Activations		Activator QSOs		Hunter QSOs	
1.	 N2NFG	15	 K2JVB	1557	 KJ7DT	15
2.	 N2AKJ	10	 N2NFG	505	 K4ARQ	14
3.	 K2JVB	10	 N2AKJ	388	 AD2MM	12
4.	 W2SMF	9	 W2SMF	311	 F4ILH	12
5.	 K2FI	2	 W2AMA	108	 WX4TW	11



Activations

Date	Callsign	CW	Data	Phone	Total QSOs
2025-11-23	 WA2DE	0	0	20	20
2025-09-04	 KD2UZT	0	0	23	23
2025-08-02	 K2JVB	161	0	0	161
2025-07-20	 WA2BAH	0	0	19	19
2025-07-17	 N2OCK	0	34	0	34
2025-06-22	 K2JVB	161	0	0	161

Sagamore Hill National Historic Site

Reference: US-0856

Entity: United States of America

Location(s): US-NY

Latitude / Longitude: 40.8855, -73.4896 (FN30gv)

Early Shift Award Times: 7:00 UTC to 13:00 UTC

Late Shift Award Times: 23:00 UTC to 7:00 UTC

Website: <https://www.nps.gov/sahi/index.htm>

Is Active? ACTIVE
















First Activation:  KC2SYF on 2016-04-08

Stats: 83 activations / 86 attempts (4058 QSOs)

Sagamore Hill National Historic Site







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Entity:	United States of America
Location(s):	US-NY
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Park Leaders
















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2025-07-17	 N2OCK	0	34	0	34
2025-06-22	 K2JVB	161	0	0	161
















Park Leaders

	Activations		Activator QSOs		Hunter QSOs	
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Park Leaders







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Activations

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Sagamore Hill National Historic Site







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2025-07-17	 N2OCK	0	34	0	34
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Activators – Getting Started

- Once you've chosen a location in the park
 - Set up your gear
 - Be cognizant of your surroundings
 - aka children running into your radials or coax
 - Set your logging program
 - Find a quiet frequency
 - Start calling CQ POTA!

Activators – Spotting

- Before starting your initial CQ calls, consider going to <https://pota.app> to Spot yourself
- Once spotted the *Hunters* will pounce, so be prepared to start logging your QSOs!



Add Spot

Activator Callsign
AH20

Spotter Callsign
AH20

Frequency (kHz)
14320

Park Reference
US-0856
Sagamore Hill National Historic Site

Comments
Sagamore Hill National Historic Site

Wrong mode? Mention a mode in the Comments field to change the mode for this spot (e.g. "QSY CW", "RTTY" or "Switching to FT8").

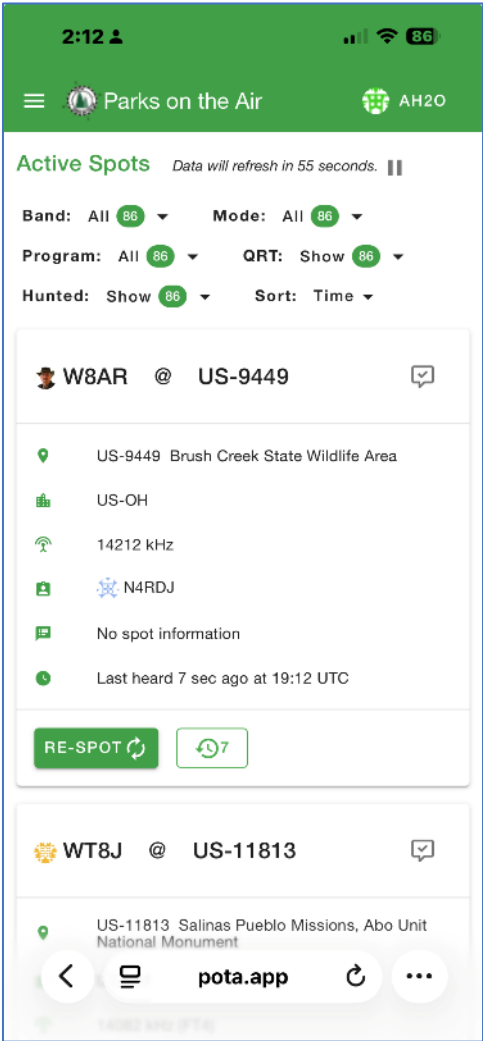
Mention QRT if this activator is no longer on the air to mark this spot as finished.

This spot will be **marked hunted** for this band and mode.

CANCEL

SPOT

POTA.app website added to my iPhone home screen







Activator – Self Spotting in Advance



Add Activation

Callsign
AH20 ▼ **Reference**
Example: US-1234

 Start Date (UTC)  Start Time (UTC)

 End Date (UTC)  End Time (UTC)

Frequency

Comments

CANCEL SAVE

- You can “spot yourself in advance” before traveling to the park
- Upside: Good if there is no cell service within the park to self spot
- Downside – what if you’re late, or the frequency is occupied?

Activator – Spotting - Reverse Beacon Network (RBN)

- Networked skimmers constantly monitor CW and FT8 activities
- Skimmers detect your callsign when you call CQ
- POTA has its RBN gateway set to pick up that information and update the POTA spot page automatically for registered and currently spotted activations

Activator – SSB Exchanges

- Typical formulated SSB exchange
 - Activator: CQ Parks on the Air, CQ Parks on the Air, this is AH2O (*phonetically*)
 - Hunter: W1AW (*phonetically*)
 - Activator: W1AW you are (RS) Park #####
 - Hunter: You are (RS) CT
 - Activator: Thank you, this is AH2O POTA

Activator – CW Exchanges

- Typical formulated CW exchange
 - Activator: CQ CQ POTA DE AH2O AH2O
 - Hunter: W1AW
 - Activator: W1AW UR (RST) (STATE) BK
 - Hunter: BK TU (RST) CT BK
 - Activator: BK TU CT 73 (72) DIT DIT
 - Hunter: DIT DIT

- Park-to-Park
 -
 - Hunter: P2P W1AW
 - Activator: P2P UR (RST) Park ##### BK
 - Hunter: BK DE W1AW (RST) Park ##### BK
 -
 -

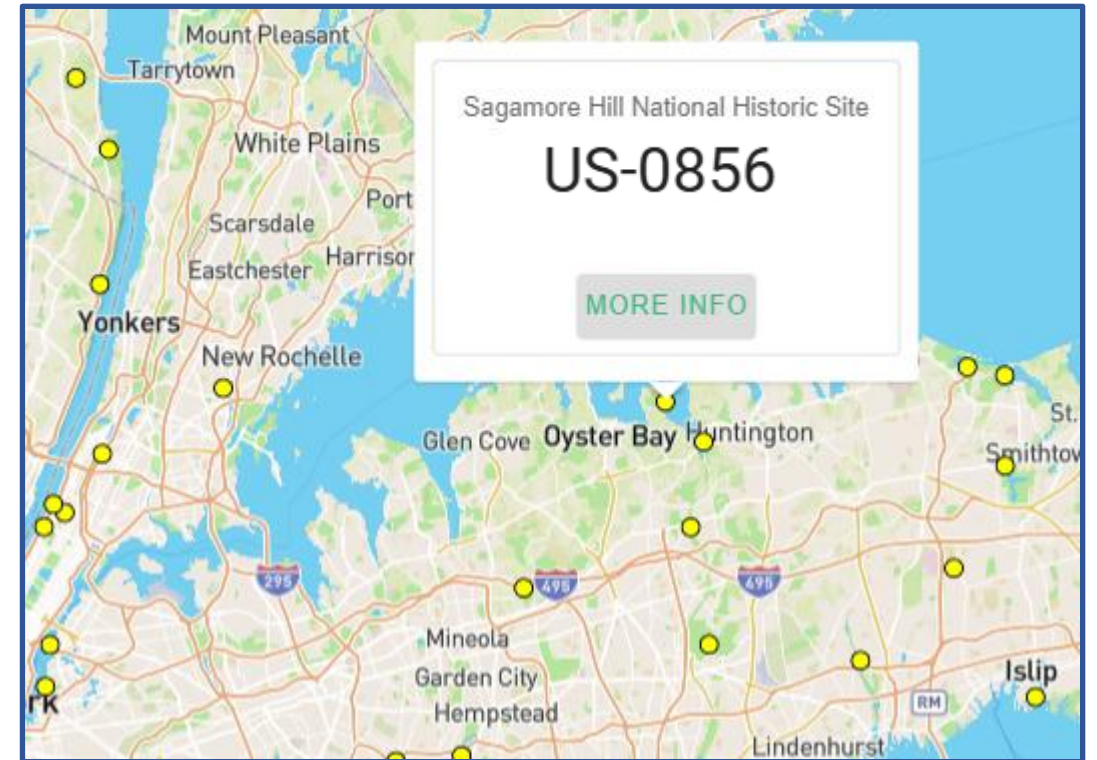
- Typical formulated CW exchange (**with Courtesies**)
 - Activator: CQ CQ POTA DE AH2O AH2O
 - Hunter: W1AW
 - Activator: W1AW (**GM, GA, GE**) UR (RST) BK
 - Hunter: BK TU UR (RST) CT CT BK
 - Activator: BK TU 73 (72) DE AH2O DIT DIT
 - Hunter: DIT DIT

Activator Logging

- POTA requires *Activators* to submit log
 - This is the only way *Activators* and *Hunters* get credit!
- Upload all logs, even if you make less than 10 QSOs
 - *Hunters* will still get credit
- No time limits for submission
 - However, be courteous to *Hunters*
- One log can span multiple days if you are at the same park
- Can be manually upload to POTA website if using paper logs

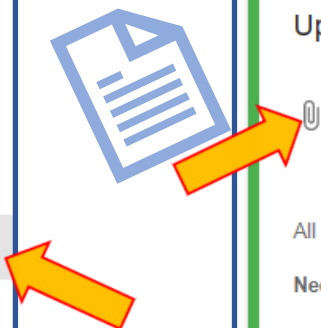
Activators – Submitting Your Log

- Log files in ADIF format
- Use any logging program of your choosing
- Required ADIF fields
 - STATION_CALLSIGN (Activator Callsign)
 - CALL (Hunter Callsign)
 - QSO_DATE
 - TIME_ON
 - BAND
 - MODE
- File naming convention standards
 - **CALLSIGN**@PARK#-yyyymmdd.adi
 - An example using one of my activations:
 - **AH2O**@US-8056-20241214.adi




Activators – Submitting Your Log, Continued


- Go to <https://pota.app>, then “My Log Uploads”
- Drag and drop ADIF log
- You get immediate “processed” confirmation
- That’s it!



← ↻ 🏠 🔒 <https://pota.app/#/user/logs>


☰  My Log Uploads 🔍 Search for Callsigns & Parks ▼

Upload Activation Logs

 Click here or drag and drop to upload ADIF logs from your activation

All files must be compliant with the ADIF specification, see <https://adif.org>. Please refer to the [ADIF for POTA Technical Reference](#) for a list of required ADIF fields.

Need help? See the [Submitting Logs](#) section of the POTA Activator Reference or contact the support team by clicking the Request Support button.

Prefer to log on paper?  MANUAL LOG ENTRY^{BETA}

Processed	2021-10-24 20:10	2021-10-24 20:10	AH20	K-0856 Sagamore Hill National Historic Site (US-NY)
-----------	------------------	------------------	------	---

A Few of My POTA Activations



Lodi Point State Park, NY
(Finger Lakes)
[US-2098](#)



Target Rock National Wildlife Refuge, NY
[US-0480](#)



Caumsett State Historical Park, NY
[US-8628](#)

A Few of My POTA Activations



Taughannock Falls, NY
(Finger Lakes)
[US-2150](#)



Valley Forge National Historic Park, PA
[US-0761](#)



Trail View State Park, NY
[US-2152](#)

My Gear



Remember

My POTA Gear – How I Started



Yaesu FT-891 (QRO)

2 x 6 x 8.6"

Wt: 4 lbs



RG8X Coax

50 ft



Wolf River Coil

Take It Along 1000

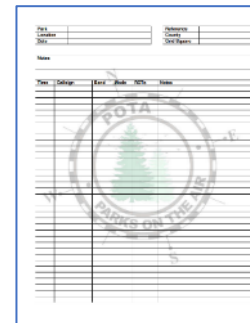
80 to 10m

Collapsible 102" Whip

Three 33' radials

Footprint: 19" x 17"

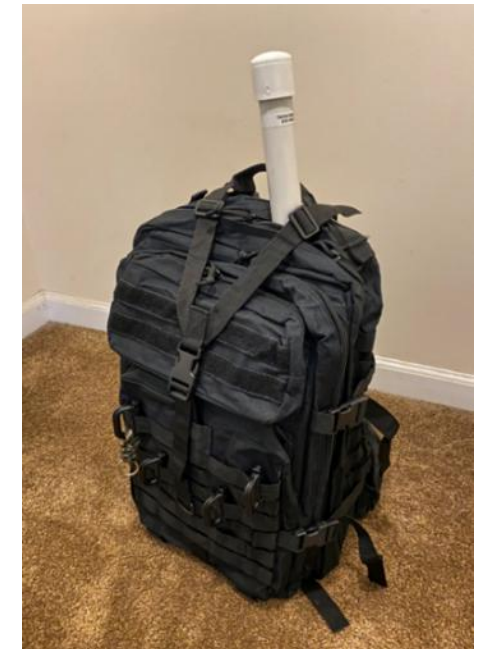
Wt: 3 lb 5 oz



Paper Log



Bioenno Power
12V, 12Ah Battery
8.5 x 2.2 x 3.1"
Wt: 3.3 lbs



Backpack
17.1 x 12.6 x 2.2"
Wt: 3 lbs

My POTA Gear - Today



Yaesu FT-891 (QRO)
2 x 6 x 8.6"
Wt: 4 lbs



Powerwerx Watt Meter
DC Inline Power Analyzer,
WattMeter
3.3 x 1.7 x 1.0"
Wt: 0.18 lbs



Bioenno Power
12V, 12Ah Battery
8.5 x 2.2 x 3.1"
Wt: 3.3 lbs



**Anderson 1 to 4
Cable Splitter**



RG8X Coax
50 ft



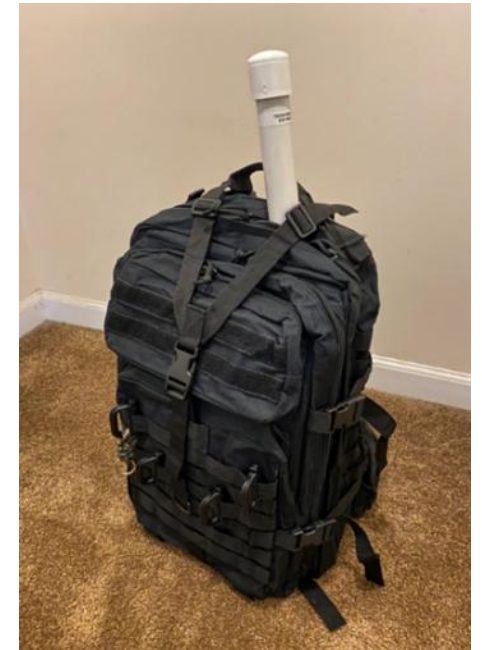
**Antenna
Tuner**



Wolf River Coil
Take It Along 1000
80 to 10m
Collapsible 102" Whip
Three 33' radials
Footprint: 19" x 17"
Wt: 3 lb 5 oz



iPad w/ Keyboard
(**HAMRS** Logging SW)



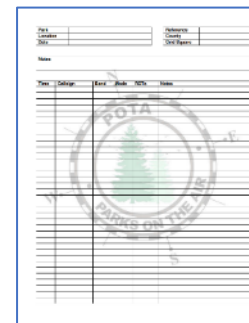
Backpack
17.1 x 12.6 x 2.2"
Wt: 3 lbs



**Antenna
Analyzer**



EFHW



Paper Log
"Just in Case"



My POTA Gear – CW, FT8, FT4



Yaesu FT-891 (QRO)
2 x 6 x 8.6"
Wt: 4 lbs



CAT Cable



Mini Paddle



Audio Interface
Cable



USB External
Stereo Sound
Adapter



Laptop
Logging SW: N3FJP / N1MM
WSJT-X
JTAlert

Many Antenna Options

- Numerous options to choose from:
 - Freestanding tripod
 - Wire Antenna
 - Mobile – Mounted to your car
 - Telescoping masts
 - Drive over mast holders
 - etc....



My Park Antennas

Freestanding Tripod



Wolf River Coil

Take It Along 1000

80 to 10m

Collapsible 102" Whip

Three 33' radials

Footprint: 19" x 17"

Wt: 3 lb 5 oz



End-Fed Half-Wave

Spark Plug EFHW- 100W

Coax - 25' of RG-17 4/u

Antenna Wire - 68' of 24 AWG PVC jacketed tinned copper wire.

Wire Winder:

Wt: 8 oz



Rope



Bungee Cords



S-Clips

My Mobile Antennas

Mobile

Shark "Ham Stick" Antennas

**10, 15, 20, 40, 75m Mono Band Mobile
Vertical Antennas**

Rated for 250W



Quick Disconnects



Magnet Mount

Safety

Use AI to Improve the Readability of Weak Beacons | 30

QST



ARRL The National Association for
Amateur Radio®
October 2025 www.arrl.org
DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO AMATEUR RADIO

DIGITAL EDITION

Parks on the Air, In the Air



QST Reviews

Alinco DR-CS10HT 2-Meter
FM Transceiver

APC Schneider Electric
Pro BN1500M2 UPS

CyberPower CP1500PFCLCD UPS

Tripp-Lite SMART1500PSGLCD
UPS

Public Service

Safety Stand-Down: Look Up and Live

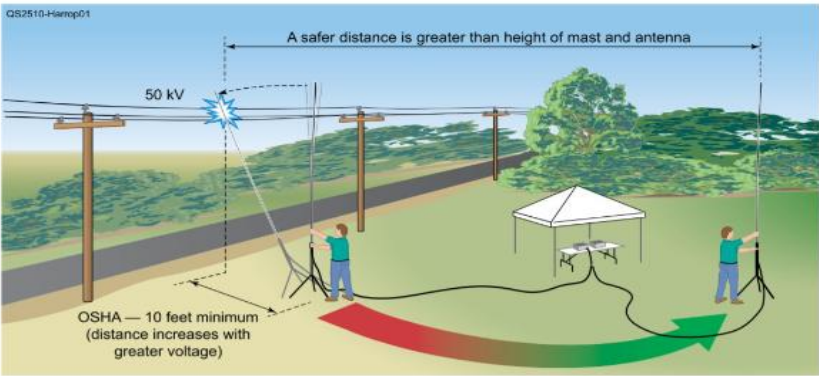


Figure 1 — OSHA regulations state that 10 feet is the minimum safe distance from any equipment, load line, or load to a power line carrying 50 kV or less (<https://osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.1408>). That doesn't mean you can just set up your mast and antenna 10 feet away and be safe; you want to be at least far enough that, while raising or lowering your mast and antenna, or if your rig falls over, no part of your equipment comes within 10 feet of any lines. And remember that this is a *minimum* safe distance, and that the minimum safe distance increases as the voltage in the lines increases — farther away is always better!

leave it unless it is on fire; if you touch the exterior of your vehicle with your feet on the ground, the electricity will use your body as a path to ground.

The ground outside of your vehicle can be just as dangerous. When an electrified object, such as a downed power line or an energized vehicle or antenna, contacts the ground, the electrical current spreads out in concentric circles of decreasing voltage from the point of contact, known as a voltage gradient. Being in contact with different voltages is what will kill you — if you walk normally across a voltage gradient, or fall and catch yourself with your hands, one part of your body will contact a higher voltage than the other, and the electrical current will use your body as a path to equalize the voltage.

Instead, call for help via phone or ham radio. Warn bystanders not to approach your vehicle. If a fire requires you to exit, carefully jump clear of the vehicle with your feet together to avoid contacting the vehicle and ground simultaneously. Be mindful of your movements; “bunny hop” with your feet together or shuffle across the ground in small increments, keeping your feet in constant contact, to avoid providing a path between the different potentials.

Please be careful when erecting portable gear near overhead wires. Remember: *Look up and live*.

Look Up and Live!

No ham radio activation is worth your life. Be aware of potential electrical hazards when operating in the field:

- **Walk around and look up.** Circle the perimeter of the area and search for any overhead lines or obstructions. There is no pressure to get on the air — take your time.
- **Maintain a safe distance from any overhead power lines.** OSHA regulations state that 10 feet is the minimum safe distance from any equipment, load line, or load to any power line carrying 50 kV or less, and this minimum safe distance increases with higher voltage; see OSHA 29 CFR § 1926.1408, Table A, for a list of minimum clearance distances by voltage (<https://osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.1408>). Note that this is a *minimum* safe distance — you want to be at least far enough that, should your mast topple over, none of your equipment comes within the minimum clearance distance of any lines. You're also not likely to know offhand the voltages of nearby power lines when operating in the field, so farther away is always better (see Figure 1).
- **Remember: any line could be energized.** Even what looks like a phone or fiber-optic line could be carrying lethal voltages. Don't take any chances.

My Activator Logging SW



Remember

My POTA Logging Software

- HAMRS
- A simple logger designed specifically for portable activities, like Parks on the Air (POTA), Summits on the Air (SOTA) Field Days, etc.
- Auto populates park Grid location
- Available in App Store



HAMRS 4+
Simple portable logging
Jarrett Green
Designed for iPad
#95 in Productivity
★★★★★ 4.3 • 52 Ratings
\$4.99

- Can log other Activations
“Park-to-Park”



3:19 PM Wed Jan 1

HAMRS Logbooks QSOs Settings Profile Help Enter Callsign

AH20@US-2114-20241031

QSOs 176

THEIR CALLSIGN

RST SENT

RST RCVD

FREQUENCY

 MHz

BAND

THEIR PARK

COMMENTS

POWER (W)

MODE

TIME

DATE

MY PARK

MY CALLSIGN


Entries 176

QSO Map


POTA Spots

DATE	CALLSIGN	RST ↑	RST ↓	STATE	FREQUENCY	BAND	MODE	THEIR PARK
19:48:48 2024-10-31	KD9YLJ	57	56		14.308	20m	SSB	<input type="radio"/>
19:48:18 2024-10-31	K1LLQ	57	59		14.308	20m	SSB	<input type="radio"/>
19:47:54 2024-10-31	N2NU0	59	59		14.308	20m	SSB	<input type="radio"/>
19:47:32 2024-10-31	KI5AX	52	55		14.308	20m	SSB	US-4424 <input type="radio"/>

3:38 PM Wed Dec 17









 Logbooks QSOs

Settings Profile ▾ Help ▾



Logbooks

+ New Logbook

TITLE	TEMPLATE	DATE CREATED	QSO #	
AH20@US-8090-20250807	Parks on the Air	8/08/25	15	
AH20@US-8082-20250807	Parks on the Air	8/08/25	11	
AH20@US-8084-20250807	Parks on the Air	8/08/25	13	
AH20@US-8085-20250807	Parks on the Air	8/08/25	10	
AH20@US-8086-20250807	Parks on the Air	8/08/25	13	
AH20@US-8081-20250807	Parks on the Air	8/08/25	12	
AH20@US-2114-20241031	Parks on the Air	10/31/24	176	
AH20@US-2114-20241013	Parks on the Air	10/13/24	119	

Select
"New Logbook"



Logbooks

[+ New Logbook](#)

TITLE	TEMPLATE	DATE CREATED	QSO #
AH20@US-8090-20250807	Parks on the Air	8/08/25	15
AH20@US-8082-20250807			11
AH20@US-8084-20250807			13
AH20@US-8085-20250807			10
AH20@US-8086-20250807			13
AH20@US-8081-20250807			12
AH20@US-2114-20241031			176
AH20@US-2114-20241013	Parks on the Air	10/13/24	119
AH20@K-0761-20230916	Parks on the Air	9/16/23	80
AH20@K-2114-20230827	Parks on the Air	8/27/23	108
AH20@K-2114-20230813	Parks on the Air	8/13/23	102
AH20@K-2114-20230811	Parks on the Air	8/11/23	102

New Logbook

TITLE

40m, POTA @ K-2336, etc

TEMPLATES

Enter Log Title



Logbooks

[+ New Logbook](#)

TITLE	TEMPLATE	DATE CREATED	QSO #
AH20@US-8090-20250807	Generic	8/08/25	15
AH20@US-8082-20250807	✓ Parks on the Air		11
AH20@US-8084-20250807	Summits on the Air		13
AH20@US-8085-20250807	Field Day		10
AH20@US-8086-20250807	Winter Field Day		13
AH20@US-8081-20250807			12
AH20@US-2114-20241031			176
AH20@US-2114-20241013	Parks on the Air	10/13/24	119
AH20@K-0761-20230916	Parks on the Air	9/16/23	80
AH20@K-2114-20230827	Parks on the Air	8/27/23	108
AH20@K-2114-20230813	Parks on the Air	8/13/23	102
AH20@K-2114-20230811	Parks on the Air	8/11/23	102

New Logbook

TITLE

AH20@US-08

40m, POTA @ K-2

TEMPLATES


Parks on the Air

Save


Cancel

Select
"Parks on "the Air"

3:31 PM Wed Dec 17

 Logbooks QSOs

Settings Profile ▾ Help ▾

Enter Callsign 

AH20@US-0856-20251210

QSOs 2

THEIR CALLSIGN

RST SENT

59

RST RCVD


59

THEIR PARK

Comma separated

COMMENTS

TIME

20:31:15 

DATE

2025-12-17

Clear

Save

FREQUENCY

14.275 MHz

BAND

20m ▾

POWER (W)

100

MODE

SSB ▾

MY PARK

US-0856

MY CALLSIGN

AH20

Enter Operating details only once, repeats for subsequent entries

Entries 2

QSO Map


POTA Spots

Call, Name, Park...


Clear

DATE	CALLSIGN	RST ↑	RST ↓	STATE	FREQUENCY	BAND	MODE	THEIR PARK	
20:29:54 2025-12-17	W1AW	59	59		14.275	20m	SSB		
20:29:50 2025-12-17	4U1UN	59	59	NY	14.275	20m	SSB		

3:31 PM Wed Dec 17

 Logbooks QSOs

Settings Profile ▾ Help ▾

Enter Callsign 

AH20@US-0856-20251210

QSOs 2

THEIR CALLSIGN

4U1WB

RST SENT

59

RST RCVD


59

THEIR PARK

Comma separated

COMMENTS

TIME

20:31:15 

DATE

2025-12-17

Clear

Save

FREQUENCY

14.275 MHz

BAND

20m

POWER (W)

100

MODE

SSB

MY PARK

US-0856

MY CALLSIGN

AH20

Entries 2

QSO Map

POTA Spots

Call, Name, Park...

Clear

DATE	CALLSIGN	RST ↑	RST ↓	STATE	FREQUENCY	BAND	MODE	THEIR PARK	
20:29:54 2025-12-17	W1AW	59	59		14.275	20m	SSB		
20:29:50 2025-12-17	4U1UN	59	59	NY	14.275	20m	SSB		

Type Callsign,
Hit Enter

Log populates,
Done

3:15 PM Wed Dec 17

[Logbooks](#)
[QSOs](#)

[Settings](#)
[Profile](#)
[Help](#)

AH20@US-2114-20241031	Parks on the Air	10/31/24	176	
AH20@US-2114-20241013	Parks on the Air	10/13/24	119	
AH20@K-0761-20230916	Parks on the Air	9/16/23	80	
AH20@K-2114-20230827	Parks on the Air	8/27/23	108	
AH20@K-2114-20230813	Parks on the Air	8/13/23	102	
AH20@K-2114-20230811	Parks on the Air	8/11/23	102	
AH20@K-2114-20230408	Parks on the Air	4/08/23	89	
AH20@K-0761-20230405	Parks on the Air	4/05/23	126	
AH20@K-2152-20230106	Parks on the Air	1/06/23	16	
AH20@K-0761-20221205	Parks on the Air	12/05/22	90	
AH20@K-2114-20221021	Parks on the Air	10/14/22	139	
AH20@K-2114-20220903	Parks on the Air	9/03/22	104	
AH20@K-8628-20220828	Parks on the Air	8/28/22	28	
AH20@K-2152-20220821	Parks on the Air	8/21/22	20	

- Edit
- Duplicate
- Export .ADI
- Delete

When finished,
export ADIF for
POTA upload

Upload ADIF to POTA

My Log Uploads

Search for Callsigns & Parks

SPOTSACTIVATIONSDOCSAH2O

Development Volunteer Opportunities open until Dec 15!

Upload Activation Logs

REQUEST SUPPORT

Click here or drag and drop to upload ADIF logs from your activation

0 files (0 B in total)

All files must be compliant with the ADIF specification, see <https://adif.org>. Please refer to the [ADIF for POTA Technical Reference](#) for a list of required ADIF fields.

Need help? See the [Submitting Logs](#) section of the POTA Activator Reference or contact the support team by clicking the Request Support button.

Prefer to log on paper? [MANUAL LOG ENTRY](#) BETA

Once your log is processed, it may take up to 24 hours for your logbook and stats to fully reflect your uploaded QSOs. Most awards are granted within a few days, but some awards may take a few weeks.

Thank you for being patient!

Uploaded Logs

Show All

Search

Status	Submitted ↓	Processed	Callsign	Park	First QSO	Last QSO	Log QSOs	Accepted QSOs	
Processed	2025-08-08 19:47	2025-08-08 19:48	AH2O	US-8090 Frank Charles Park National Recreation Area (US-NY)	2025-08-07 22:30	2025-08-07 22:42	15	15	▼
Processed	2025-08-08 19:47	2025-08-08 19:48	AH2O	US-8081 Floyd Bennett Field National Historic District (US-NY)	2025-08-07 20:16	2025-08-07 20:28	12	12	▼
Processed	2025-08-08 19:47	2025-08-08 19:48	AH2O	US-8082 Jamaica Bay State Wildlife Area (US-NY)	2025-08-07 02:20	2025-08-07 22:07	11	11	▼
Processed	2025-08-08 19:47	2025-08-08 19:48	AH2O	US-8084 Breezy Point Tip State Recreation Area (US-NY)	2025-08-07 21:22	2025-08-07 21:28	13	13	▼
Processed	2025-08-08 19:47	2025-08-08 19:48	AH2O	US-8085 Fort Tilden National Historic Site (US-NY)	2025-08-07 21:04	2025-08-07 21:10	10	10	▼
Processed	2025-08-08 19:47	2025-08-08 19:48	AH2O	US-8086 Jacob Riis Park National Historic Site (US-NY)	2025-08-07 20:44	2025-08-07 20:50	13	13	▼
Processed	2025-08-06 22:34	2025-08-06 22:35	AH2O	US-2152 Trail View State Park (US-NY)	2025-08-06 19:38	2025-08-06 20:10	19	19	▼

Drag & Drop



Ham2K Portable Logger

Reviewed by John Leonardelli, VE3IPS
 ve3ips@gmail.com

The portable logger (PoLo) by Ham2K is an exceptional logging tool designed for amateur radio enthusiasts participating in Parks on the Air® (POTA®), Summits on the Air (SOTA), World Wide Flora and Fauna (WWFF), and similar activities. Optimized for smartphones with data plans, it offers seamless on-the-go operation. Its standout feature is a clean, user-friendly interface, making logging quick and intuitive — even during fast-paced pileups. The app automatically updates its database, ensuring the latest park and summit information is readily available. This eliminates the need for manual updates and lets users focus entirely on their activities.

The Origin of PoLo

PoLo was created by Sebastian Delmont, KI2D, an active portable operator who sought a better solution after finding other loggers frustrating or limited. Initially a personal project to meet his needs, PoLo evolved through feedback from a highly engaged user community. With its open-source, modular design, PoLo empowers users to customize and improve the app to suit their preferences. Active forum discussions and feature requests further underscore its strong user base and commitment to continuous improvement.

In the early days of portable operations, I relied on the ARRL MINILOG and a pencil. Transferring paper logs to a PC logger, however, was tedious. To simplify this, I tried going paperless with a laptop in the field. Over time, I experimented with various setups:

Bottom Line

The Ham2K PoLo is one of the fastest and easiest ways to log your amateur radio operations on the go.

- Laptops: large, heavy, and difficult to use inside a car, even with a steering wheel desk.

- Netbooks: compact but slow, with screens that were hard to read in sunlight.

- Tablets (Android and Apple): lightweight, but pen inputs were finicky, and adding a Bluetooth keyboard negated portability.

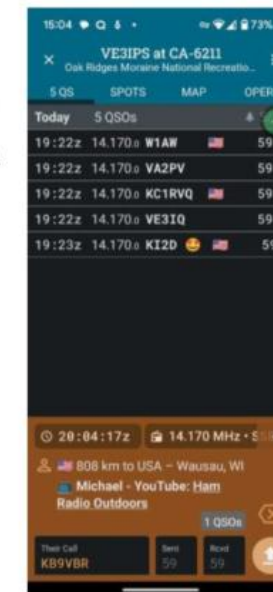
- Power banks: essential for extended sessions but added complexity.

The constant juggling of devices, cables, and hotspots made field logging cumbersome. A notebook failure that resulted in the loss of 6-meter sporadic-E logs forced me to seek a better solution. For an upcoming DXpedition, I needed a reliable, lightweight, and intuitive solution. Using a laptop in 40°C heat wasn't practical, and I wanted dependable QRZ lookups to verify call signs during pileups. After frustrations with other Android logging apps, I discovered PoLo.

Use Smartphones for Portable Logging

Today's smartphones offer better speed, portability, and internet access than older netbooks, making them ideal for logging. With a smartphone-based logger like PoLo, I can:

- Easily input call signs with live lookups.
- Send log files to my email for backup and uploads.



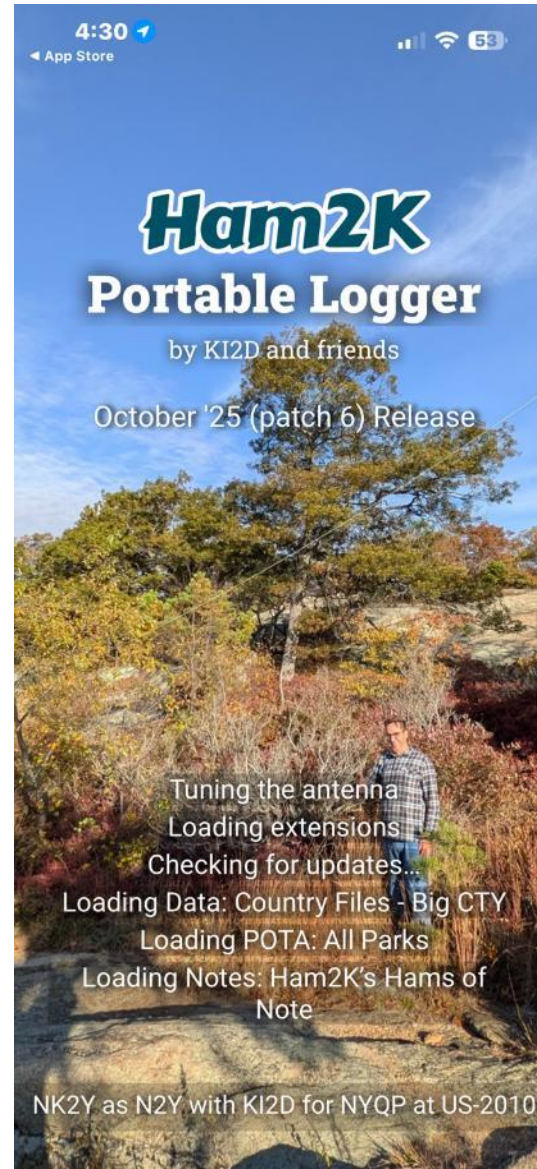
Ham2K Portable Logger - Smartphones

- Ham2K
- A simple logger designed specifically for Smartphones

- Available in App Store



Ham2K Portable Logger
Amateur Radio Logging



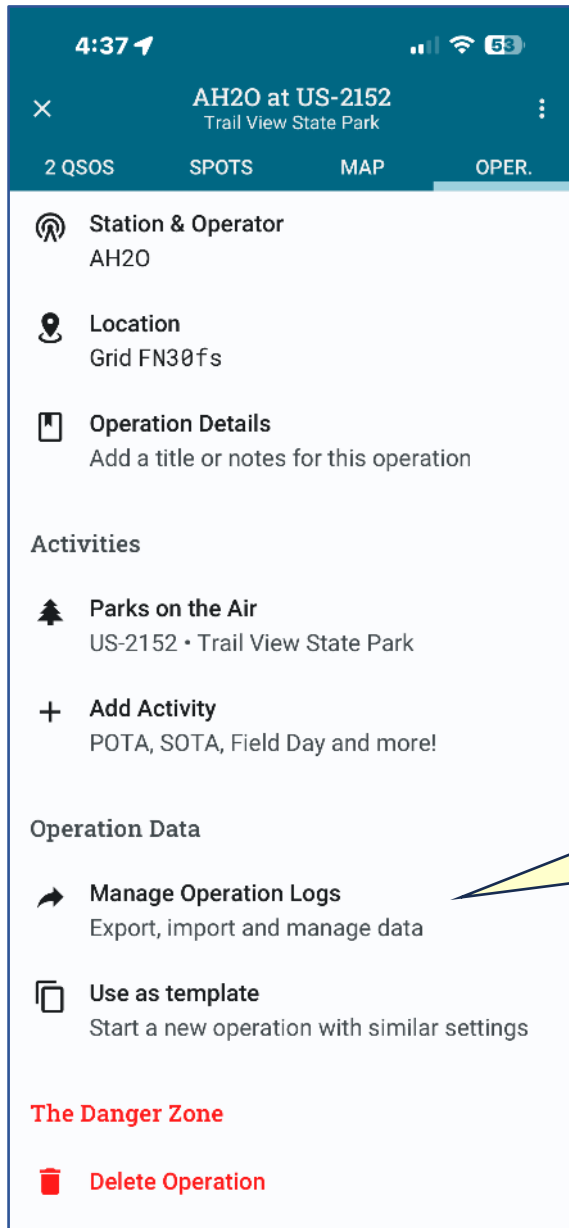
Log
Populates

Type
Callsign,
Enter

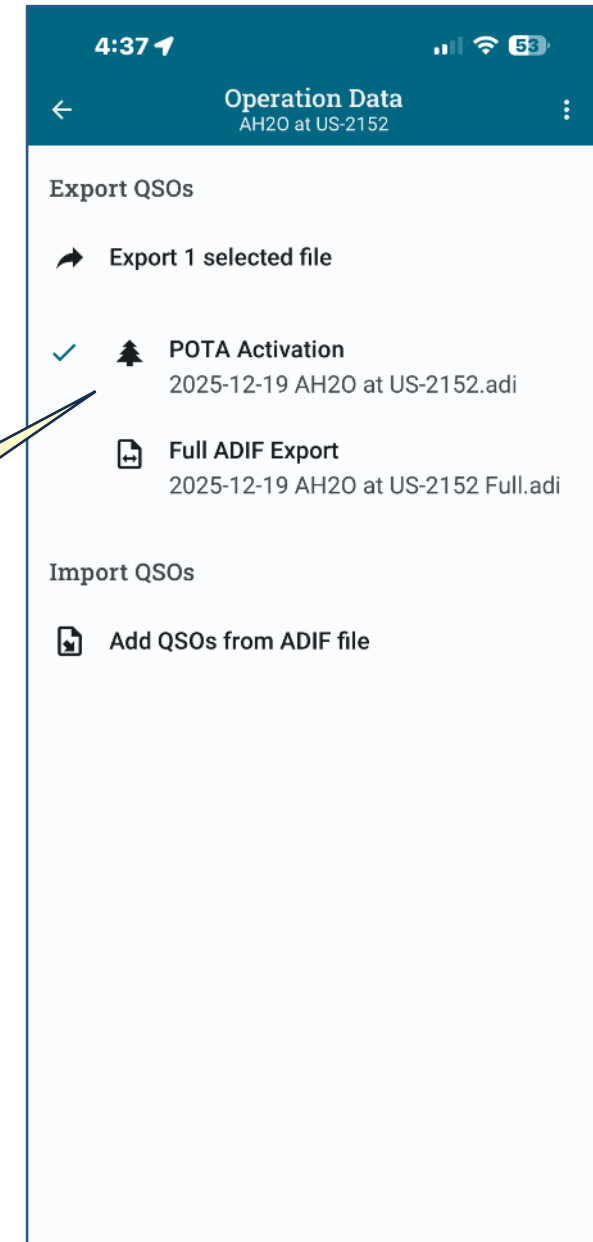
Numbers
& letters
on same
screen!

The app's main interface, showing a dark blue header with the time '4:36' and a back arrow. The title 'AH20 at US-2152' and subtitle 'Trail View State Park' are displayed. Below the title are tabs for '2 QSOS', 'SPOTS', 'MAP', and 'OPER.'. The '2 QSOS' tab is selected, showing a table with two rows of log entries. The first row shows '21:36z', '20m', 'W1AW', 'CT', 'ARR...', '59', and '59'. The second row shows '21:36z', '20m', '4U1UN', a blue square icon, and '59', '59'. Below the table is a section for the current log entry, showing '21:36:36z', '20m • USB', and 'P2P'. Below this is a section for the current log entry, showing '2 QSOS in 22s • 6s since last'. Below this is a section for the current log entry, showing 'Their Call', 'Sent', 'Rcvd', and 'State'. Below this is a numeric keypad with digits 1-0 and a decimal point. Below the numeric keypad is a QWERTY keyboard. Below the keyboard is a '123' button, a 'space' button, and a 'send' button. At the bottom are a smiley face icon and a microphone icon.

Ham2K Portable Logger

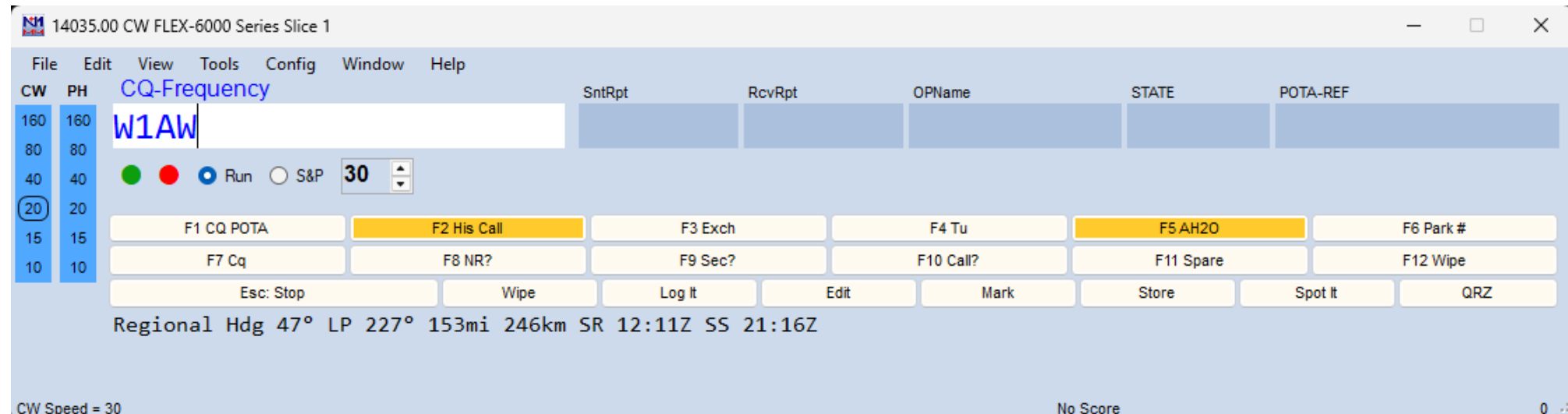


When finished,
export ADIF for
POTA upload

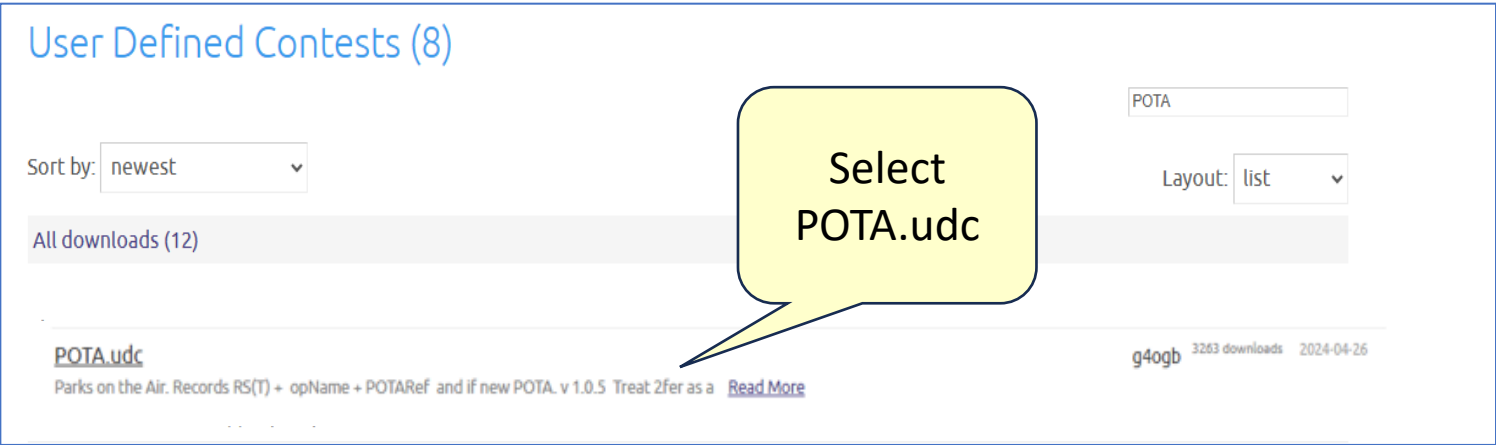
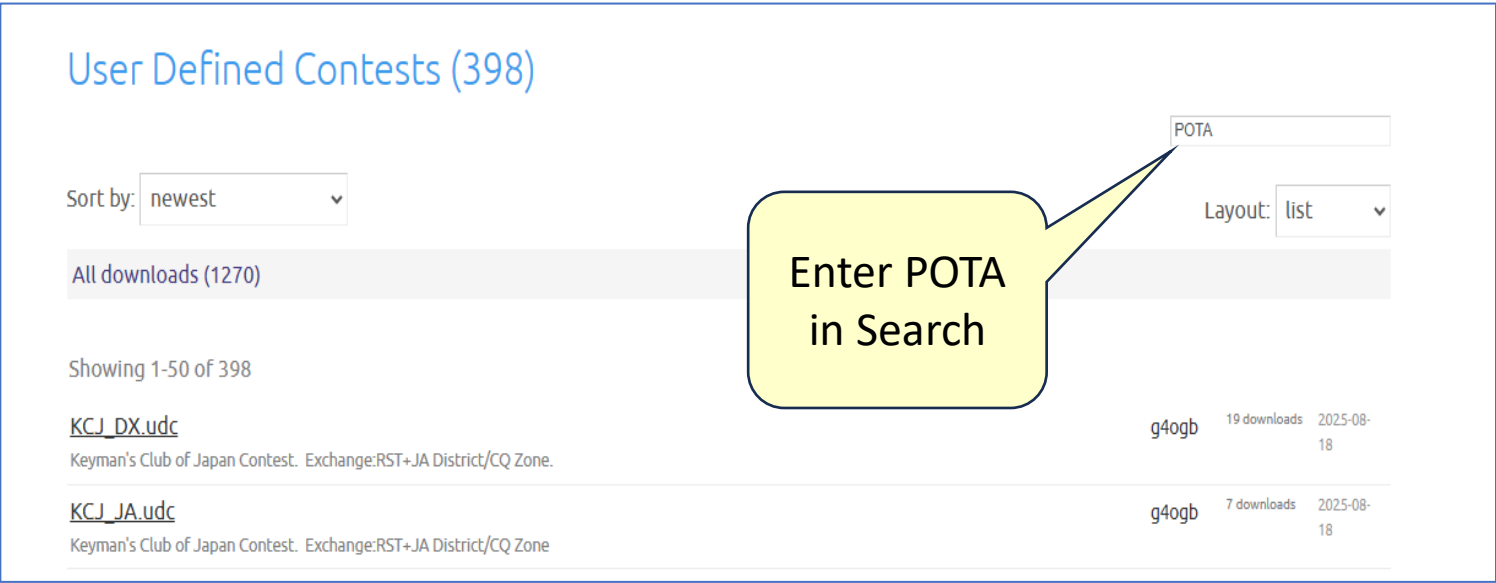
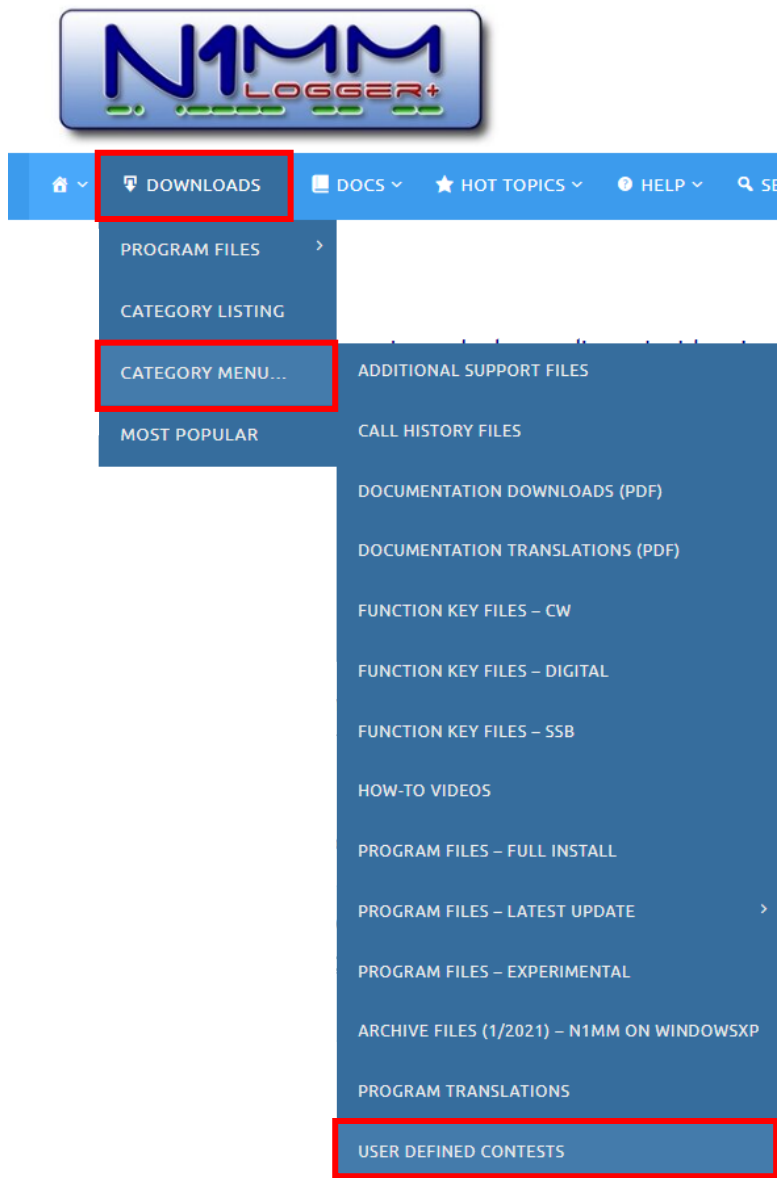


N1MM – User Defined Contest (UDC)

- A N1MM POTA User Defined Contest (UDC) is a custom-made configuration file for POTA activations - Download from N1MM
- Custom N1MM entry fields for callsigns, exchanges (like park number/signal report), and logging fields needed
- Helps to generate POTA logs for submission.
- Detailed instruction in N1MM Manual
 - <https://n1mmwp.hamdocs.com/manual-supported/contests-setup/setup-udc-contests/>



N1MM – User Defined Contest (UDC) – Installation Summary



N1MM – User Defined Contest (UDC) – Installation Summary

POTA.udc

Download Info

Author: [g4ogb](#)
File size: 2.66 kB
Downloads: 3263
Updated: 2024-04-26
Categories: [User Defined Contests](#)

Download

Download

Description

Parks on the Air. Records RS(T) + opName + POTARef and if new POTA. v 1.0.5
Treat 2fer as a Rover. Self Spot enabled. v1.0.7 Misc used to replace Comment.

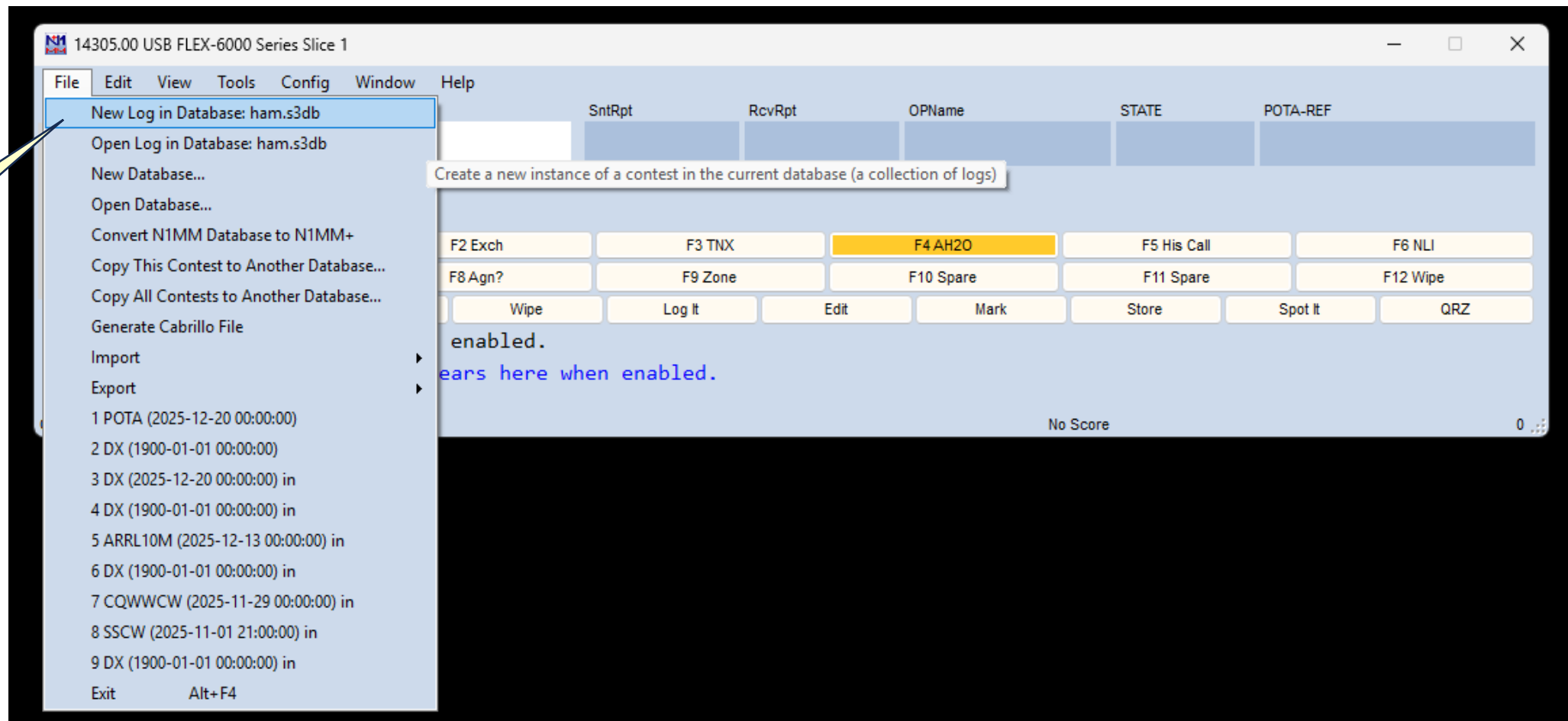
Downloads

POTA (1).udc
[Open file](#)

Documents > N1MM Logger+ >				
Sort View ...				
Name	Date modified	Type	Size	
CallHistoryFiles	9/30/2024 19:30	File folder		
Databases	12/21/2025 20:19	File folder		
Diagnostics	3/24/2017 13:07	File folder		
ExportFiles	9/30/2024 19:30	File folder		
FunctionKeyMessages	2/2/2025 22:28	File folder		
GoalFiles	3/24/2017 13:07	File folder		
Old File from N1MM Logger root directory	12/21/2025 19:39	File folder		
Piper	12/21/2025 20:12	File folder		
PiperModelFiles	12/21/2025 20:12	File folder		
QsoRecording	3/24/2017 13:07	File folder		
SkinsAndLayouts	9/30/2024 19:30	File folder		
SupportFiles	12/21/2025 20:19	File folder		
SystemFiles	12/21/2025 20:19	File folder		
UserDefinedContests	12/21/2025 20:19	File folder		
Wav	12/21/2025 20:12	File folder		
LogError.txt	12/21/2025 20:21	Text Document	1 KB	
N1MM Logger.ini	12/21/2025 20:21	Configuration sett...	10 KB	
n1mm logger.ini.Sunday.bak	12/21/2025 19:39	BAK File	10 KB	
realtimescorereport.ini	12/21/2025 20:12	Configuration sett...	1 KB	

Copy to
this folder

N1MM – User Defined Contest (UDC) – Installation Summary



N1MM – User Defined Contest (UDC) – Installation Summary

Select Contest Type for New Log

Log Type	POTA	Parks on the Air
Start Date	NAQPSSB	North American QSO Parties - SSB
	NAVAL	International Naval contest
	NPOTA-HOME	NPOTA-Home
	NRAU10M	Nordic Radio Amateur Union-Baltic - 10 meters
	NRAUCW	Nordic Radio Amateur Union-Baltic - CW
	NRAUSSB	Nordic Radio Amateur Union-Baltic - SSB
	NRRLFYLKE	Norwegian Radio RL - FYLKE
	NRRLNFD	NRRL Fieldday
Total num	NRRLVINTER	Norwegian Radio RL - Winter
Contest	NSRTTYDUPE	NS RTTY with Same-Band Dupes Allowed
Ass	OCEANIACW	Oceania DX CW
	OCEANIASSB	Oceania DX SSB
Po	OKDXRTTY	Czech Amateur Radio, OKDX RTTY
	OKOMDX	Czech and Slovak Republics DX
Categ	PABEKERCW	Netherlands - PABEKER CW
	PABEKERSB	Netherlands - PABEKER SSB
Oper	PACC	Netherlands - PACC
	PORTUGAL	Portugal Day contest
B	POTA	Parks on the Air
Po	POTA-VE3FP	Parks on the Air
	QSOPARTY	QSO Parties (US and Canada)
M	RAC	RAC Canada Day and RAC Canada Winter contest
	RAEM	RAEM (E.T.Krenkel contest)
Ove	RCCCUP	RCC Cup
	RDAC	Russian District Award Contest
Sta	REFCW	French REF DX contest - CW
	REFSSB	French REF DX contest - SSB
Assis	REGIOVHF	WANLC, VRZA - Netherland Locator Contest
	RFCCW	Cup of the Russian Federation - CW
Transm	RFCDIGI	Russian Federation Digital contest
	RFCHAMPBW	Russian Federation (only) RF Championship CW
Sent Excha	RFCHAMPSSB	Russian Federation (only) RF Championship SSB
	RFSSB	Cup of the Russian Federation - SSB
Opera	ROPOCO	RSGB ROLO
	RRCW	ARRL Rookie Roundup - CW
Soap	RRRTTY	ARRL Rookie Roundup - RTTY
	RRSSB	ARRL Rookie Roundup - SSB
	RRTC	Russian Radiosport Team Championship

Select POTA
from listing

N1MM – User Defined Contest (UDC) – POTA Entry Window

14035.00 CW

File Edit View Tools Config Window Help

CW PH CQ-Frequency SntRpt RcvRpt OPName STATE POTA-REF

160 160
80 80
40 40
20 20
15 15
10 10

W1AW

Run S&P 30

F1 CQ POTA F2 His Call F3 Exch F4 Tu F5 AH20 F6 Park #

F7 Cq F8 NR? F9 Sec? F10 Call? F11 Spare F12 Wipe

Esc: Stop Wipe Log It Edit Mark Store Spot It QRZ

Regional Hdg 47° LP 227° 153mi 246km SR 12:11Z SS 21:16Z

CW Speed = 30 No Score 0











Configure Function Keys



Awards

- Shows your progress towards certificates and awards based on the logs that *Activators* you contacted submit
 - As a *Hunter* no logs submittals required

Earned Awards

Date First Granted	Award Name	Description
2025-08-07 00:00	Rover Warthog 	Activating 5 parks in a single UTC day
2025-03-07 14:34	Kilo 	1000 QSOs from the same entity as an activator
2025-01-04 18:58	Echinacea Paradoxa Hunter 	Working 1500 different units
2024-02-04 21:55	Worked All States 	Working 50 states / Dist of Columbia
2024-02-04 02:02	Oasis Hunter 	Worked a single entity 20 times
2024-02-04 02:02	Oasis Hunter 	Worked a single entity 20 times
2024-02-04 02:02	Oasis Hunter 	Worked a single entity 20 times
2024-02-04 02:02	Oasis Hunter 	Worked a single entity 20 times
2023-12-30 22:54	Western Prairie Fringed Orchid Hunter 	Working 1000 different units
2023-12-22 02:17	Rafflesia Flower Hunter 	Working 900 different units





Activator - 1,000 QSOs From One Park



Hunter – Worked All States

Glandularia Tampensis



That
Dennis Boye
AH2O

has submitted proof of working
2000 unique reference areas
in the Parks on the Air program,
this certificate is hereby
presented in recognition of this
outstanding achievement.

Jason Johnston, W3AAX, POTA Coordinator

01/02/2026

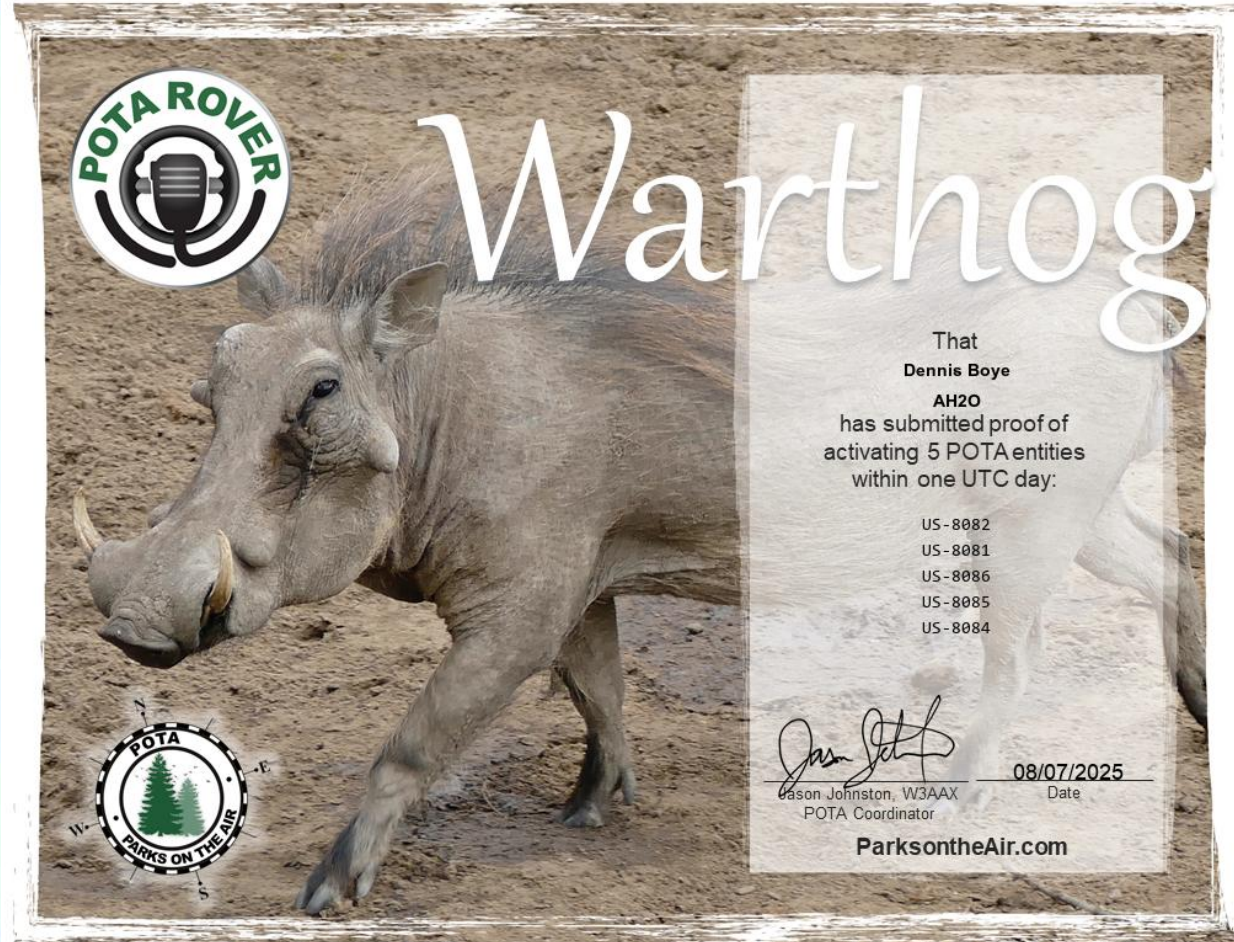
Date

2000

Hunter Award

Photo: Public Domain

Hunter – Worked Over 2,000 Different Parks



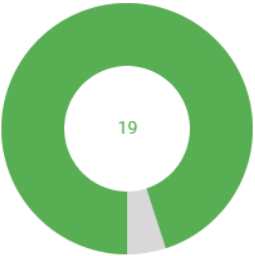
Activator – 5 Parks in One Day

Awards Metrics

Awards are updated daily and it may take a day or two for you to get full credit for uploaded logs. Hunters do not receive credit until the activator's log is processed.

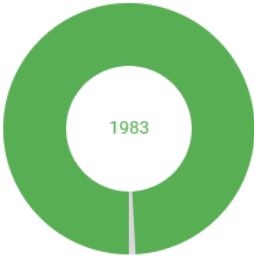
For awards that can be earned multiple times, 'Date First Granted' is the first date the award was earned, not when when upgrades, endorsements, etc. were earned.

Parks Activated



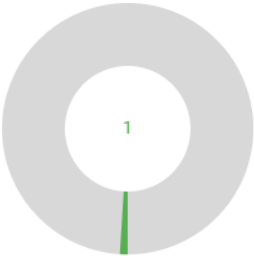
Next award at 20 unique parks.

Parks Hunted



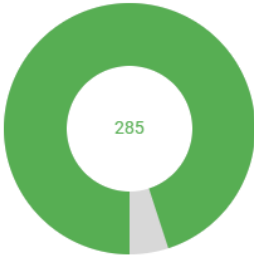
Next award at 2000 unique parks.

Late Shift Activator Contacts



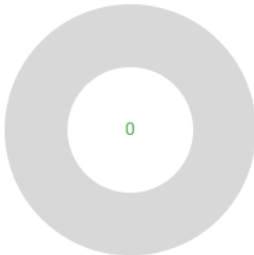
Next award at 100 late shift QSOs.

Late Shift Hunter Contacts



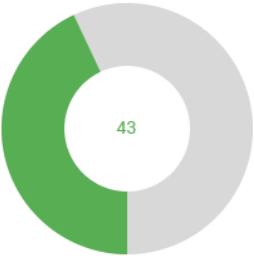
Next award at 300 late shift QSOs.

Early Shift Activator Contact
s



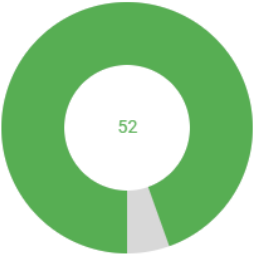
Next award at 100 early shift QSOs.

Early Shift Hunter Contacts



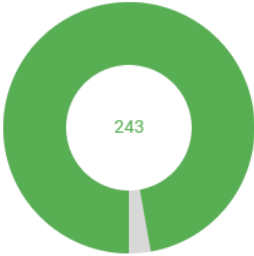
Next award at 100 early shift QSOs.

Entities Hunted



Next award at 55 unique entities.

Park 2 Park



Next award at 250 park-to-park QSOs.

Awards Metrics

Next award at 55 unique entities.

Next award at 250 park-to-park QSOs.

Activated US States

AK	AL	AR	AZ	CA	CO	CT	DC	DE	FL	GA	HI	IA	ID	IL	IN	KS	KY	LA	MA	MD
ME	MI	MN	MO	MS	MT	NC	ND	NE	NH	NJ	NM	NV	NY	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD
TN	TX	UT	VA	VT	WA	WI	WV	WY												

Activate a park in 50 states (DC is a wildcard) to earn this award.

Hunted US States

AK	AL	AR	AZ	CA	CO	CT	DC	DE	FL	GA	HI	IA	ID	IL	IN	KS	KY	LA	MA	MD
ME	MI	MN	MO	MS	MT	NC	ND	NE	NH	NJ	NM	NV	NY	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD
TN	TX	UT	VA	VT	WA	WI	WV	WY												

Hunt a park in 50 states (DC is a wildcard) to earn this award.

Activated All References

Location	Progress ↓
New York (US-NY)	17 / 849
Pennsylvania (US-PA)	1 / 490
Rows per page: 10 1-2 of 2 < >	

Activate all of the parks in a state/province/region to earn this award.

Hunted All References

Location	Progress ↓
Wake Island (UM-W)	1 / 1
Sable Island (CA-SI)	1 / 1
St. Paul Island (CA-SP)	1 / 1
Galápagos (EC-W)	1 / 1
Bouvet Island (BV-BV)	1 / 1
Arkhabił Suqutřá (YE-SO)	1 / 1
Glorioso Islands (TF-GI)	1 / 1
Archipiélago Juan Fernández (CL-JF)	1 / 1
Easter Island (CL-EI)	1 / 1
Swains Island (AS-SI)	1 / 1
Rows per page: 10 1-10 of 130 < >	

Hunt all of the parks in a state/province/region to earn this award.

Kilo

Park	Contacts ↓
Nissequogue River State Park (US-2114)	1094
Valley Forge National Historical Park (US-0761)	293
Rows per page: 10 1-2 of 2 < >	

Have 1000 total contacts from a single park as an activator.

Special Events



POTA Official Events

- Currently POTA has 5 official events throughout the year

- New Year's Week

1. First full week of the new year	January 1-7, 2026
------------------------------------	-------------------

- Support Your Parks

2. Winter - 3rd Full Weekend of January	January 17-18, 2026
---	---------------------

3. Spring - 3rd Full Weekend of April	April 18-19, 2026
---------------------------------------	-------------------

4. Summer - 3rd Full Weekend of July	July 18-19, 2026
--------------------------------------	------------------

5. Autumn - 3rd Full Weekend of October	October 17-18, 2026
---	---------------------

Special Event Awards



Celebrating a new beginning

2025
Hunter

That
Dennis Boye
AH2O

has submitted proof of working a
Parks on the Air reference area during
the first week of 2025



Jason Johnston, W3AAX, POTA Coordinator

01/05/2022

Date

**SUPPORT
YOUR
PARKS
WEEKEND**



That
Dennis Boye
AH2O

has submitted proof of
activating Parks on the Air
entities during the weekend of
October 16-17, 2021 UTC.

AUTUMN 2021

ACTIVATOR AWARD



Jason Johnston, W3AAX, POTA Coordinator

10/19/2021

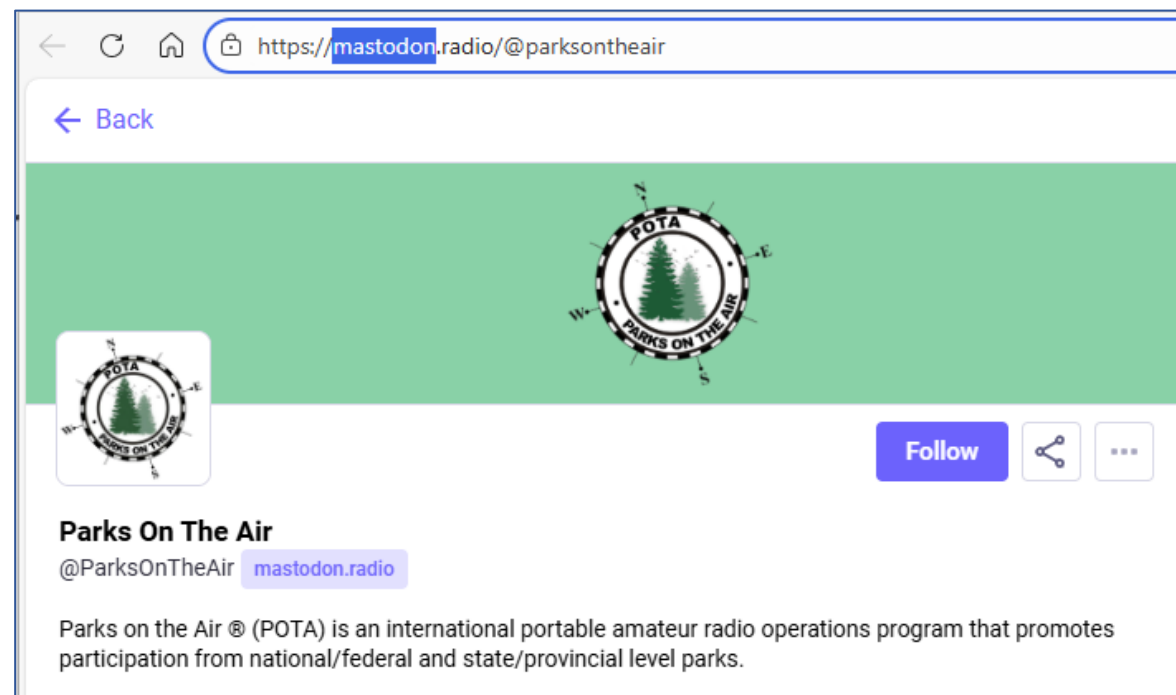
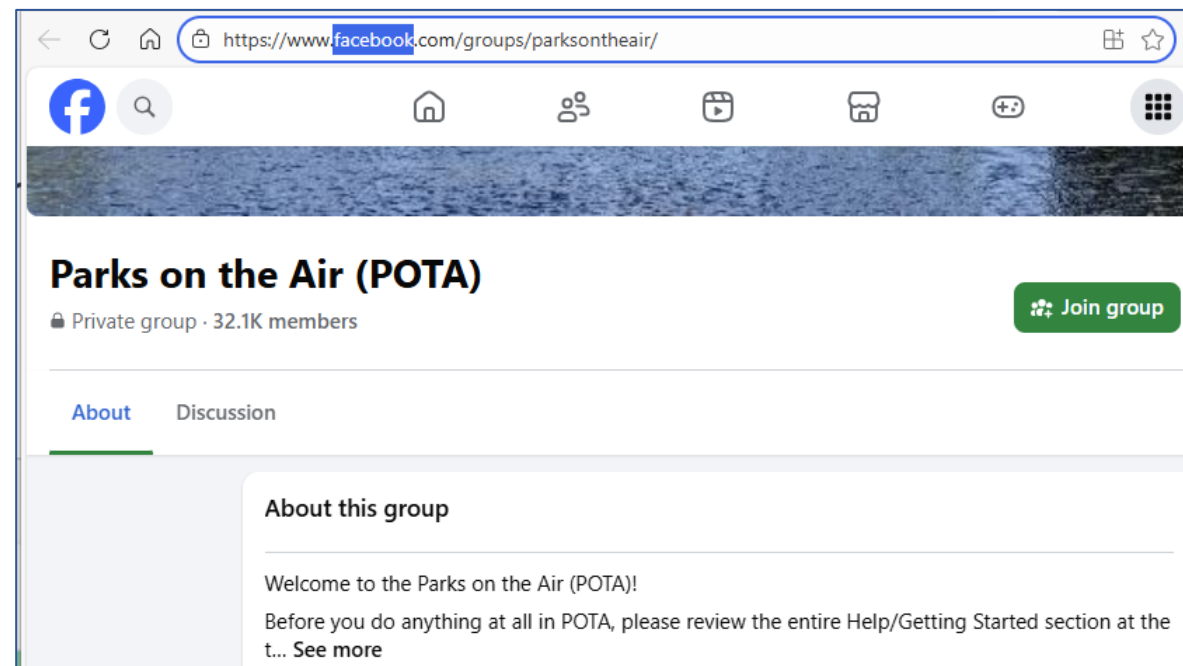
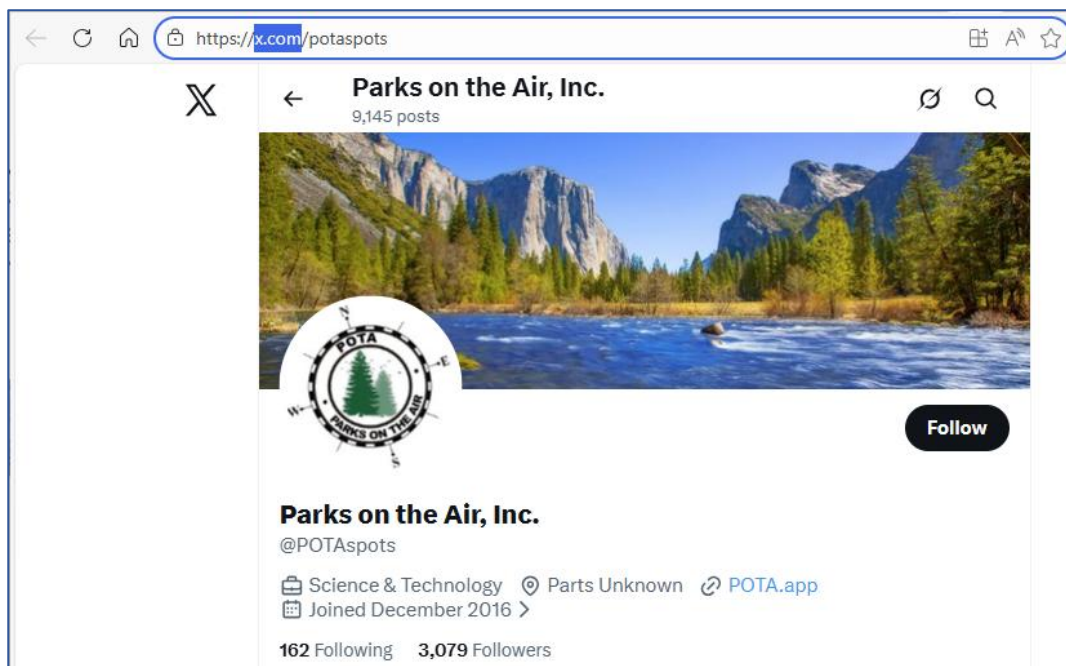
Date

Social Media Platforms



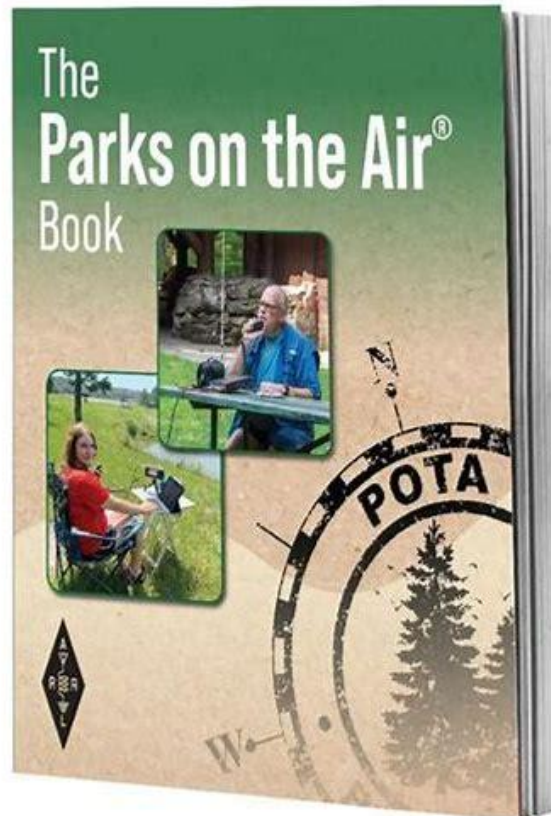
Social Media Platforms


- Interact with the POTA community online:
 - [Facebook group](#)
 - [X](#)
 - [Mastodon](#)



References

- [Parks on the Air Documentation \(pota.app\)](https://pota.app)
- [ARRL POTA Book](#)



 Parks on the Air

[Home](#)
[Rules](#)
[Code of Conduct](#)
[Activator Reference](#) ✓
[Hunter Guide](#)
[CW Guide](#)
[Digital Modes Guide](#)
[Award Events](#) ✓
[Video Resources](#)
[Support](#)
[Resources and Documents](#)
[Glossary](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)
[About](#)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 [Getting Started with POTA](#)
 - a [Getting Started for Hunters](#)
 - b [Getting Started for Activators](#)
- 2 [Getting Started Video Guide](#)

Getting Started with POTA

Parks on the Air® (POTA) started in early 2017 when the ARRL's National Parks on the Air special event ended. A group of volunteers wanted to continue the fun beyond the one-year event, and thus, POTA was born.

General information about the program is available at parksontheair.com, so we highly recommend checking out the information there. You may also want to join the [POTA Slack Channel](#) or the [POTA Facebook group](#), where you can easily interact with the POTA community online. POTA also maintains accounts on [Twitter](#) and [Mastodon](#) if you prefer to interact on those social media platforms.

Once you're ready to start, just remember that the golden rules of POTA are to have fun and keep it simple. We want to give you as much flexibility as possible, to have fun your way.

Getting started with POTA can happen via one of two paths — as an “activator” who heads out into the parks or as a “hunter” who is trying to contact someone in a park. The easiest way to participate in POTA is as a hunter, so we'll start there.

Getting Started for Hunters

Hunters are the individuals located anywhere, who contact the activators in the park. As a hunter, the rules are few and simple.

- Follow the law.
- Follow the [DX Code of Conduct](#).
- Follow the Golden Rule.

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Now Go Out and Enjoy POTA!

- Park Bench or Vehicle
 - As long as you're "within the boundaries of the park"



Questions?

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