



POTA

Parks On The Air

POTA

- Parks On The Air – one of many activities for radio amateurs
- SOTA – Summits On The Air
- IOTA – Islands On The Air
- BOTA – Boats On The Air
- VOTA – Volunteers On The Air
- Many more

POTA

Parks On The Air – History

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 it is highly recommended 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.

POTA

- Parks On The Air – What does it consist of?
 - Activators and Hunters
 - Has really good website, easy to navigate, can find the rules, maps, registration, Code of conduct, etc.
 - <https://docs.pota.app>
 - POTA is not a contest, may take place on any amateur band including the WARC bands
 - Repeaters not allowed

POTA

- Parks On The Air – What does it consist of?
 - Simple - going to one of the many parks, wildlife areas, National Forests, National Monuments, etc, on the POTA website setting up a temporary station and activating the park
 - Possible to activate more than one entity at the same time
 - Possible to activate many parks during the day
 - Can have multiple operators using the park
 - All parks have a unique identifier
 - EG: Idaho Panhandle National Forest = K-4477

POTA

- Lets start with the activation
 - Minimum of 10 QSO's for a successful activation within a single day (Zulu)
 - Can be done using any HF/VHF/UHF radio equipment, does not require massive deployments, can be as large or as small as one wants
 - Is great practice for emergency communication deployment
 - Multiple modes – Voice, CW, Digital
 - Possible to hunt activators from your armchair :-)

POTA

- Rules for activation

- How is it possible to activate many parks during the day?
 - The rules for activation on the website allow activation of multiple entities

Example: Mount Rushmore, K-0786, is contained within the Black Hills National Forest, K-4524. An activation within the boundaries of Mount Rushmore would be a 2-fer

- How is it possible to activate multiple parks during the course of the day even if not near each other?
 - The rules require making at least ten contacts to complete an activation, then you can move to the next

POTA

- Rules for activation

- Activators must keep accurate logs
- Only activators submit logs (hunters get credit only after activators submit)
- Follow guidelines of park - antennas, generators, etc.
- No power limit
- Special consideration for QRP stations & Park 2 park
- Fully automated QSO's not allowed

POTA

- Rules for Hunters

Activators like the following for their log: Callsign, Signal Report, and State
Activators like to receive **actual** signal reports.

Be sure to use phonetics when first giving your callsign. It is best practice to use the NATO phonetic alphabet.

Sometimes the activator will be quick with the QSO, as they may have a pileup to return to.

They may also give you information about their portable setup at the park. This is an open invitation to share your station information with them. Be open that they may want to get back to calling CQ, as most activators are on battery power and have a limited time to operate, and some are exposed to challenging weather conditions.

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- Rules for Hunters

As a hunter, you do not submit any logs to POTA. However, it would be best if you still kept a log for your station. It is also recommended to upload your log to LoTW, QRZ, ClubLog, eQSL, or any other online confirmation service. In particular, **LoTW** is used by most award hunters.

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.

POTA

- Awards for everyone

POTA has awards for everything and everyone no matter what you do there are realistic awards that one can achieve, unlike some other award programs.

My Awards										
Search for Callsigns & Parks										
SPOTS ACTIVATIONS NZ2S										
Earned Awards										
Search										
Date First Granted	Award Name	Description	Badge	Endorsements	Repeat/Kilo Reference	Park Name	Operator	Rove Date	Additional Details	
2023-09-18 19:17	Texas Wild Rice Hunter	Working 600 different units								
2023-08-05 15:46	Oasis Hunter	Worked a single entity 20 times			K-3473	Marial Cottle Park State Recreation Area				
2023-01-16 20:10	Howells Spectacular Thelypody Hunter	Working 500 different units		20M, PHONE						
2022-06-21 13:15	DX Hunter	Hunting 5 different DX Entities	5							
2022-04-21 17:22	Stenogyne Kanehoana Hunter	Working 400 different units		20M, PHONE						
2022-03-28 16:37	Late Shift Hunter Classic	Making 50 QSOs between 0000z and 1200z	50							
2022-02-17 02:39	Ouachita Mountain Goldenrod Hunter	Working 300 different units		20M, PHONE						
2021-12-17 04:37	Enrubio Hunter	Working 200 different units		20M, PHONE						
2021-11-09 05:13	New Years Hunter	Making contacts as a hunter in the first week of the year			2020, 2021, 2022, 2023					
2021-11-09 03:13	Support Your Parks Hunter	Making Any Contacts as a Hunter During a Support Your Parks Event			Autumn 2021, Autumn 2022, Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Winter 2022					

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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.

POTA

- Awards for everyone

Here are just a few



POTA

- Awards for everyone

**SUPPORT
YOUR
PARKS
WEEKEND**



That
Jeff Banke
NZ2S

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

AUTUMN 2021

HUNTER AWARD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Johnston'.

Jason Johnston, W3AAX, POTA Coordinator

11/09/2021

Date



Hunter Award

That
Jeff Banke
NZ2S

has submitted proof of
having 50 QSOs
from any POTA entity
between 00:00z and 12:00z.

late shift

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Jason Johnston'.

Jason Johnston, W3AAX, POTA Coordinator

03/28/2022

Date

POTA

- Awards for everyone

Repeat Offender Hunter

Park	Contacts ↓	Next Award
Martial Cottle Park State Recreation Area (K-3473)	20	0 / 20
Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (K-0189)	16	16 / 20
Spring Creek Forest State Preserve (K-4423)	10	10 / 20
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (K-0648)	7	7 / 20
Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area (K-8303)	7	7 / 20
Ray Roberts Lake State Park (K-3051)	7	7 / 20
Pike National Forest (K-4404)	7	7 / 20
Old Spanish National Historic Trail (K-4575)	6	6 / 20
Oregon National Historic Trail (K-4576)	6	6 / 20
Cherry Creek State Park (K-1213)	6	6 / 20

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AWARD LEVEL
OASIS

**(K-3473) Martial Cottle Park
State Recreation Area**

Entity

08/05/2023

Date

Jason Johnston, W3AAX, POTA Coordinator



That
Jeff Banke
NZ2S
has submitted proof of having
contacts from the same Parks
on the Air entity more than
20 times.



entities to earn a repeat offender award. Higher level awards are earned every 20 contacts.


POTA

- Awards for everyone






























































POTA

- How to find current activations

 SPOTS ACTIVATIONS NZ2S

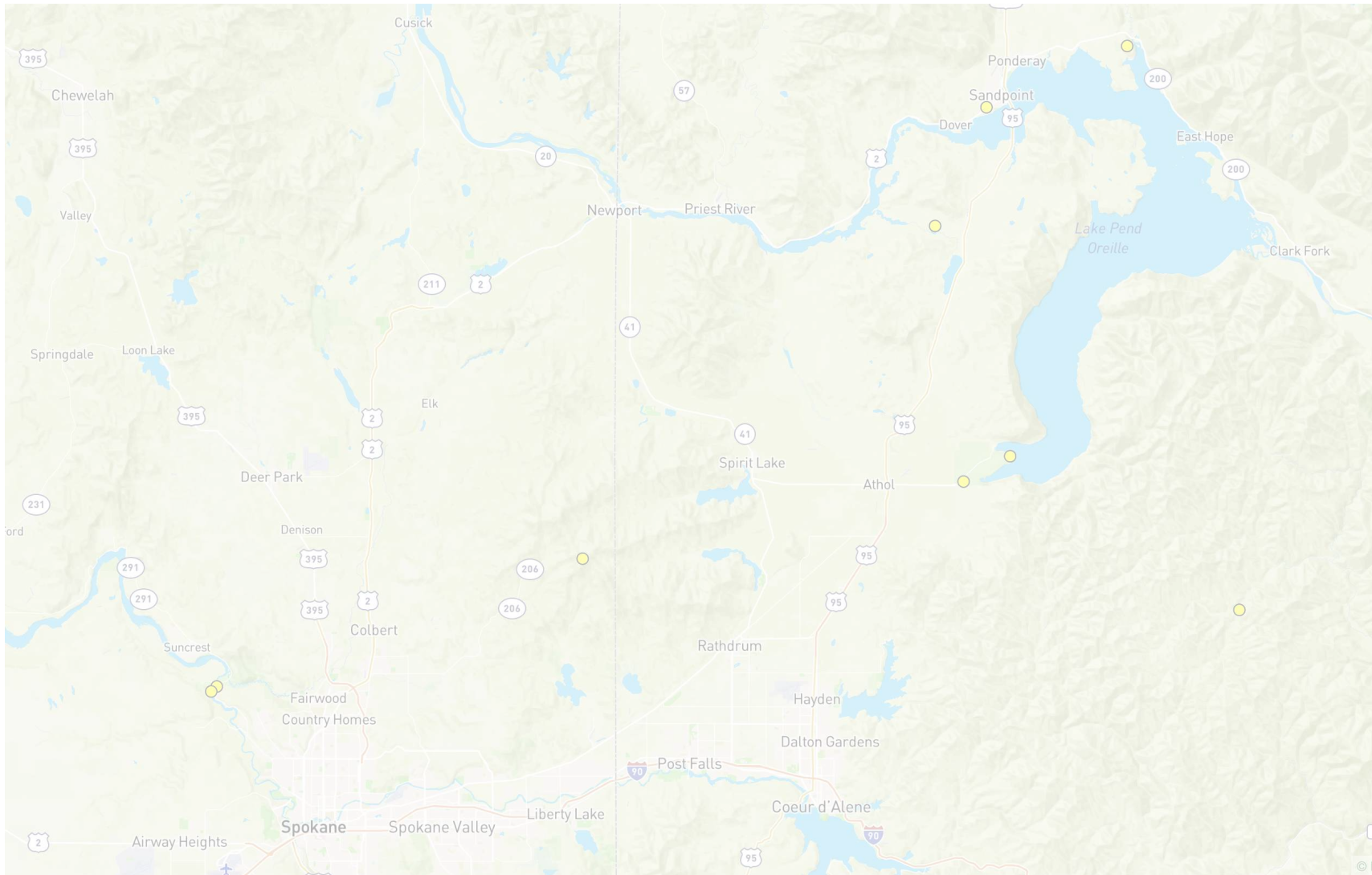
Active Spots Data will refresh in 15 seconds. At a park now? [ADD SPOT](#)

Band: All 38 Mode: All 38 Program: All 38 QRT: Show 38 Hunted: Show 38 Sort: Time

<p> VA3GKX @ VE-1368 </p> <p> VE-1368 North Maple Regional Park</p> <p> CA-ON</p> <p> 14347 kHz</p> <p>  VE1CNS</p> <p> No spot information</p> <p> Last heard 13 sec ago at 17:36 UTC</p> <p>RE-SPOT </p>	<p> W2AMA/20M @ K-2072 </p> <p> K-2072 Hempstead Lake State Park</p> <p> US-NY</p> <p> 14048 kHz (CW)</p> <p>  N2AKJ</p> <p> Cw pse use pwr bands are bad</p> <p> Last heard 17 sec ago at 17:36 UTC</p> <p>RE-SPOT </p>	<p> N4EL @ K-1995 </p> <p> K-1995 Sycamore State Park</p> <p> US-OH</p> <p> 14055.0 kHz (CW)</p> <p> KO7SS-#</p> <p> RBN 11 dB 18 WPM via KO7SS-#</p> <p> Last heard 18 sec ago at 17:36 UTC</p> <p>RE-SPOT </p>
<p> VA5MUD @ VE-2759 </p> <p> VE-2759 Montreal River Recreation Site</p> <p> CA-SK</p> <p> 14074 kHz (FT8)</p> <p>  VA5MUD</p> <p> ATNO ft8</p> <p> Last heard 27 sec ago at 17:35 UTC</p> <p>RE-SPOT </p>	<p> KB1ZZU @ K-7723 </p> <p> K-7723 John H. Chaffee Rome Point State Nature Preserve</p> <p> US-RI</p> <p> 14280 kHz</p> <p>  AD0BC</p> <p> 33 MO</p> <p> Last heard 28 sec ago at 17:35 UTC</p> <p>RE-SPOT </p>	<p> WQ9V @ K-0750 </p> <p> K-0750 Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site</p> <p> US-TX</p> <p> 28555 kHz</p> <p>  WQ9V</p> <p> SSB</p> <p> Last heard 36 sec ago at 17:35 UTC</p> <p>RE-SPOT </p>

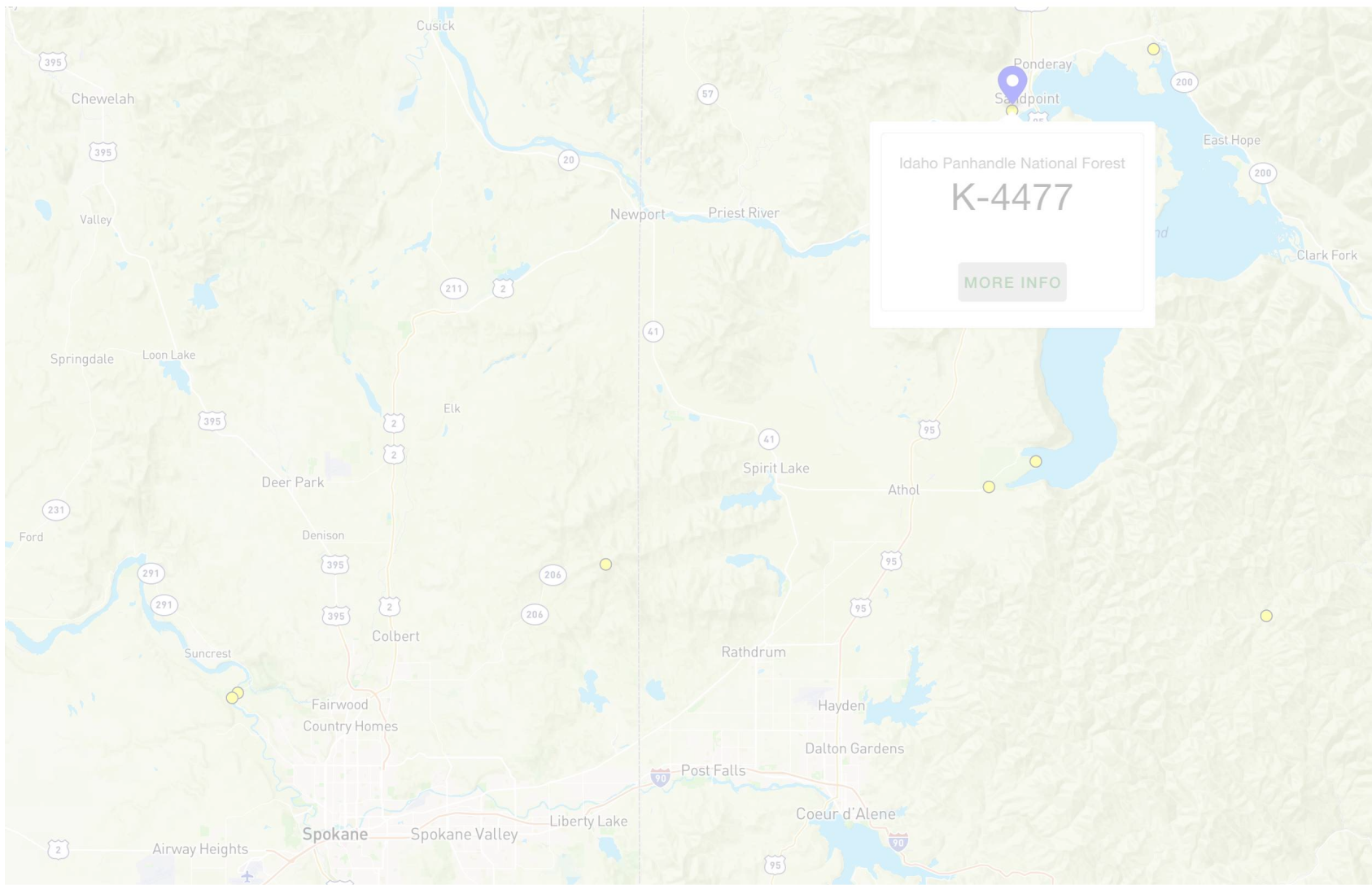
POTA

- How to find parks to activate?



POTA

- How to find parks to activate?



POTA

- How to activate?
 - Send an adi file to the website
 - NZ2S@K-3234-WA-20121018.adi

POTA

- POTA combined with SOTA

One other activity that can be combined with POTA is also joining SOTA (<https://www.sota.org.uk>) and doing a combo activation.

- For example Mt Spokane State Park (K-3234), has inside it several peaks that are also listed on the SOTA site, Mount Spokane (W7W/WE-006), Quartz Mountain (W7W/WE-012) and Ragged Mountain (W7W/WE-014).

POTA

- A little on the equipment
 - First there is no real difference between a POTA setup and any emergency radio communication setup



POTA

- Equipment – Transceivers
 - You can use any transceiver
 - Really depends on how much gear you want to tote
 - How big of an event you want to make it



POTA

- Equipment – going small
 - It can be done with nothing more than an HT and a good antenna (or nothing more than a rubber duck)



POTA

- Equipment – going small
 - It can be done with nothing more than an HT and a good antenna (not the rubber duck)

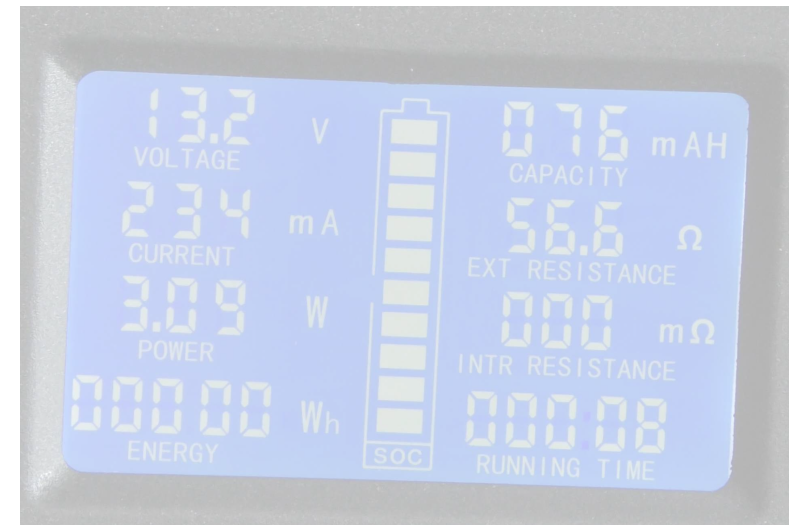


POTA

- Equipment – more typically
 - It is done with a mobile radio, either battery, solar or possibly even generators driven.
 - If batteries are used, bigger the better. LIPO's are better as they are lighter, and last longer.
 - If solar panels are used, it is a good way to provide power to boost batteries.
 - If Generators are used, an inverter generator is better as it provides consistent voltage.

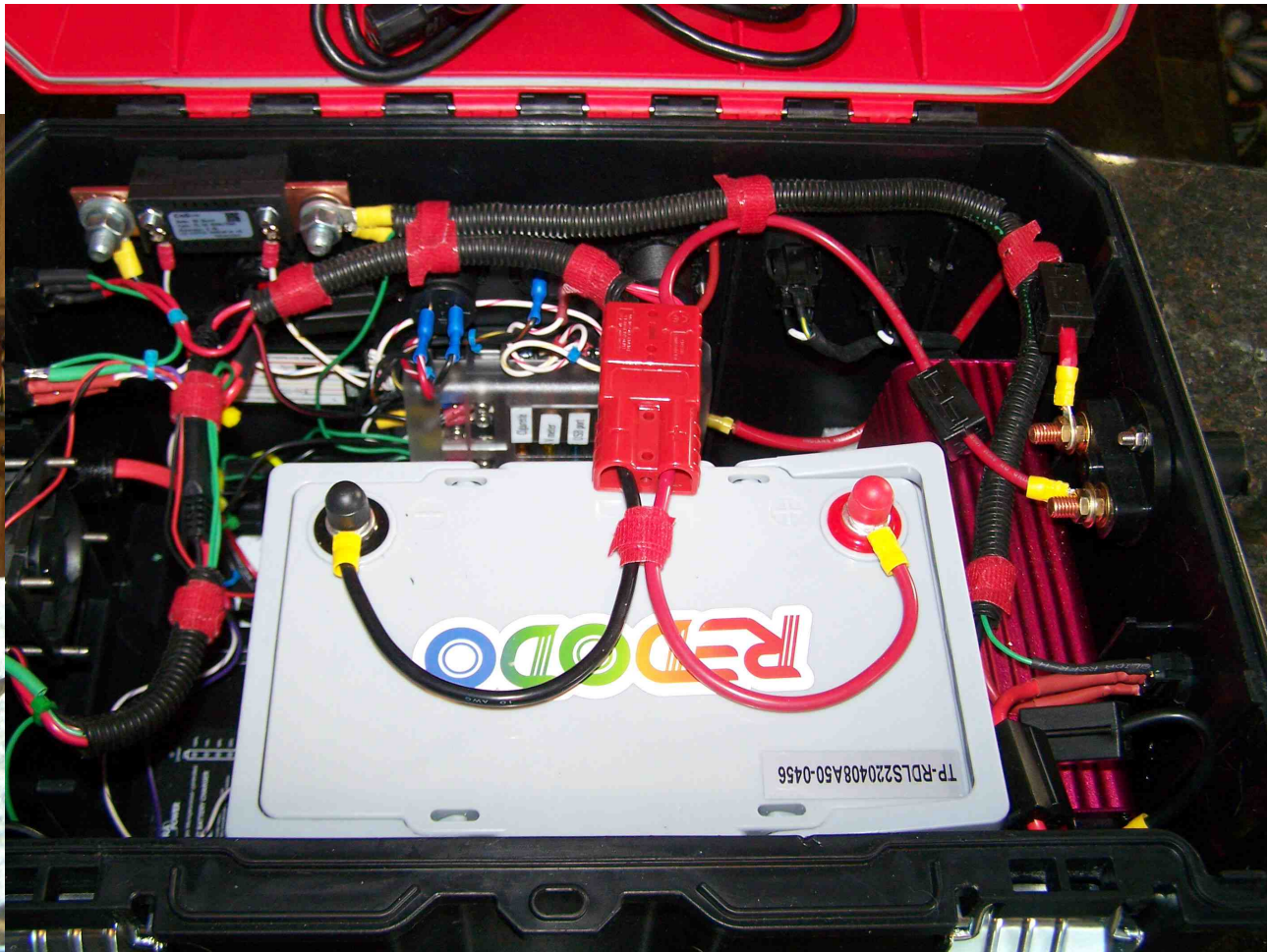
POTA

- More on the equipment – If you go big
 - You need a big power source!



POTA

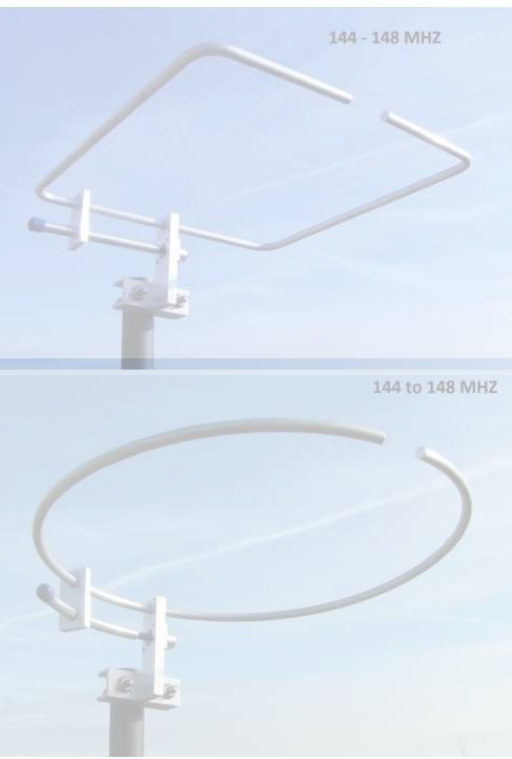
- More on the equipment – If you go big
 - You need a **big** power source!



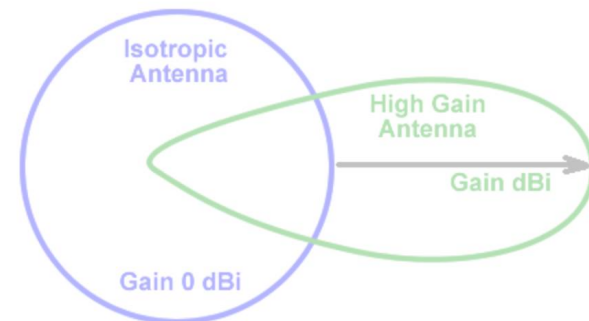
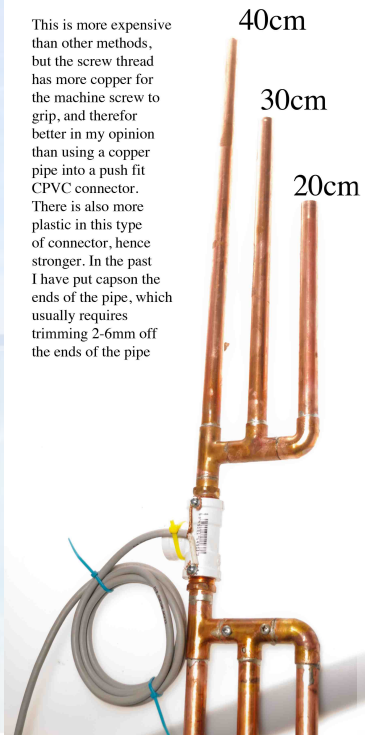
POTA

- More on the equipment – antennas
 - You need good antennas
 - VHF/UHF you can go to easily manipulated yagi antennas or other types

Eik Antennas 2M/70cm VHF/UHF Dual-Band Log Periodic Handheld Directional Antenna - 2M/440L5

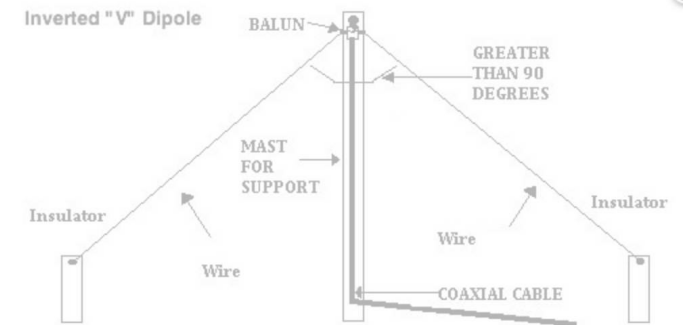


This is more expensive than other methods, but the screw thread has more copper for the machine screw to grip, and therefore better in my opinion than using a copper pipe into a push fit CPVC connector. There is also more plastic in this type of connector, hence stronger. In the past I have put capson the ends of the pipe, which usually requires trimming 2-6mm off the ends of the pipe



POTA

- More on the equipment – antennas
 - You need good antennas
 - HF you can use, end-fed wires to inverted “V” or sloper dipoles, or OCF dipoles to Wolf River coil verticals, Buddipoles or a variety of others.



POTA

- More on the equipment – antennas
 - But wait you need to get HF antennas in the air
 - This can be done using a variety of types of masts and methods to keep them upright.
 - Push-up poles are good start but need either a tripod, custom stand, guying, or a drive on plate system to hold them.
 - Trees work well with some kind of launcher to get the wire up there (*make sure it is OK in the park to do so*), some launchers use .22 blanks, some use compressed air, and therefore are noisy.

POTA

- More on the equipment – Mounting systems
 - But wait you need to get HF antennas in the air
 - This can be done using a variety of methods to keep them upright, from guying to hitch mount systems to drive-On plate systems.



POTA

- More on the equipment – Poles
 - I have used the following
 - 33ft fiber push-up pole
 - Metal push-up poles
 - Military 4ft fiber (also aluminum) section poles



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- More on the equipment – Launchers
 - I have used the following
 - Compressed air launcher
 - Bow and fishing arrow
 - Drone with weight, line and release
 - Slingshot & Dog Training launcher



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- More on the equipment – Logging software
 - My friends and I use the following on a laptop
 - N3FJP
 - N1MM
 - My friends have used the following on a smart phone
 - Hamrs
 - Others are “Ham Radio Logger” from Google Play
 - “HamLog” for the ipad
 - “Parks & Peaks” for the iphone and ipad

POTA

- POTA: <https://parksontheair.com>
- BOTA: <https://www.boatsontheair.com>
- IOTA: <https://www.iota-world.org>
- SOTA: <https://www.sota.org.uk>
- JOTA: <https://www.scouting.org/international/jota-joti/jota/>
- VOTA: <https://vota.arrl.org>

Questions?