

WELCOME TO AN INTRO TO
PARKS ON THE AIR

CHEROKEE AMATEUR
RADIO SOCIETY



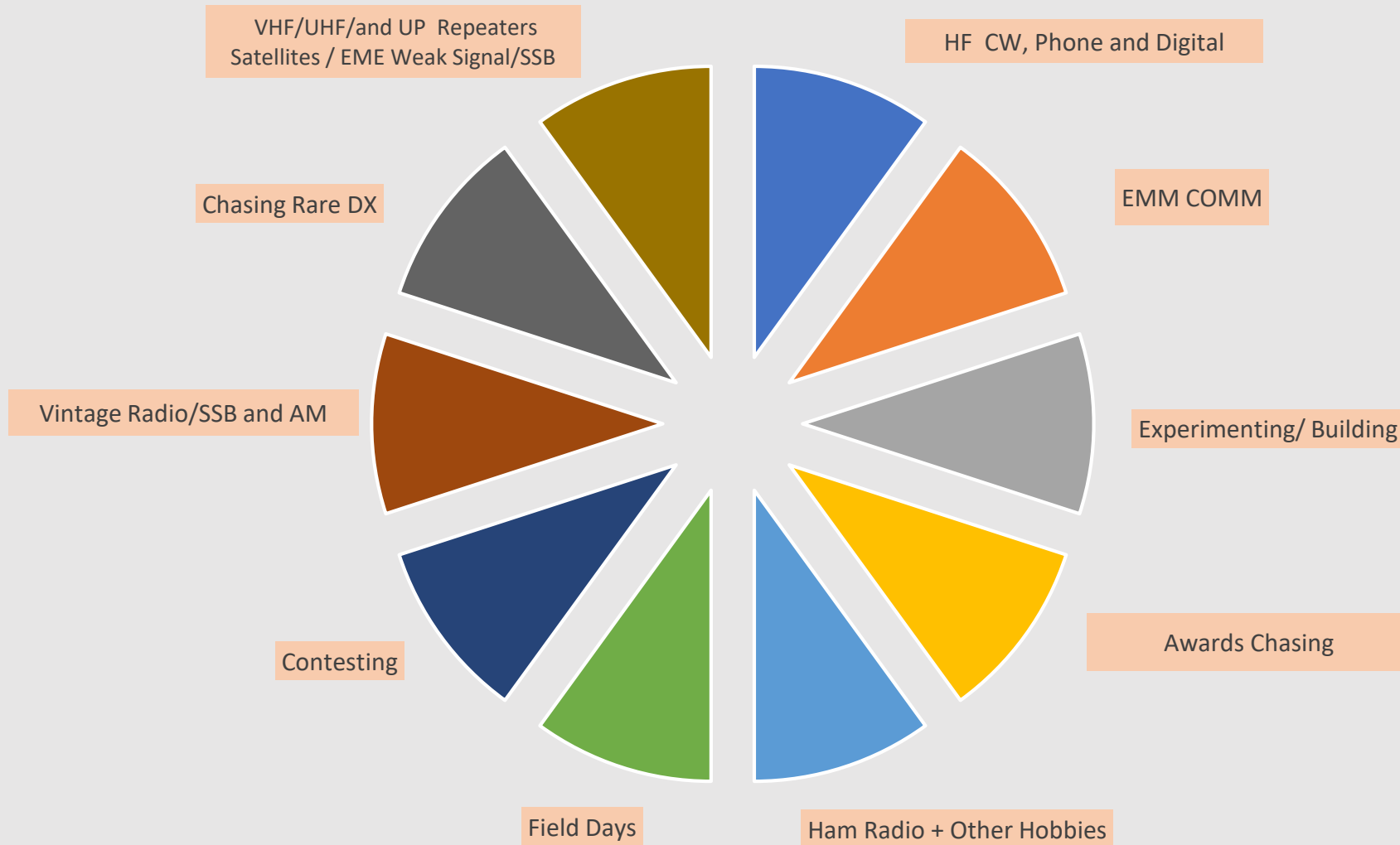
PRESENTATION MODIFIED
BY W1JKU 10JAN20

ORIGINAL CONTENT
PROVIDED BY
W3RAR AND WY3P

PARKS ON THE AIR WEBSITE

<https://parksonthear.com/>

Let's Take A Look AT Ham Radio



- How many of you enjoy the following:
 - Collecting awards?
 - Contesting?
 - Chasing rare DX ?
 - Participating in “Worked All States” type nets?
 - Hiking or Camping?
 - Field Day/Portable Operations?
 - Experimenting/ building and testing antennas, radios etc.?
 - Working weak signals, satellites, EME, backscatter, etc.?
 - Making contacts using digital modes like PSK31, RTTY, FT8 etc.?
 - Running QRP?

WHAT IS PARKS ON THE AIR (POTA)?

- 2016 - a 1 year long special event called National Parks On The Air was created to celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the National Park Service.
- Some of the leadership of POTA were involved in NPOTA originally.
- Parks On The Air is an organization that encourages its members to go out and operate their ham radios in the great outdoors.
- It also encourages its members to hunt those activating in these beautiful places.
- These places include designated State and Federal Parks, as well as certain National Historic sites and wildlife management areas.
- Both the activators and hunters can earn many different awards. These awards are similar to the ARRL “Worked All States” awards, except there are no QSL cards, or card checking involved.
- The activator logs his or her contacts and simply creates an ADIF file of the log. That log is sent to their regional director for upload to the POTA system.
- The awards are earned by making contacts and then sent to you electronically in an email. Then you can simply print them out if you wish.

Participating in a Parks on The Air activation includes many of the same aspects of Ham Radio that I laid out earlier.

When Participating in POTA-you are either:

- an Activator
 - Activators must be located within the boundaries of an approved Park, and your setting up to have Hunters contact you!
- or a Hunter
 - Hunters may make QSO's with any Activator, regardless of Hunters location.
 - ** **W1JKU Confirmed -** Hunting can be performed working from home and on a Conference Call

Let's look at it from the Activators perspective first.

Activator

1. The operator gets to schedule a “Field Day” type event anytime.
2. The activator gets to decide what radio, what antenna, how to power it, where to operate from (picked from the long list of approved locations from the POTA website) as well as choose whatever mode they prefer.
3. Many use the old standard of paper and pen and then log it digitally later. Others prefer to use electronic logging in the field.
4. You can rough it and hike miles to the top of a mountain, deep into the woods, or simply operate as I prefer, which is to either operate from my vehicle or while sitting comfortably at a picnic table under a pavilion.

Parks on the Air (POTA) Rules:

<https://parksontheair.com/rules/>

Activator

- **The activator and all the equipment** you use need to be **within the perimeters of the park, and on federal or state/provincial owned land.**
- **The land must not be private property** as the spirit of the **POTA** program is to get out of the house and operate, but you can do it from a vehicle/park bench/various methods etc. Use the map on the **POTA site** in combination with **Google Maps, and official park sites** to find the **official boundaries.**
- If the park is part of a trail system or river, you need to be within **100 feet** of the trail or river. You may **never trespass on private property** to access state/provincial or federal lands without permission. You are taking part in this program at **your own risk to following the proper law, and injury.**
- The **hunter** can contact the activator from **home or any other property.**
- You can only work from **one reference at a time.** If you are in a park that is a sub-region of a larger park, you can use the reference of the **sub-region, or** you can also **split your logs** as you like for each park too.
- You must make a minimum of **10 QSOs** for your activity to count toward a **POTA** activation. **This must be done within the same day in Zulu Time 00:00 – 23:59.**
- **Hunters still gain credit,** even if the activator hasn't reached 10 QSOs. For hunters and activators to gain credit though, the **activator MUST** send the log in **.adif** format to their **regional manager based on their call sign via e-mail.**
- **One log** can cover **multiple days** of activity, this includes **club call signs** and **multiple operators.**
- **Land repeaters are NOT allowed,** but satellite contacts, and all other types are permitted.

Parks on the Air (POTA) Approved Parks

5,632 Locations in the US to Activate POTA. Site lets you search for specific parks.

stats.parksontheair.com/reports/park-info-select-program.php?program=K

Apps Verifone HAM and Weather Lanierland Amateur... Apps Bookmarks Bar Bookmarks RadiolD.net DMR R... RadiolD.net DMR R... cable WEBEOC-Cherokee... Cherokee-ARES@gr...

Parks On The Air Find Parks Leaderboards Activity Park Stats My Stats Join us on Slack W1JKU Help

Choose Program:

K

Submit

here are 5632 parks in this program

how 25 entries Search:

Reference	Entity	Unit Name	Park Type	Active	Location Abbr	Location
K-0001	United States Of America	Acadia	National Park	Yes	US-ME	Maine
K-0002	Alaska	Alagnak Wild River	National Park	Yes	US-AK	Alaska
K-0003	Alaska	Aniakchak	National Preserve	Yes	US-AK	Alaska
K-0004	United States Of America	Arches	National Park	Yes	US-UT	Utah
K-0005	United States Of America	Badlands	National Park	Yes	US-SD	South Dakota
K-0006	United States Of America	Big Bend	National Park	Yes	US-TX	Texas
K-0007	United States Of America	Biscayne Bay	National Park	Yes	US-FL	Florida
K-0008	United States Of America	Black Canyon of the Gunnison	National Park	Yes	US-CO	Colorado
K-0009	United States Of America	Bryce Canyon	National Park	Yes	US-UT	Utah
K-0010	United States Of America	Canyonlands	National Park	Yes	US-UT	Utah
K-0011	United States Of America	Capitol Reef	National Park	Yes	US-UT	Utah
K-0012	United States Of America	Carlsbad Caverns	National Park	Yes	US-NM	New Mexico
K-0013	United States Of America	Chaco Culture	National Historical Park	Yes	US-NM	New Mexico
K-0014	United States Of America	Channel Islands	National Park	Yes	US-CA	California
K-0015	United States Of America	Chesapeake and Ohio Canal	National Historical Park	Yes	US-DC, US-MD, US-WV	District Of Columbia, Maryland, West Virginia
K-0016	United States Of America	Colonial	National Historical Park	Yes	US-VA	Virginia
K-0017	United States Of America	Congaree	National Park	Yes	US-SC	South Carolina
K-0018	United States Of America	Crater Lake	National Park	Yes	US-OR	Oregon

Map of Approved POTA Activation Locations

Real-Time Map to find Eligible Parks to Activate from

[HTTPS://POTA.US/#/MAP](https://pota.us/#/map)

The screenshot displays the POTA US website's map interface. The browser address bar shows the URL pota.us/#/map. The website's navigation bar is green and includes a menu icon, the word "Map", a "Park ID Search" input field, and links for "HOME", "SPOTS", "ACTIVATIONS", "MAP", and an "ADD SPOT" button. The map itself is a satellite view of the Southeastern United States, with numerous blue location pins indicating approved POTA activation sites. A tooltip is visible over a pin near Rome, Georgia, displaying the text: "Name: Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area" and "Reference: K-0662". The map includes a zoom control in the top-left corner and a "Leaflet | © OpenStreetMap contributors" attribution in the bottom-right corner. The footer of the page is green and contains the text "Copyright © 2018-2019 Parks on the Air".

Planned POTA Activations for the Day

Listing of Activations planned for the day- Used to build you Hunting plan or Communicate your Activation Plan...

[HTTPS://POTA.US/#/Activations](https://pota.us/#/Activations)

The screenshot shows the POTA website interface. The browser address bar displays pota.us/#/activations. The website has a green header with a navigation bar containing icons for Home, Spots, Activations, and Map, along with an 'ADD SPOT' button. Below the header, the page is organized into a grid of activation cards. Each card displays the call sign and park name, location details, frequency, and activation time. The first card is for KA1V/KC1AEO at Lowell National Historical Park. The second is for K8RHH at Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area. The third is for W2LCW at Captree State Park. The fourth is for KN4SWS at Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park. The fifth is for W2AFE/5 at Bottomless Lakes State Park. The sixth is for W0COX at Bottomless Lakes State Park. The seventh is for WA3TVH at Pinchot State Forest. The eighth is for KF4EC at Paul State Forest. The ninth is for K8UA at Chattahoochee River National. The footer of the website states 'Copyright © 2018-2019 Parks on the Air'.

Call Sign	Park Name	Location	Frequency	Activation Time	Notes
KA1V/KC1AEO	Lowell National Historical Park	K-0742 Lowell National Historical Park, 14285,14264	14285,14264	2020-01-10 16:00 to 2020-01-10 17:00 UTC	First activation since 2016
K8RHH	Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area	K-4243 Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area, 20m, 40m	20m, 40m	2020-01-10 17:00 to 2020-01-10 19:00 UTC	Times approximate. This park never before activated!
W2LCW	Captree State Park	K-2028 Captree State Park, 7.033 10.113 14.033	7.033 10.113 14.033	2020-01-10 18:00 to 2020-01-10 22:00 UTC	The Long Island CW Club looking to put you in our log.
KN4SWS	Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park	K-3612 Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park, 14335	14335	2020-01-11 13:15 to 2020-01-11 15:00 UTC	South Florida
W2AFE/5	Bottomless Lakes State Park	K-2687 Bottomless Lakes State Park, 7030, 10116, 14060	7030, 10116, 14060	2020-01-11 19:00 to 2020-01-11 22:00 UTC	CW
W0COX	Bottomless Lakes State Park	K-2687 Bottomless Lakes State Park, 20 and 40	20 and 40	2020-01-11 19:00 to 2020-01-11 22:00 UTC	Planned frequencies 14.242 and 7.245
WA3TVH	Pinchot State Forest	K-5473 Pinchot State Forest			
KF4EC	Paul State Forest	K-5521 Paul State Forest			
K8UA	Chattahoochee River National	K-0662 Chattahoochee River National			

Calling CQ as an Activator

For Phone

"CQ CQ This is [My Call] Parks on the Air... calling from [Park Designator], Parks on the Air"

****** Every Park is assigned a Parks Designator you must use and Log***

Example:

"CQ CQ This is W1JKU Parks on the Air calling from Park KILO 0662, Parks on the Air"

For FT8

For FT8, just run as normal default "CQ W1JKU EM74"

For CW

CQ POTA W1JKU W1JKU K0662 K

Response to a calling CQ

- Callsign + RST+ Location (Normally just the State or Park #)

If responder is in a Park, they should provide their Park Designator as that generates more points for a Park to Park QSO

If you are in responding to CQ and you are in an Approved Park, Announce “**Park to Park**” before your Callsign . That will get you in as a priority especially in a Pile-Up!

Example QSO:

Activator: CQ CQ This is W1JKU Parks on the Air calling from Park KILO 0662, Parks on the Air

Hunter: W1JKU, this is KK4YQV. You are 59 Georgia.

Activator: This is W1JKU, I Copy 59, you are 59 from Park Kilo 0662, QSL

Hunter: QSL, Thank you for the Activation 73's.

Activator: 73's thank you for the Contact, This is W1JKU Parks on the AIR from Park KILO 0662, Q R Zed (to see if any other Hunters are ready to jump in next...)

If nothing heard after a few seconds, resume CQ....

(Rinse and Repeat just like Shampoo)

Manual Log in the Field

W1JKU Parks on the Air Log															
#	CALLSIGN	UTC TIME	MODE	FREQ	MY POTA LOCATION	Callsigns POTA Location	Sent-RST	Rec-RST	Power		R-S-T Characteristics	Readability R	Strength S		
1	KK4YQV	20:01	SSB	14.250	K-0662		59	59	10		1	Unreadable	Faint signals, barely perceptible		
2											2	Barely readable, occasional words distinguishable	Very weak signals		
3											3	Readable with considerable difficulty	Weak signals		
4											4	Readable with practically no difficulty	Fair signals		
5											5	Perfectly readable	Fairly good signals		
											6	N/A	Good signals		
											7	N/A	Moderately strong signals		
											8	N/A	Strong signals		
											9	N/A	Extremely strong signals		

Keep it simple. Paper and Pen more reliable then laptop, and faster during Pile-ups!
Have a bunch of blank logs available, you might find the perfect storm...

Activators Logging F3FJP

Ready to begin! LogData.mdb

Call	Date	Band	Mode	Time On	SIG_INFO	my_sig_info	Sent	Rec
		▼	▼					

Name	Frequency	Power	State					
			▼		<input type="checkbox"/> QSL Sent	2:49:38 PM		
					<input type="checkbox"/> QSL Rcvd	19:49:38 UTC		Log Contact

Bearing: _____

Miles: _____

Cont: _____

Comments	
POTA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Current time if blank

Required Fields: Call, Date, Band, Mode, SIG_INFO, MY_SIG_INFO

- **SIG_INFO=** This is the Park Designator, if applicable of the Contact you make. The Hunter may or may not be in a Park
- **My_SIG_INFO=** If Activating, this is the Park Designator you are located at.
- ** The two fields above are custom definable fields in F3FJP

Optional Fields I record but not used by POTA: QST Sent, QST Received, Frequency, Name, Power, State, Comments

Why Become a Hunter

- First it is fun!
- Second you get to make new friends while making these contacts.
- Practice and test your rig or go-boxes from any location.
- As a Hunter you do not have to be within a designated Park. You may make QSO's from your Home, Mobile, or any location you wish.
- You may use the POTA.US website to find Activators that have been spotted and try to raise them.
- As a Hunter, you have no requirement to submit logs to gain credit- the Activator does all the work and log submissions
- If your shack allows, you can make QSO's during boring work related conference calls- Just ensure your camera is off and your muted on your Conference Call/Web-Ex. (I put electrical tape over my camera).

POTA.US Spotting

Find current Activators and or 'Repost' your contact with them so others know they are still active and last heard

← → ↺ 🏠 🔒 pota.us/#/

Apps Verifone HAM and Weather Lanierland Amateur... Apps Bookmarks Bar ★ Bookmarks RadiolD.net DMR R... RadiolD.net DMR R... cable WEBEOC-Cherokee... Cherokee-ARES@gr...

☰ 🏠 Home

Park ID Search

🏠 HOME

📋 SPOTS

📅 ACTIVATIONS

🗺️ MAP

ADD SPOT

Active Spots

Data will automatically refresh every 60 seconds.

K8RHH @ K-4243

📍 [K-4243, Sauk Prairie State Recreation Area](#)

🏠 US-WI

📡 7215 kHz / MHz,

👤 VA3TTB

💬

🕒 Last heard 0 mins ago at 18:58 UTC

RE-SPOT ↺

KB2IOF @ K-4422

📍 [K-4422, W. Goodrich Jones State Forest](#)

🏠 US-TX

📡 14040 kHz / MHz,

👤 KB2IOF

💬

🕒 Last heard 1 min ago at 18:57 UTC

RE-SPOT ↺

KB3WAV @ K-0015

📍 [K-0015, Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#)

🏠 US-DC,US-MD,US-WV

📡 14049.2 kHz / MHz,

👤 WD5CSK

💬

🕒 Last heard 6 mins ago at 18:52 UTC

RE-SPOT ↺

KU8T @ K-4774

📍 [K-4774, Au Sable State Forest](#)

🏠 US-MI

📡 7240 kHz / MHz,

👤

💬

🕒

W3VL @ K-1731

📍 [K-1731, Bellevue State Park](#)

🏠 US-DE

📡 7220 kHz / MHz,

👤

💬

🕒

W1FYG @ K-1667

📍 [K-1667, Fort Trumbull State Park](#)

🏠 US-CT

📡 7212.0 kHz / MHz,

👤

💬

🕒

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COME JOIN THE FUN

- Go to the POTA Website and join up!
- You need to decide if you are going to be an activator and put together a mobile or portable station.
- If not, please join and become a frequent hunter. There is no fun in putting together a portable station and endlessly calling CQ with no one answering. POTA has been growing so fast this is very rare.
- One aspect I wish to mention is that there are plenty of members all through the country. Go do as I have, and ask another member to meet up with you on an activation.

Equipment for Portable Operations

- Radio can be as simple as a VHF or UHF mobile (this will limit your abilities right now)
- An HF radio – mobile or base.
- A power source- batteries, solar power(mostly used to recharge batteries) or a 12 volt AC power supply.
- Any type of an antenna can be used. These include mobile antennas, pole mounted or tree supported wire antennas, vertical whips and others.
- Any antenna tuning equipment, coax etc.
- Microphone, headset, or CW key.
- Logging equipment- pen/paper or laptop computer/ IPAD
- Laptop for digital and satellite modes
- FLAG or Signage to show off your doing POTA- The spectators at the park are very curious when they see your rig, antennas, etc:



Let's Look at Some W1JKU Examples of Activations





Rob Bruderer

October 16, 2019

Thank you! W1JKU successful activation from K-4508 between 1843 and 1906 UTC today.

From my FT857 and ATAS antenna. NEW SETUP...



25

10 Comments



Like



Comment



Rob Bruderer

November 9, 2019

Thank you for the QSO's for K-0662. 28 Contacts in the short activation across 20m and 40m. Thank you all. Have a great Weekend.

W1JKU



Martin Buehring and 23 others

1 Comment



Like



Comment

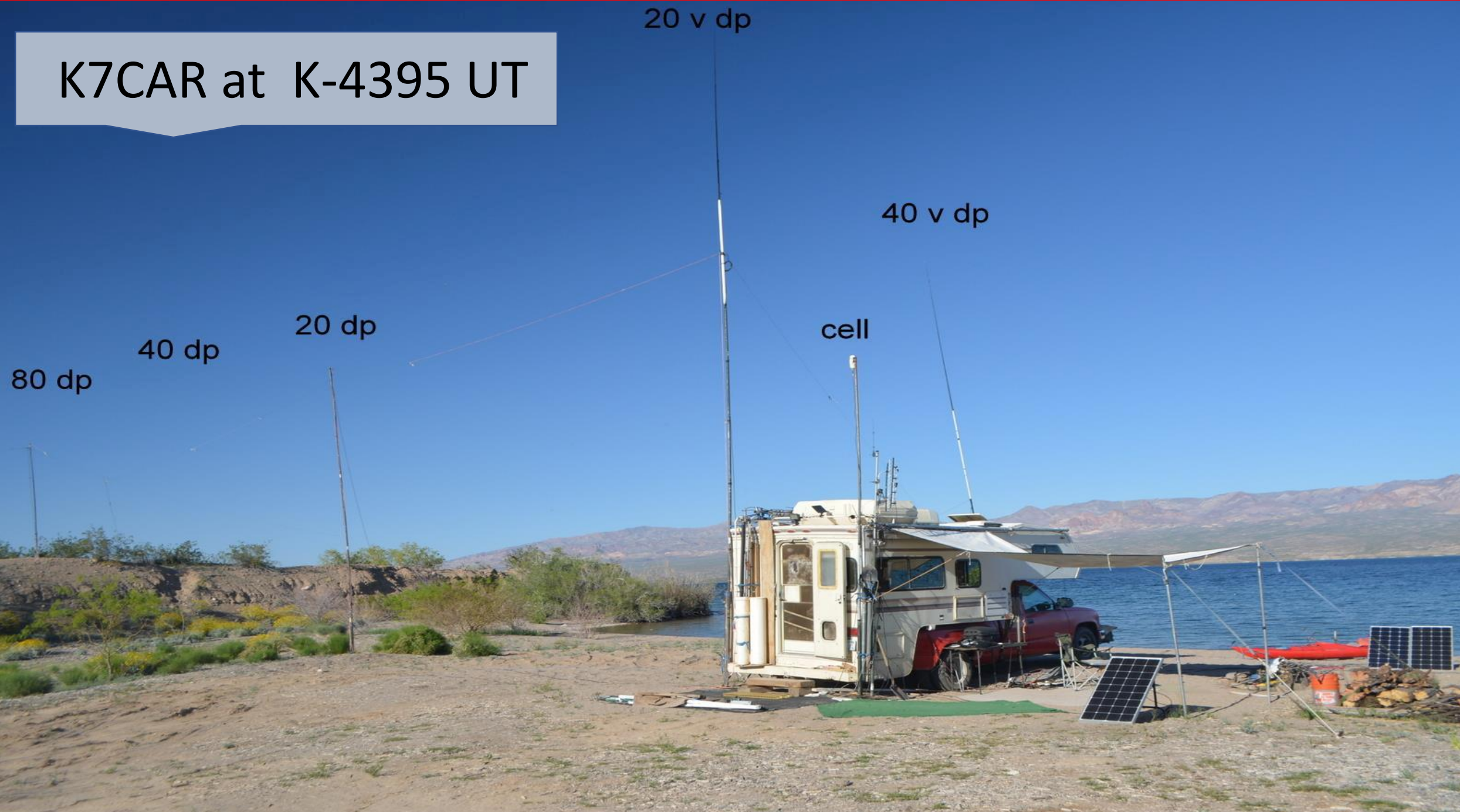
Non-W1JKU Additional Activation Examples



This is Fort McHenry in Baltimore. The home of the Star Spangled Banner K-0928
W3RAR and W3FGD activated it together on 03/20/19



K7CAR at K-4395 UT









Not all activations are done in beautiful weather.

Here Joe hides from Mother Nature and relies on a home made telescoping antenna.





Sometimes the antenna system can be quite simple. This is an MFJ ground rod antenna mount with a Hamstick on it.

Thank you KK1TLS

LETS LOOK AT SOME AWARDS NOW



- 1.**Bronze Award:** work from **10** different reference areas.
- 2.**Silver Award:** work from **20** different reference areas.
- 3.**Gold Award:** work from **30** different reference areas.
- 4.**Platinum Award:** work from **40** different reference areas.
- 5.**Diamond Award:** work from **50** different reference areas.
- 6.**Sapphire Award:** work from **75** different reference areas.

LETS LOOK AT SOME AWARDS NOW



- 1.**Bronze Award:** work from **10** different reference areas.
- 2.**Silver Award:** work from **20** different reference areas.
- 3.**Gold Award:** work from **30** different reference areas.
- 4.**Platinum Award:** work from **40** different reference areas.
- 5.**Diamond Award:** work from **50** different reference areas.
- 6.**Sapphire Award:** work from **75** different reference areas.

POTA Stats

stats.parksontheair.com/reports/my-summary-stats.php

Apps Verifone HAM and Weather Lanierland Amateur... Apps Bookmarks Bar Bookmarks RadiolD.net DMR R... RadiolD.net DMR R... cable WEBEOC-Cherokee... Cherokee-ARES@gr...

[Parks On The Air](#)[Find Parks](#)[Leaderboards](#)[Activity](#)[Park Stats](#)[My Stats](#)[Join us on Slack](#)[W1JKU](#)[Help](#)

Activator Statistics

Entities with activities

There are 1 entities with activities

Entity	Activities	Activations
United States Of America	9	9

Locations with activities

There are 3 locations with activities

Location	Total Activities	Successful Activations	Details
Florida	1	1	Details
Georgia	6	6	Details
North Carolina	2	2	Details

POTA Stats

Parks with activities

There are 5 parks with activities

Reference ↕	Park Name ↕	Failed Attempts ↕	Successful Activations ↕	Total Activities ↕	Total QSOs ↕
K-0635	St. George State Park	0	1	1	10
K-0662	Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area	0	5	5	90
K-0711	Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield	0	1	1	10
K-0804	Carl Sandburg National Historic Site	0	1	1	10
K-4508	Croatan National Forest	0	1	1	10

Activator QSOs by Band/Mode

Mode ↕	70CM ↕	1.25M ↕	2M ↕	6M ↕	10M ↕	12M ↕	15M ↕	17M ↕	20M ↕	30M ↕	40M ↕	60M ↕	80M ↕	160M ↕
CW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DATA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	1	3	0	0	0
PHONE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	110	0	0	0

POTA Stats

Hunted Parks

There are 23 unique hunted parks

Reference	Park Name	Unique Parks
K-0027	Gettysburg National Military Park	1
K-1031	White Pines Forest State Park	1
K-1294	Chippokes Plantation State Park	1
K-1342	Codorus State Park	2
K-1368	Lackawanna State Park	1
K-1500	Grand Mere State Park	1
K-1660	Day Pond State Park	1
K-1751	Castlewood State Park	1
K-1857	Don Pedro Island State Park	1
K-2251	Brown County State Park	1
K-2256	Fort Harrison State Park	4
K-2260	McCormick's Creek State Park	1
K-2791	Lake Texoma State Park	1
K-2984	Atlanta State Park	1
K-3051	Ray Roberts Lake State Park	1
K-3980	Dick Cross Wildlife Management Area	1
K-4032	Clatonia State Recreation Area	1
K-4488	Huron National Forest	1
K-4556	Appalachian Trail National Scenic Trail	1
K-4775	Copper Country State Forest	1
K-5583	Calvin Price State Forest	1
VE-0777	Hopewell Rocks Provincial Park	1
VE-0784	Mactaquac Provincial Park	1

POTA Stats

Hunter Statistics

Hunted Locations

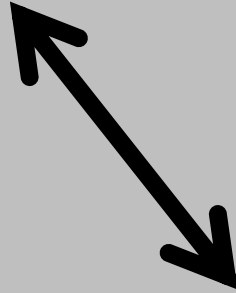
There are 13 hunted locations

Location	Total QSOs	Details
Connecticut	2	Details
Florida	1	Details
Illinois	1	Details
Indiana	6	Details
Michigan	3	Details
Missouri	1	Details
Nebraska	1	Details
Oklahoma	1	Details
Pennsylvania	4	Details
Texas	2	Details
Virginia	2	Details
West Virginia	1	Details
New Brunswick	2	Details

**IS IT TIME
TO COME
JOIN
IN THE FUN?**

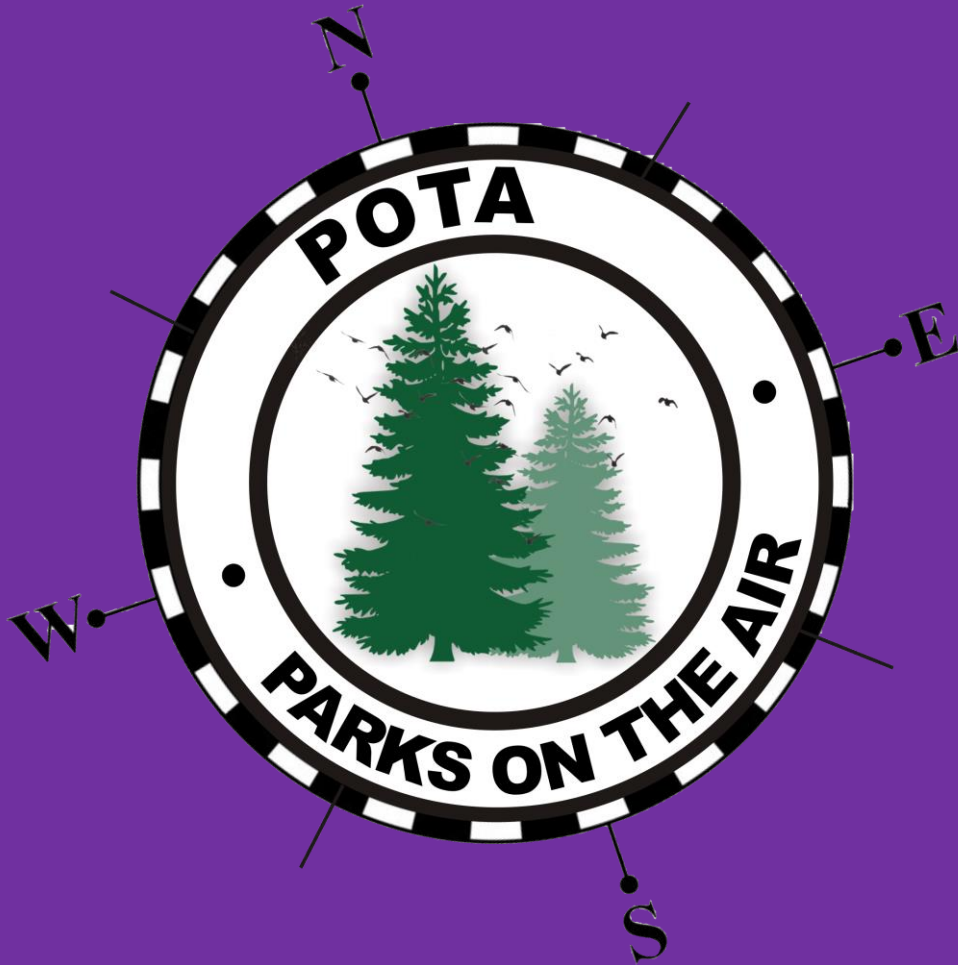


JUST GOOGLE PARKS ON THE AIR



<https://parksontheair.com/>

Spend some time getting to know our website.
Use the Activities/spotting section to spot
yourself or find others while they activate.



Be sure to also join us
on the POTA Face Book
Page