

POTA

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West Valley Amateur Radio Association (WVARA)

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Agenda

- What is Parks on the Air (POTA)?
- The Hunters
- POTA Awards
- Activating parks
- N5YJZ Ops Details

Please ask question during the presentation



What is Parks on the Air (POTA)?

What is POTA?



“**Parks on the Air (POTA)** is an international [radiosport](#) award program that encourages [licensed amateur radio operators](#) to visit, enjoy and operate portable equipment in a variety of parks and public lands, always respecting other park users and local regulations.^{[1][2]} POTA issues awards to participants based on a wide range of criteria including the total number of radio contacts made, number made on each [amateur radio band](#), and for different modes of communication including voice, [Morse code](#) or [FT8 \(Digital\)](#).^{[3][4][5]}” from Wikipedia

History of POTA



- 2008 creation of World Flora and Fauna (WFF) by the Russian Robinson Club (RCC)
- 2012 relaunched as World-Wide Flora and Fauna (WWFF) adding most of Europe, North America and many other parts of the world
- 2016 ARRL ran National Parks on the Air (NPOTA) for the whole year
- Late 2016 US WWFF management group (WWFF-KFF) added POTA to its name
- 2018 WWFF and POTA split into different groups
 - A lot of US hams want to change the activation count from 44 to 10 contacts
 - Unintended consequence of the ARRL NPOTA program

Status

N5YJZ Status for 2013:

- 29 Qs per hour
- Min 14; Max 47 Qs per hour
- 41 activations

Park	Accepted QSOs	Hrs	Q/Hr
K-3399 Asilomar State State Beach (US-CA)	11	0.23	47
K-3522 New Brighton State Beach (US-CA)	30	0.73	41
K-3471 Marina State Beach (US-CA)	54	1.33	40
K-6452 Carmel River State Beach (US-CA)	10	0.25	40
K-3469 Manresa State Beach (US-CA)	38	0.97	39
K-1207 Wilder Ranch State Park (US-CA)	37	0.98	38



Q1 2023 POTA:

- Activations 45,745 1.7x
- Activators 4,547 1.7x
- DX Entities 62 1.5x
- QSO 2,259,494 1.8x
- POTA members 3600
- Over 350K callsign in DB

The Hunters

Hunter FTx tools



☰

Parks on the Air

📍

📅

🌐 N5YJZ

Active Spots Data will refresh in 19 seconds. ||

Band: All 29 Mode: DATA 11 Program: All 29 QRT: Hide 24
Hunted: Show 29 Sort: Frequency

Time	Activator	Frequency	Park	Region	Spotter	Comments			
6 mins ago	N2NWK	3575 (FT8)	K-7973 B...	US-MD	NC4TI	QTH	🕒 7	📄	🔄
5 mins ago	JE7ZGS/1	7041 (FT8)	JA-0114 ...	JP-CH, + 1	JA9HWD		🕒 2	📄	🔄
1 min ago	JR0CST/P	7041 (FT8)	JA-1164 ...	JP-ST	JR0CST	FT8 JA-1151 2far	🕒 1	📄	🔄
4 sec ago	JK2NWU/P	7042 (FT8)	JA-1480 ...	JP-ME	JA9HWD		🕒 1	📄	🔄
5 sec ago	S55G	7074.0 (FT8)	S5-0558 ...	SI-SP	WA7LNW-#	RBN -14 dB vi...	🕒 0	📄	🔄
41 sec ago	W1IX	14074.0 (FT8)	K-6735 M...	US-MI	VE7CC-#	RBN via VE7C...	🕒 1	📄	🔄
7 mins ago	KM6TAU	21074.0 (FT8)	K-3407 B...	US-CA	WE9V-#	RBN -16 dB vi...	🕒 15	📄	🔄
2 mins ago	K9JOY	21140.0 (FT4)	K-9557 J...	US-OR	WA7LNW-#	RBN -12 dB vi...	🕒 0	📄	🔄
20 mins ago	K7CAR	28074.0 (FT8)	K-9265 M...	US-NV	KC2FHG		🕒 121	📄	🔄
2 mins ago	DS5SQS	28074.0 (FT8)	HL-0266 ...	KR-TG	KK6KMU		🕒 1	📄	🔄

At a park now?

ADD SPOT

Alerts

Own Call

CQ

Directed CQ

Wanted Prefix

Wanted CQ Marathon

Wanted US State

Wanted VE Province

Wanted DXCC

Wanted Continent

Wanted CQ Zone

Wanted ITU Zone

Wanted Grid

Miscellaneous Alerts

Wanted Callsigns #1

Wanted Callsigns #2

Wanted Callsigns #3

Ignored Callsign

Decode Keywords

TX Watchdog

Out of Shack

User Defined Alert

Windows Notifications

No Alert

Alerts Priority

Worked B4

LoTW / eQSL(AG) Flags

Filters

☒ Enable Keywords Alert

Alert on keywords detected in decode free-text messages.

Note: If the keyword is part of a standard exchange it is ignored. Free-text decodes, with or without keywords, are NOT recorded in the Decodes History database.

Alert Keywords

Word Add >>

CA
DX
IOTA
NA
POTA
SOTA

Delete

Clear

Alert Color

Sample

Set Font Color

Set Background

Alert Sound

Wave File Path

Clear

Volume 50%

Test

Select

Default

JTAlert by VK3AMA

Help

OK

Cancel

Save

FTx tips



- Always work split
- If you are chasing a call and can't get through, try changing freq
- Be watchful for rare DX on the band. This can have a negative or positive effect

POTA Awards

What is required for POTA awards

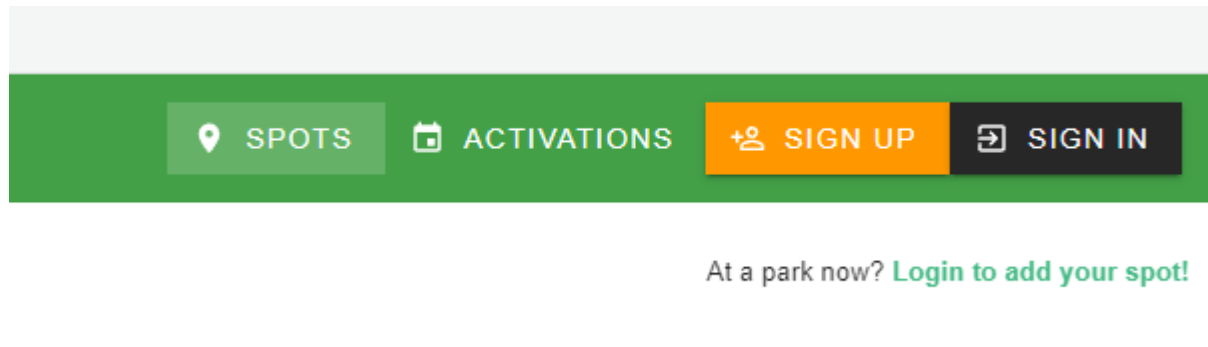


- For the Activator to receive credit
 - A POTA account
 - Upload you park log for each activation
- For a Hunter to received credit
 - A POTA account
 - Entry in the Activator's logs that are uploaded to POTA site
- There no card checking
- Hunters do not have to upload their logs
- No special exchange required

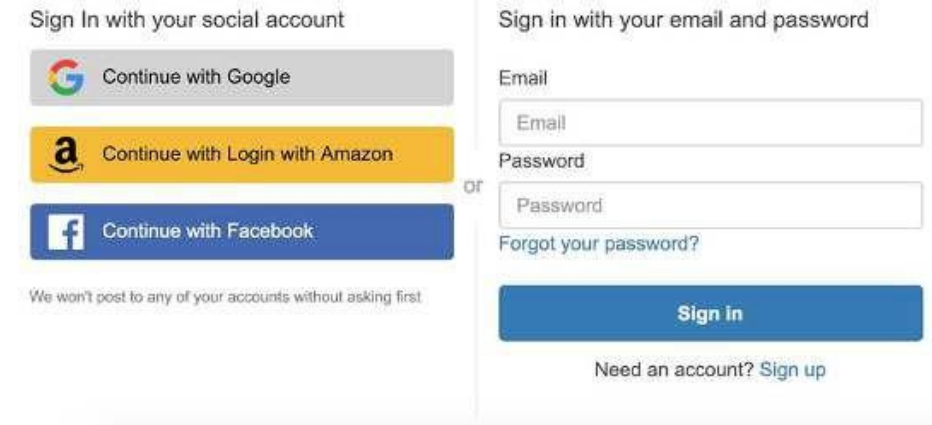
How to join the POTA

Creating an account is fast and easy.

Select the Sign Up link in the up right at POTA.APP



info@parksontheair.com if you need assistance



POTA Awards



- References Awards received at 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 75, 100, 200, ...
- POTA Rover Awards received at 5, 10, 15, ..., 30 references in single UTC day
- Early Shift/Late Shift Awards based on time zone
- All States/Provinces/Prefectures etc. Awards
- Repeat Offender Awards for operator or reference

POTA official Events

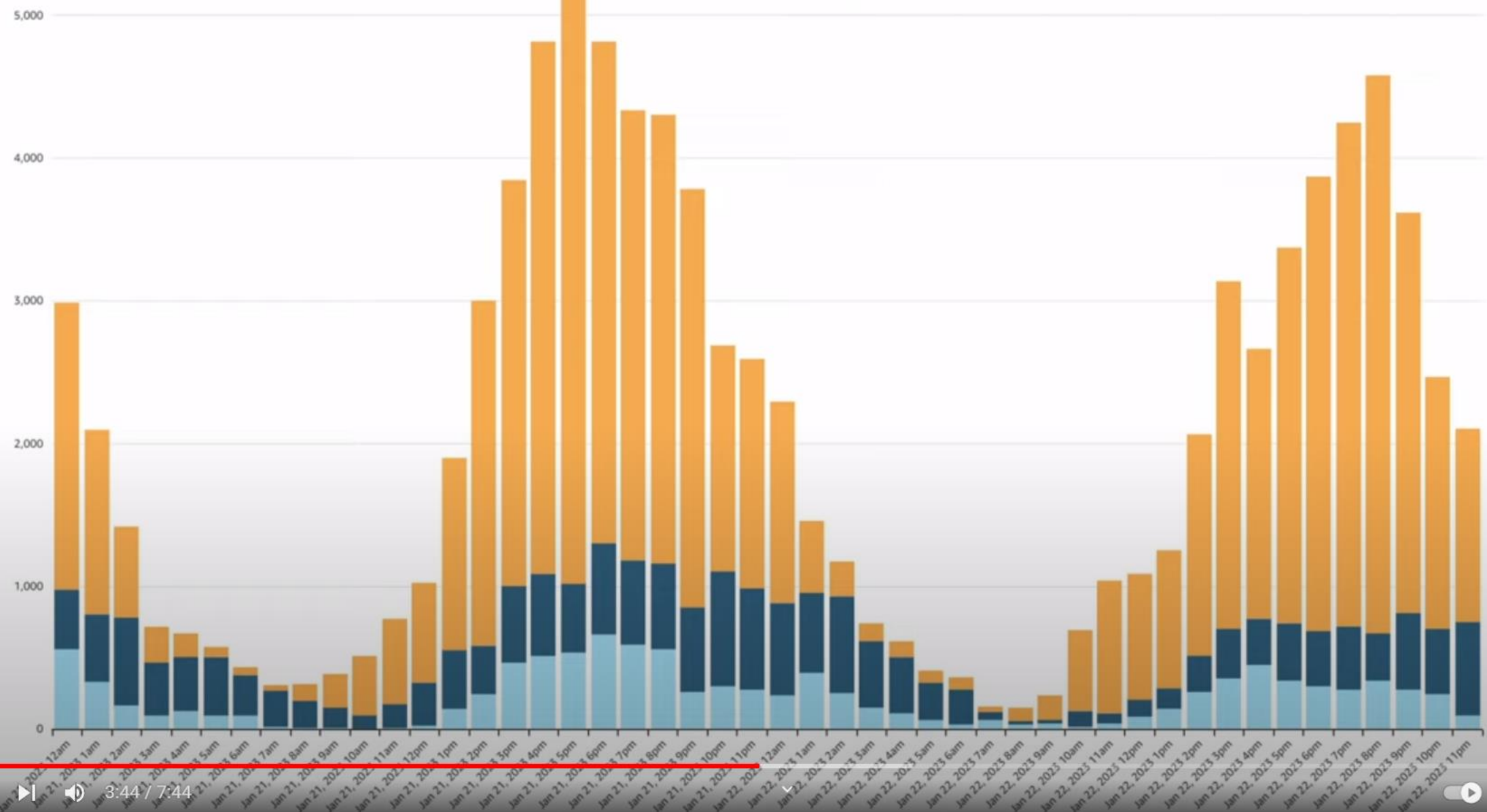
Starts at 0000 UTC and ends 2359 UTC on the days listed



- New Year's Week Jan 1-7, 2024
 - First full week of the new year
- Support Your Parks
 - Winter - 3rd Full Weekend of January. January 20-21, 2024
 - Spring - 3rd Full Weekend of April. April 20-21, 2024
 - Summer - 3rd Full Weekend of July. July 20-21, 2024
 - Autumn - 3rd Full Weekend of October. October 19-20, 2024

97,219 QSOs!

-  CW
-  DATA
-  PHONE

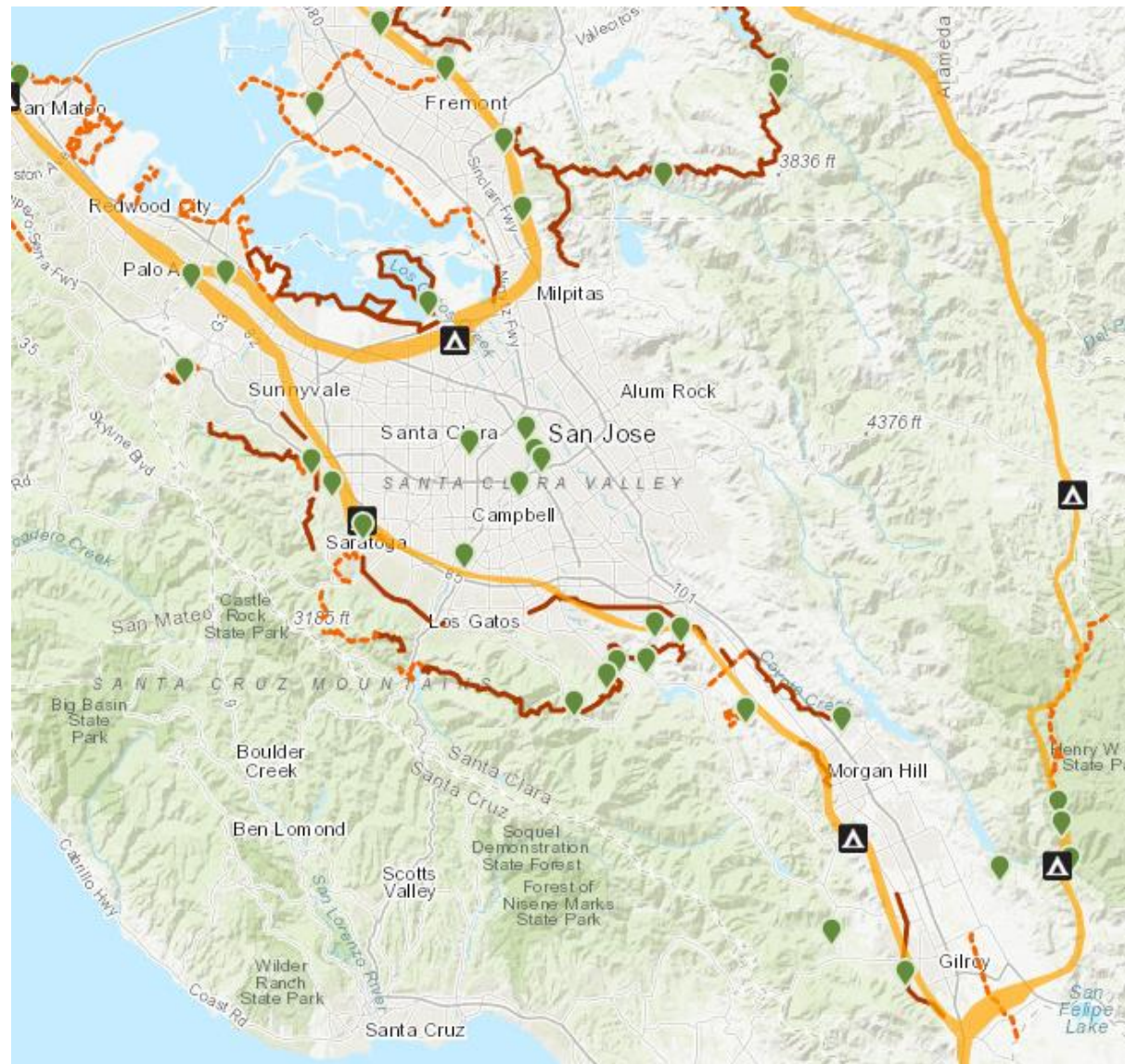
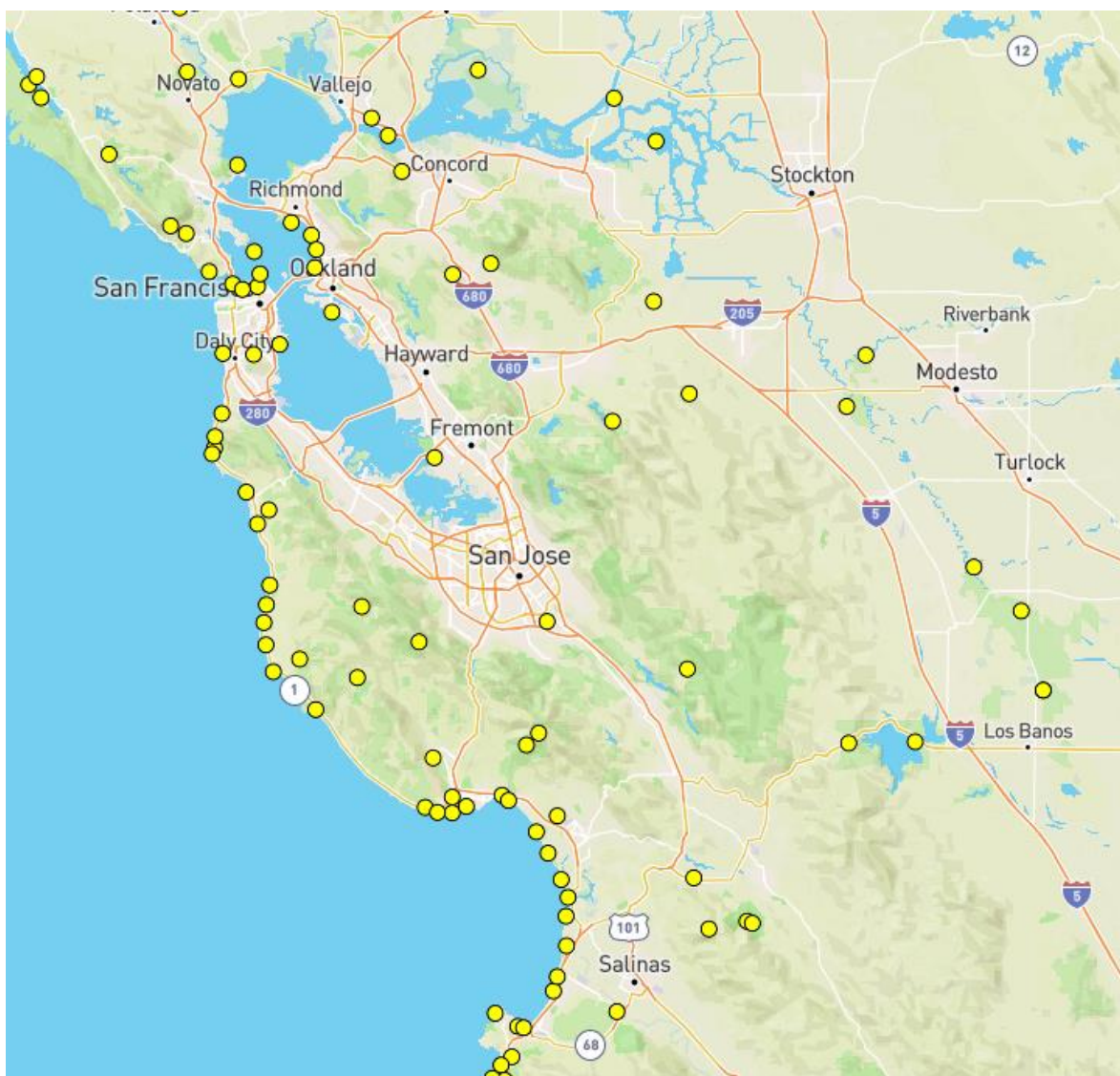


Activating parks



Activation Location and Access

- A park is considered open when the public has civil and legal access, or a special permission/permit to the public lands
- The activator and all equipment must be within the park's boundary and on public property
- If a trail system or a river is designated as a POTA entity by itself (not as parts of a land park having a defined boundary), the activator and the station equipment must be on public property within 30.5 meters (100 feet) from the edge of the trail corridor or river
- Activations of multiple references ("Multi-loc" or "two-fer," "three-fer," etc.) are permitted with POTA



What is required to activate a park?



- The call that is being used needs an account on POTA.app
- Before leaving you can enter activation details on the POTA.app site
 - If you do this and run CW or FTX RBN will auto spot you

Start (UTC)	End (UTC)	Activator	Park	Location	Frequencies	Comments
2023-08-15 00:00	2023-12-15 23:59	VO1AA	VE-4825 Sign...	CA-NL		SONRA club station in Cabot Tower - sporadic operation
2023-09-16 09:00	2023-12-10 16:01	VK2FSLC	VK-3171 West...	AU-NS	7144	(Future Planning), 40m, Voice, Possible CW.
2023-10-13 00:00	2024-01-15 00:00	BG9IYV	BY-0001 大槐...	CN-SX	14074	很好
2023-10-13 00:00	2023-12-15 00:00	BG9IYV	BY-0328 甘肃...	CN-GS	14074	FT8
2023-12-04 00:00	2024-01-31 23:00	KI5ZDQ	K-3019 Huntsv...	US-TX	Various	Will be here in the park for a couple of months, activating most days.

Add Activation

Callsign
N5YJZ

Reference
K-3585
Twin Lakes State Beach

Start Date (UTC)
2023-12-09

Start Time (UTC)
01:01

End Date (UTC)
2023-12-09

End Time (UTC)
02:00

Frequency
7074

Comments
FT8

CANCEL

SAVE



What is required to activate a park?

- Fields required for logs are **CALL** (callsign you receive) **QSO_DATE**, **TIME_ON**, **MODE** and **BAND**. No other fields are needed but may be in it without harm.
- By setting SIG to POTA and Sig Info to reference ID in your logging SW

The web app will pull out park info

Name	Twin Lakes State Beach	Street		PostCode	
Pri name	CA	City	CA	Grid	CM96ax
Sec name	Santa Cruz	Country name	Santa Cruz	Latitude	36 58' 45" N
Sig	POTA	Sig Info	K-3585	Longitude	121 57' 30" W
LotW	CA Twin Lakes SB	DXCC code			

- At the park
 - Setup up station
 - If you have internet access auto spot yourself on POTA.app site
 - Note for CW and FTx your spot will be auto updated as you change bands or modes
 - For phone you will need to self update or ask for spot update
 - Make contacts and have fun
 - If you have internet access, please update your spot with QRT when you are finished
 - Your spot will autotimer out in about 15 minutes (I think)

Submitting you log to POTA



- Export you log as adi using filename format of [callsign@parkNumber-activationDdate adi](#) ex N5YJZ@K-3574-20231206 adi
- Goto My Log Uploads on the POTA.app site
- Drag file into website and click the two checkbox and hit the upload

Upload Activation Logs

[REQUEST SUPPORT](#)

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

 N5YJZ@K-3574-20231206 adi (32.3 kB) 

1 files (32.3 kB in total)

Filename	QSO Date(s)	Callsign	Park	Location	Phone	CW	Data	Total	
N5YJZ@K-3574-20231206 adi	2023-12-06	N5YJZ	K-3574 Sunset State Beach	US-CA	0	0	24	24	✗

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.

☒ My logs are correct and I understand that logs cannot be modified once uploaded

☒ My logs are for activations that conform to the Parks on the Air [Rules](#) and [Code of Conduct](#)

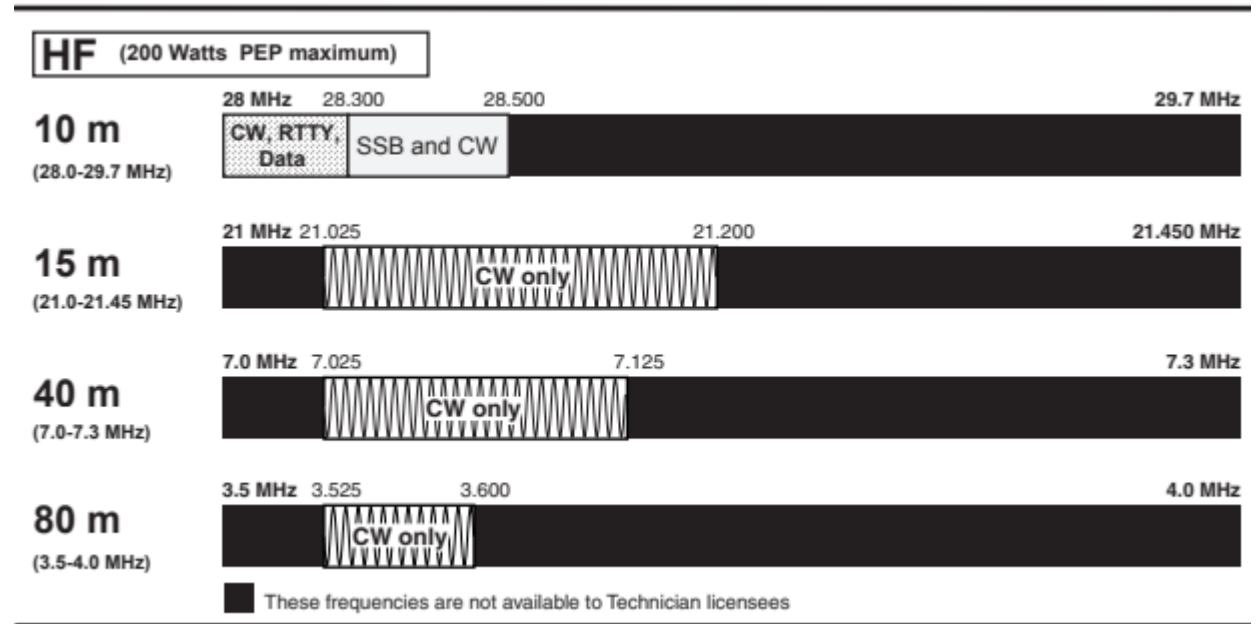
UPLOAD FILE FOR VALIDATION

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

Great times for Technician's to activate a park



- Jan 20-22 ARRL VHF contest and Winter Support your Parks event
- Maybe Jan 27-28 Winter Field Day
- June 8-10 ARRL VHF contest
- June 22-23 ARRL Field Day
- Sept 14-16 ARRL VHF contest
- Anytime
 - VHF / UHF Satellites
 - 10M CW, Data or SSB
 - 15M, 40M or 80M CW



N5YJZ Ops Details

SW Tools I use for park activation



- Dxkepper (logger)
- BktTimeSync by IZ2BKT (time sync via internet, GPS or manual adjustment)
- OutSpatial (iPhone / Android) CA Park info and boundaries
- Where Am I (iPhone) address of current location
- Ham Square (iPhone) Grid Square of current location
- FTx
 - WSJT-X Improved
 - JTAleart

My FT8 operation guidelines for POTA Ops



- Don't transmit on the same frequency as me. If everyone transmits on my frequency, I will only hear one or two you. Someone can easily cover you up and you may miss a contact with me. WSJT-X was designed to be used in split mode. Select the option "Hold Tx Freq" and select an open portion of your waterfall before calling.
- Skip sending your grid square when hunting an activator when using FT8/FT4
- Once you send RR73, you might not receive a 73 in return if I am working a pileup. If I send you R-## you are in my log. Do not worry about getting a 73 from me.
- If you can't decode my signal two consecutive passes, please stop transmitting until you can hear me again. I follow a rule of 2. I will only repeat a message before moving to another contact, change time slot or frequency.



How I deal with online logging

- After POTA activation, I export my log for my laptop
- Upload log to POTA site
- Use TQLS to sign and update to Logbook of the Word from Home PC
- Import log in to my master log on my Home PC
- Sync my Home PC with Logbook of the Word
- Then sync QRZ.com log from Logbook of the Word
 - QSL sync for JTAlert of DXKepper will not send the county info
 - eQSL is a nightmare for setting different location



If you hear or see a CQ POTA



Call the activator back and
make a Q!

POTA members 3600 and over 350K callsign in DB for Q1 of
2023