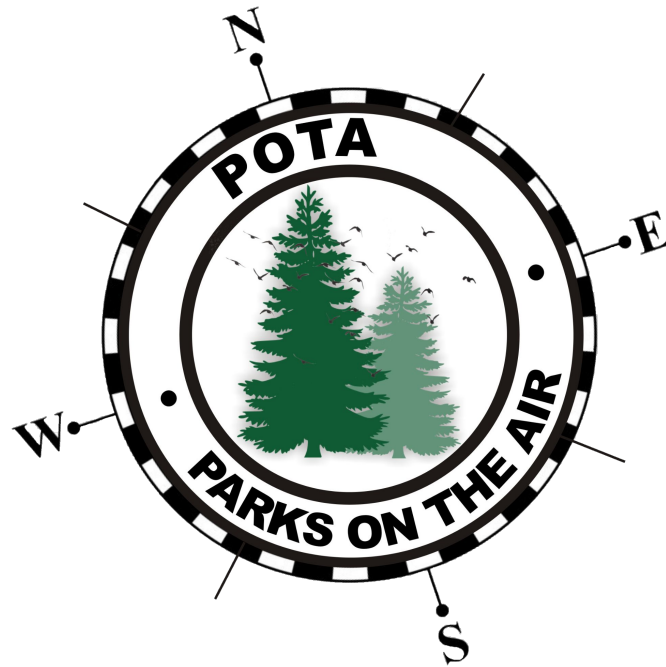


Parks on the Air

Spokane Hamfest 2025



What is POTA?

"POTA is a global amateur radio program where operators activate portable stations in parks while other operators (hunters) contact them. It combines outdoor adventure, portable operations, and conservation awareness. Participants log contacts online to earn awards, using lightweight field gear. This activity connects radio enthusiasts with nature and the ham community."

Come join us to find out more, ask questions and or share your experiences.

History of POTA

History of POTA

Origins (2017)

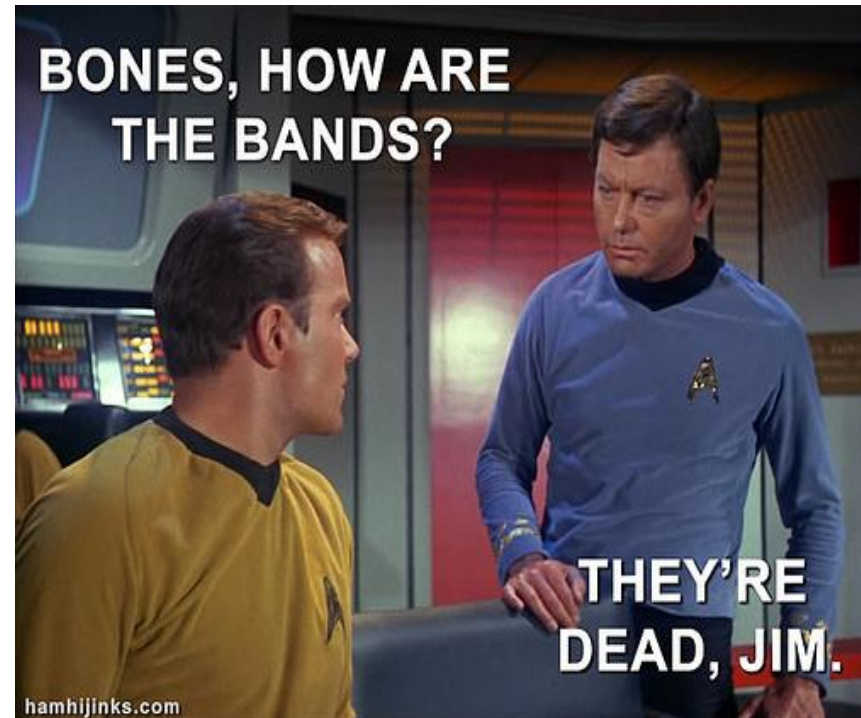
POTA was inspired by the success of **SOTA**, which began in 2002 and focused on mountain summits.

The idea for POTA emerged in late 2017 when a group of amateur radio operators in the U.S. wanted a similar program tailored to national and state parks.

POTA officially launched in **February 2019** with a structured ruleset, awards, and logging system.

By 2020, POTA expanded to include parks in **Canada, Europe, Australia, and other regions**. The program saw explosive growth during the **COVID-19 pandemic**, as hams sought outdoor operating opportunities. POTA became a global phenomenon, with thousands of activations per month and a strong online community.

Response to the claim “the bands are dead” “hobby dying” during the low part of the solar cycle -



Why POTA is Popular:

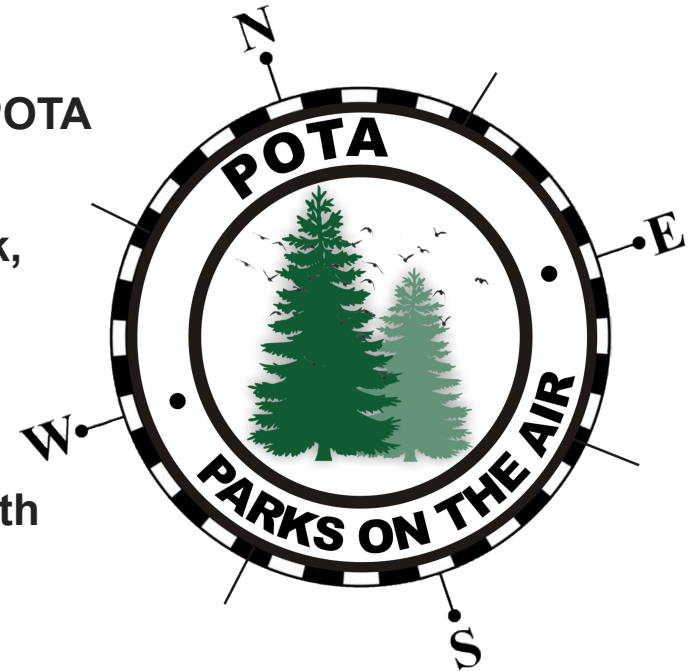
Accessible: Unlike SOTA, which often requires hiking, POTA can be done from easily accessible parks.

Community-Driven: A strong online presence (Facebook, Discord, YouTube) fosters engagement.

Awards & Recognition: Activators and hunters earn certificates, leaderboard rankings, and awards.

Portable Operating Fun: Encourages field operations with portable antennas and low-power (QRP) setups.

POTA continues to grow, with new parks being added regularly and a thriving community of amateur radio enthusiasts.



Understand the Basics

Activators: Operate from a designated park and make at least 10 valid contacts to log a successful activation.

Hunters: Contact stations operating from parks to earn points toward awards.

Eligible Parks: Must be listed in the [POTA database](<https://pota.app>). Includes national, state, provincial, and other protected lands.



First Steps - Registration

Register for a Free Account

Visit [pota.app](<https://pota.app>) and sign up (no cost).

This lets you log activations, track awards, and access park lists.

Review Rules: Familiarize yourself with the POTA rules and guidelines for activations.

Planning a Activation

Select a park from the POTA directory/map. Ensure it's accessible and suitable for setting up your radio equipment.

Check Permits: Some parks may require permits or have specific rules for operating radios. Contact park authorities if necessary.

Gear Preparation: Pack your portable radio equipment, including:

Transceiver

Antenna (e.g., wire antenna, vertical, or dipole)

Power source (battery, solar, or generator)

Logging tools (paper log, laptop, or logging app)

Cables, connectors, and accessories

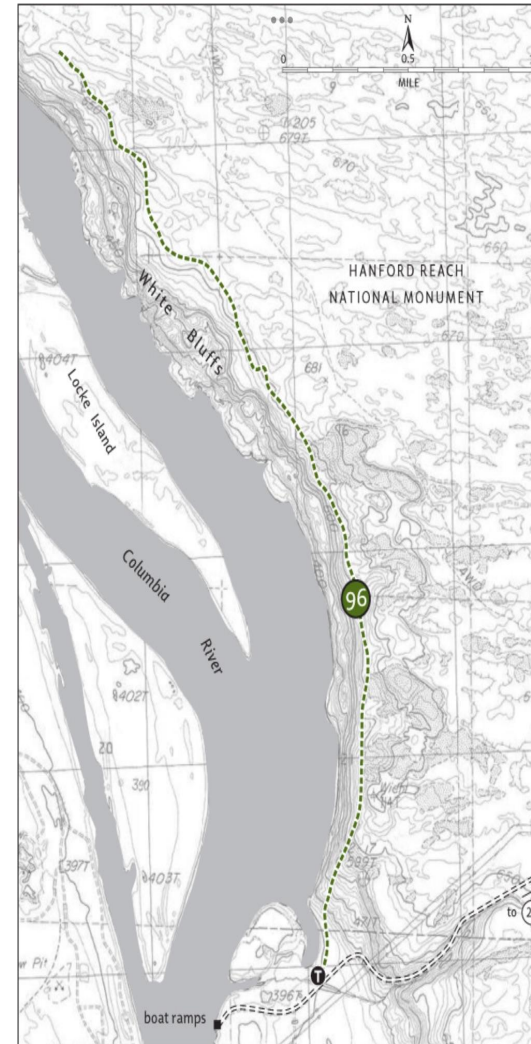
Practice Setup: Test your equipment at home to ensure everything works properly.

Travel to the Park

Travel to the Park

Arrive at the park and find a suitable location to set up your station. Look for a spot with minimal interference and enough space for your antenna.

Use the POTA map also other mapping Apps, Gaia / Avenza are better for remote locations and identifying boundaries.



Set Up Your Station

Antenna Setup: Deploy your antenna.
Common options include:

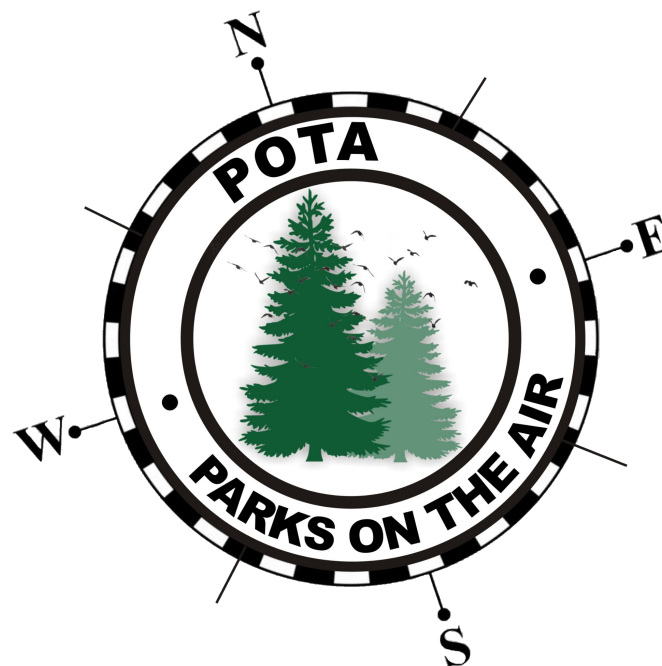
End-fed wire antennas

Dipoles

Vertical antennas

Radio Setup: Connect your transceiver
to the antenna and power source.

Test Your Station: Perform a quick test
to ensure your station is operational.



Band	Model Freq	Calc Whip Length	Model Whip Length	Whip Length (ft)	Model vs. Calc	Radial Length (in)	Radial Length (ft)	Radial vs. Vertical Length	Radial End Height	SWR	Ref Coeff
20M	14.250	197.05	205	17.1	4.0%	198	16.5	96.6%	19.5	1.00	-70.3
17M	18.140	154.80	165	13.8	6.6%	150	12.5	90.9%	21.5	1.01	-42.7
15M	21.325	131.68	143	11.9	8.6%	122	10.2	85.3%	19.2	1.01	-46.5
12M	24.960	112.50	128	10.7	13.8%	96	8.0	75.0%	18.5	1.01	-50.0
10M	28.500	98.53	117	9.8	18.8%	77	6.4	65.8%	18.0	1.01	-45.8
6M	51.000	55.06	56	4.7	1.7%	43	3.6	76.8%	20.5	1.00	-52.7

Start the Activation

Spot Yourself: Log in to the POTA website or use the POTA app to “spot” yourself. This lets other operators know you’re active and on which frequency/mode.

Begin Operating

Start calling “CQ POTA” on your chosen frequency.

Exchange your call sign, park reference number, and signal report with other operators.

Log Contacts: Record all contacts in your log, including:

- Call sign
- Time and date
- Frequency and mode
- Signal report



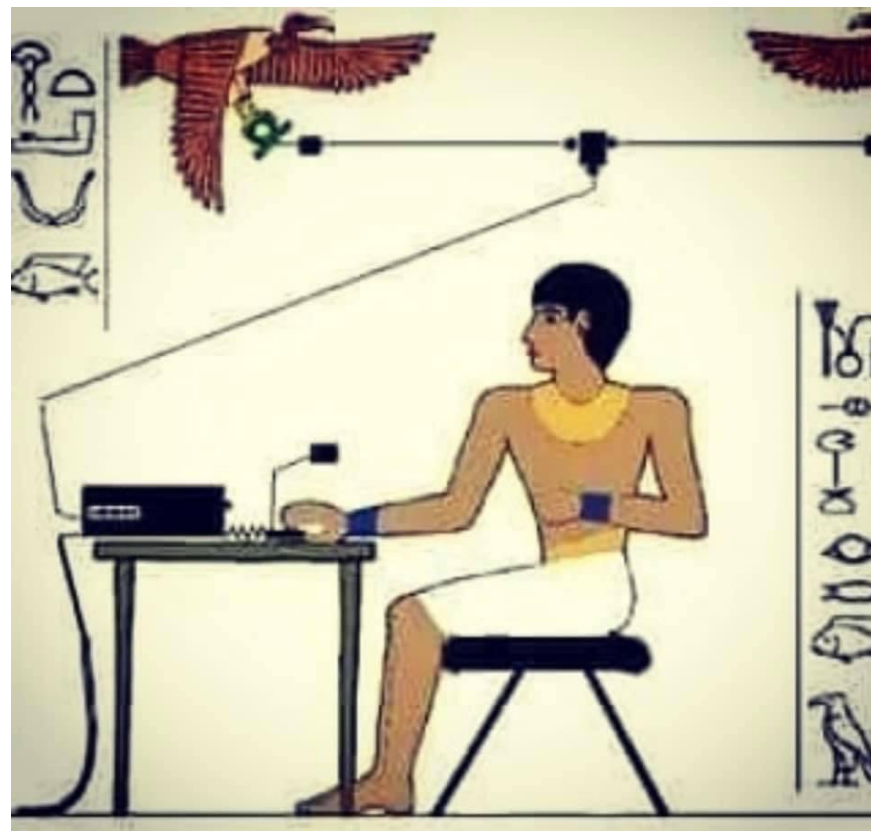
End the Activation

End the Activation

Going QRT

After completing your activation, log out on the POTA website or app.

Pack up your equipment and leave the park as you found it.



Submit Your Log

Upload your log to the POTA website within 7 days of your activation. This ensures your contacts are validated and counted toward your activation.

7:43 PM Sat Dec 24 96%

HAMRS Logbooks QSOs Settings Profile Help Enter Callsign

Comma separated

TIME 03:43:31 DATE 2022-12-25 Clear Save

OPERATOR STATE COUNTY QTH GRID

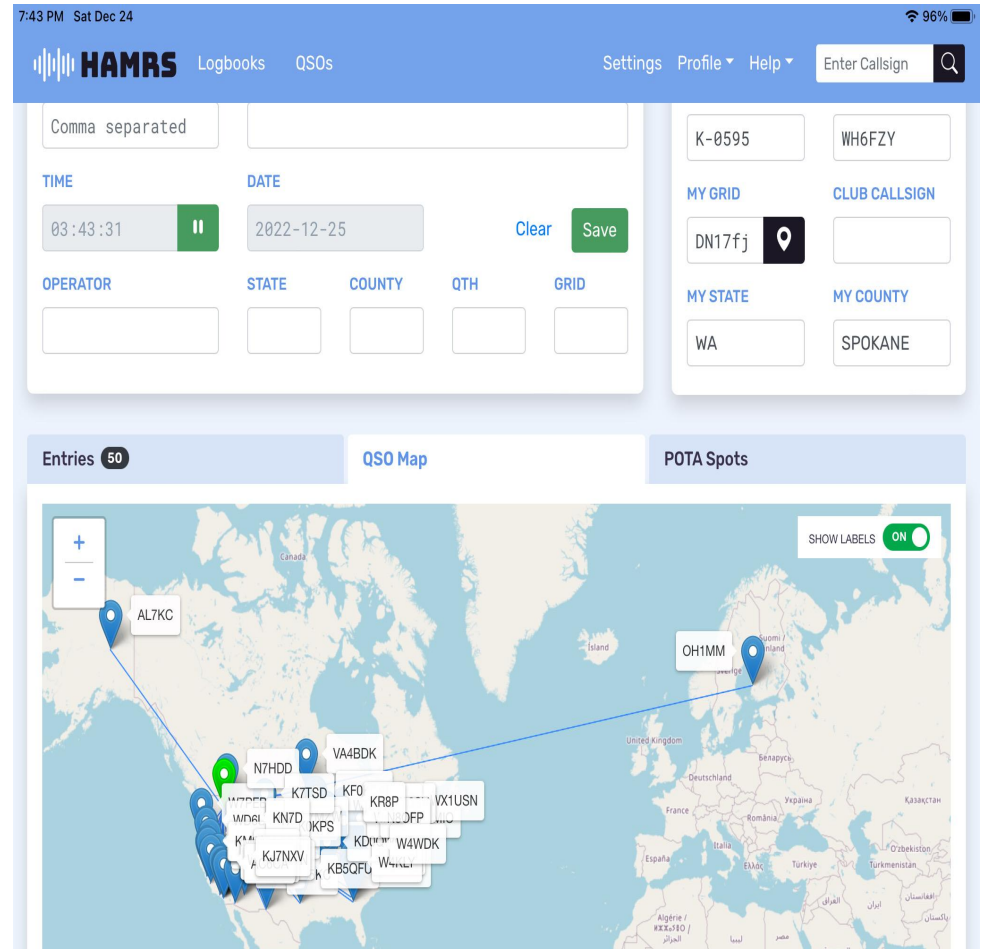
MY GRID DN17fj MY STATE WA CLUB CALLSIGN WH6FZY MY COUNTY SPOKANE

Entries 50 QSO Map POTA Spots

SHOW LABELS ON

AL7KC OH1MM

N7HDD VA4BDK K7TSD KF0 KR8P VX1USN KN7D KPS JF0 KJ7NXV KD1W W4WDK KB5QFU

The screenshot shows the HAMRS website interface. At the top, there's a blue header with the time '7:43 PM Sat Dec 24' and battery status '96%'. Below the header, there's a navigation bar with 'Logbooks' and 'QSOs' tabs, and a search bar with 'Enter Callsign'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a form for submitting a log entry, with fields for 'TIME' (03:43:31), 'DATE' (2022-12-25), 'OPERATOR', 'STATE', 'COUNTY', 'QTH', and 'GRID'. There are 'Clear' and 'Save' buttons. The right column contains fields for 'MY GRID' (DN17fj), 'MY STATE' (WA), 'CLUB CALLSIGN' (WH6FZY), and 'MY COUNTY' (SPOKANE). Below the form, there's a section with three tabs: 'Entries 50', 'QSO Map', and 'POTA Spots'. The 'QSO Map' tab is active, showing a map of North America with several call sign markers. A zoom control is on the left, and a 'SHOW LABELS' toggle is on the right. The map shows call signs like AL7KC, OH1MM, N7HDD, VA4BDK, K7TSD, KF0, KR8P, VX1USN, KN7D, KPS, JF0, KJ7NXV, KD1W, W4WDK, and KB5QFU.

Celebrate and Share

Check the POTA website to see your activation confirmed.

Share your experience with the POTA community on social media or forums.

3:48 PM Sun Apr 20

HAMRS Logbooks QSOs Settings Profile Help Enter Callsign

TIME: 22:48:49 DATE: 2025-04-20 Clear Save

OPERATOR STATE COUNTY QTH GRID

US-0595 WH6FZY

MY GRID: DN17fj MY STATE: WA MY COUNTY: SPOKANE

Entries 42 QSO Map POTA Spots

SHOW LABELS OFF

Tips for Success

Tips for Success:

Use a resonant antenna for better performance.

Operate during peak propagation times for your target audience (e.g., daytime for regional contacts, nighttime for DX).

Be patient and persistent, especially if band conditions are poor.

Enjoy your POTA activation, and happy hamming!



The Considerate Operator's Frequency Guide

The following frequencies are generally recognized for certain modes or activities (all frequencies are in MHz) during normal conditions. These are not regulations and occasionally a high level of activity, such as during a period of emergency response, DXpedition or contest, may result in stations operating outside these frequency ranges.

Nothing in the rules recognizes a net's, group's or any individual's special privilege to any specific frequency. Section 97.101(b) of the Rules states that "Each station licensee and each control operator must cooperate in selecting transmitting channels and in making the most effective use of the amateur service frequencies. No frequency will be assigned for the exclusive use of any station." No one "owns" a frequency.

It's good practice — and plain old common sense — for any operator, regardless of mode, to check to see if the frequency is in use prior to engaging operation. If you are there first, other operators should make an effort to protect you from interference to the extent possible, given that 100% interference-free operation is an unrealistic expectation in today's congested bands.

<i>Frequencies</i>	<i>Modes/Activities</i>	<i>Frequencies</i>	<i>Modes/Activities</i>
1.800-2.000	CW	14.233	D-SSTV
1.800-1.810	Digital Modes	14.236	Digital Voice
1.810	CW QRP calling frequency	14.285	QRP SSB calling frequency
1.843-2.000	SSB, SSTV and other wideband modes	14.286	AM calling frequency
1.910	SSB QRP	18.100-18.105	RTTY/Data
1.995-2.000	Experimental	18.105-18.110	Automatically controlled data stations
1.999-2.000	Beacons	18.110	IBP/NCDXF beacons
		18.162.5	Digital Voice
3.500-3.510	CW DX window	21.060	QRP CW calling frequency
3.560	QRP CW calling frequency	21.070-21.110	RTTY/Data
3.570-3.600	RTTY/Data	21.090-21.100	Automatically controlled data stations
3.585-3.600	Automatically controlled data stations	21.150	IBP/NCDXF beacons
3.590	RTTY/Data DX	21.340	SSTV
3.790-3.800	DX window	21.385	QRP SSB calling frequency
3.845	SSTV		
3.885	AM calling frequency	24.920-24.925	RTTY/Data
3.985	QRP SSB calling frequency	24.925-24.930	Automatically controlled data stations
		24.930	IBP/NCDXF beacons
7.030	QRP CW calling frequency	28.060	QRP CW calling frequency
7.040	RTTY/Data DX	28.070-28.120	RTTY/Data
7.070-7.125	RTTY/Data	28.120-28.189	Automatically controlled data stations
7.100-7.105	Automatically controlled data stations	28.190-28.225	Beacons
7.171	SSTV	28.200	IBP/NCDXF beacons
7.173	D-SSTV	28.385	QRP SSB calling frequency
7.285	QRP SSB calling frequency	28.680	SSTV
7.290	AM calling frequency	29.000-29.200	AM
10.130-10.140	RTTY/Data	29.300-29.510	Satellite downlinks
10.140-10.150	Automatically controlled data stations	29.520-29.580	Repeater inputs
		29.600	FM simplex
14.060	QRP CW calling frequency	29.620-29.680	Repeater outputs
14.070-14.095	RTTY/Data		
14.095-14.0995	Automatically controlled data stations		
14.100	IBP/NCDXF beacons		
14.1005-14.112	Automatically controlled data stations		
14.230	SSTV		

ARRL band plans for frequencies above 28.300 MHz are shown in *The ARRL Repeater Directory* and on www.arrl.org.