



PART in the Park

Activating Parks On The Air with PART of Westford

April 2025

Club POTA Activations and More

Agenda

- POTA Primer
- WB1GOF Club Activation How-To
- World Amateur Radio Day 2025
- Activation & Open House Plan (April 26th)
- CW and POTA
- Mobile Stations for POTA
- Q & A



POTA Primer

What Is it?

- POTA “Hunters” make contacts with “Activators”, who operate portable stations in state or national parks
- The POTA.app web site lists active “spots” and tracks all activity, offering statistics and awards
- POTA is “easy”
 - No “exchange”, just contacts
 - Any band, mode (but no repeaters)
 - All logging/upload by Activators



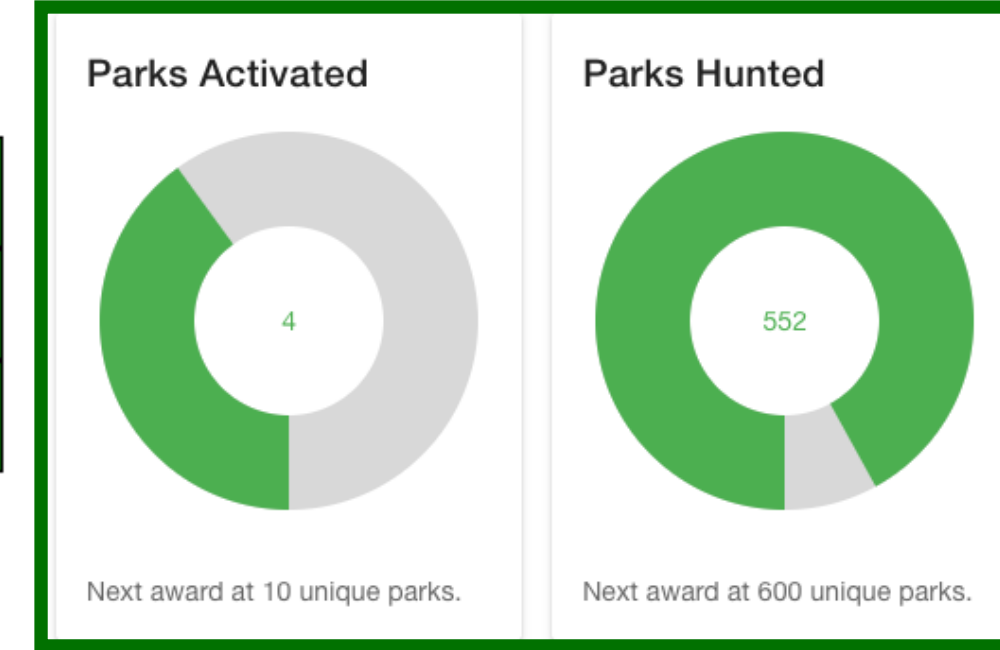
For POTA related info see the PART Wiki Pages: <https://groups.io/g/PARTofWestford/wiki/38676>

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

POTA Web Site

parksontheair.com // pota.app // docs.pota.app



- Sign up and validate your email to view Hunter stats/awards, or to submit Activator logs
- Read the operating rules and other documents
- View a map of nearby parks, or find the park / Activator you just worked
- You don't "need" an account to hunt, or to operate during a Club Activation
- ... but it's fun!

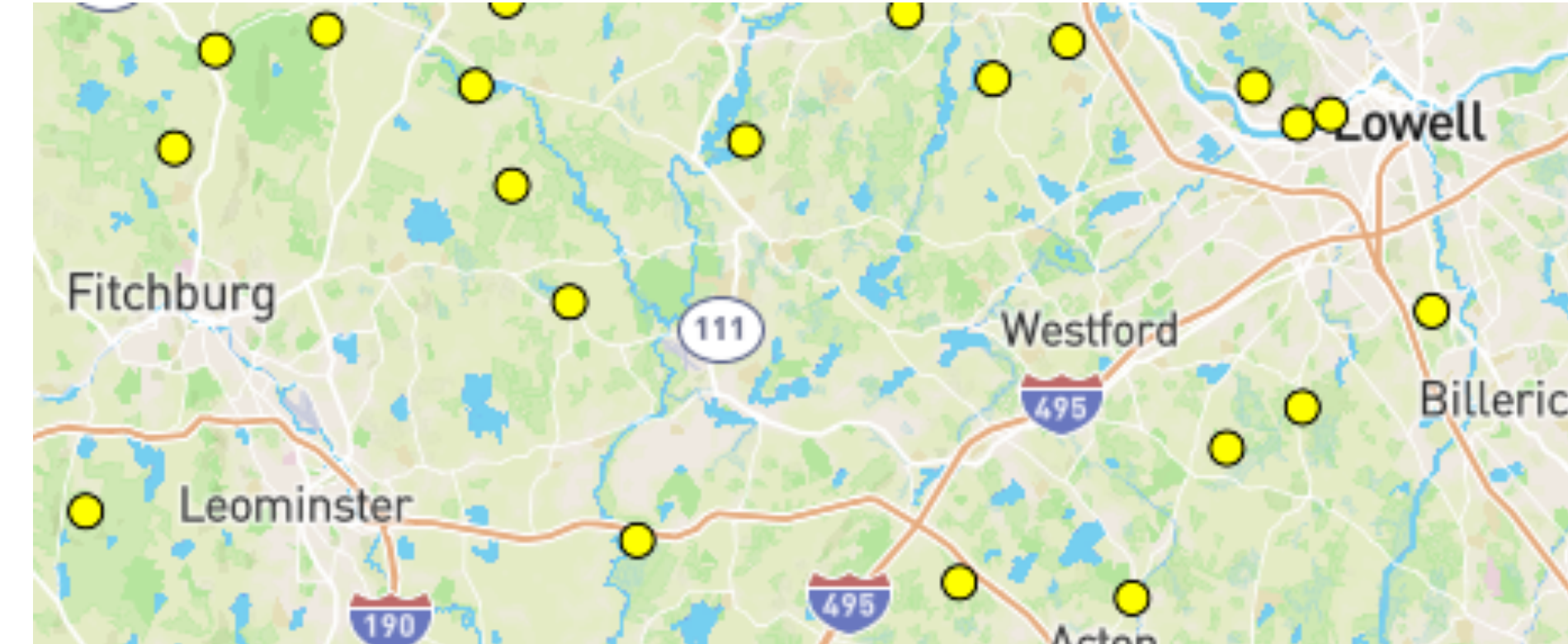
Hunted Parks		EXPORT CSV
Alaska	2 QSOs with 2 unique parks	▼
Antigua and Barbuda	1 QSOs with 1 unique parks	▼
Barbados	2 QSOs with 2 unique parks	▼
Canada	60 QSOs with 34 unique parks	▼
Dominican Republic	6 QSOs with 3 unique parks	▼
England	14 QSOs with 9 unique parks	▼
Honduras	1 QSOs with 1 unique parks	▼
Mexico	1 QSOs with 1 unique parks	▼
Norway	2 QSOs with 1 unique parks	▼
Poland	1 QSOs with 1 unique parks	▼

Hunted Bands		160m	80m	60m	40m	30m	20m	17m	15m	12m	10m	6m	4m	2m	1.25m	70cm	Other	All Bands
CW		0	0	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
DATA		0	0	0	0	0	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
PHONE		0	0	0	64	0	557	7	69	4	129	0	0	5	0	0	0	835
Total		0	0	0	64	0	567	7	72	4	129	0	0	5	0	0	0	848

Hunting POTA

You may have done more than you know

- *Just make contacts* - there is no logging required and no formal exchange
- *Use any mode and band* allowed by your license to make bi-directional QSOs (except terrestrial repeaters)
- Many Hunters will give their state/QTH and a signal report, or ask for the park number if it's not offered
- Some activators will chat at times - but remember that they may have many callers, limited time, limited battery, and other “compromises”
- Good chance to make CW contacts if you're less practiced - listen for spotted stations - most will QRS



Band: All 43 Mode: All 43 Program: All 43 QRT: Hide 35 Hunted: Show 43

K0ACP @ US-6711 US-6711 Kawkawlin Creek Flooding Wildlife Management Area US-MI 7061.5 kHz (CW) W1NT-2-# RBN 15 dB 19 WPM via W1NT-2-# Last heard 5 mins ago at 01:10 UTC RE-SPOT 16	W6CSN @ US-7889 US-7889 Presidio of SF National US-CA 14058 kHz (CW) W6CSN CW qrp Last heard 5 mins ago at 01:09 U
W1WC @ US-0161 US-0161 Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge US-AL 7258 kHz KN4MYZ No spot information Last heard 5 mins ago at 01:09 UTC RE-SPOT 5	W7HFV @ US-12144 US-12144 Little Mountain Picnic US-UT 14333 kHz W9PRM 55 SW IN Last heard 6 mins ago at 01:09 U
W7OTD @ US-4571 US-4571 Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail US-AZ, + 1 14242 kHz	K7CAR @ US-6096 US-6096 Beaver Dam Wash Nat US-UT 14074.0 kHz (FT8)

POTA Primer Wiki: <https://groups.io/g/PARTofWestford/wiki/38882>

Activating POTA - What To Do

- Find a park on the POTA map
- You and your gear must be within the park boundaries (check park maps)
- Spot yourself (optional)
- Call CQ POTA...
- ... or work “Park-to-Park” from spots
- Ten contacts from a park in one day makes a “successful” activation



Activating POTA - How To Do It



- Safety First - your own, and those around you
 - Weather, Other uses of Park
 - Awareness of surroundings
 - Antenna, guys, masts, trip hazards
- Basic gear can work perfectly well (minimum: radio, antenna, battery)
- Log your contacts (to upload later)
- It's better together - bring or join a friend
- Be an ambassador!
 - Smile, Wave, Answer Questions, Demonstrate
 - Goes double for park staff!

Activating POTA - Challenges

(Success can be hard-earned)

- Equipment: Needs to be portable and easy to set up. Balance awesome and flexible against needing more space, more time, or more battery!
- Location: Terrain, space constraints, accessibility. Are you working from/near the car or hiking in? How will you suspend your antenna?
- Weather: not just terrestrial, but “space weather” as well!
- Timing: How long do you have to set up, operate, and tear down?
Time of Day; Weekdays vs weekend / evenings; Contests; Park events?
- *Failure IS an option - but the only penalty is pride - so learn and improve!*
- *Have a “Plan B” when you can, but don’t let it keep you from going out!*

POTA Exchanges

Voice - Typical Exchange

- **Activator:** CQ Parks on the Air, CQ Parks on the Air, this is AA1N at US-0745, Alpha Alpha One November, CQ POTA
 - *Hunter:* KB9VBR
- **Activator:** KB9VBR, you are five-nine into US-0745, Concord Massachusetts, back to you
 - *Hunter:* Thanks, I have you five-seven in Wisconsin, 73!
- **Activator:** Roger, thanks for hunting, 73!

Voice - Park to Park

- **Activator:** QRZ POTA?
 - *Remote Activator:* KJ6ER, park-to-park
- **Activator:** KJ6ER, you're five-by-five in US-2435, go ahead with your park?
 - *Remote Activator:* AA1N, you are five-by-seven US-4571, that's forty-five seventy-one, whoo-hoo!
- **Activator:** Thanks for 4-5-7-1, have a great activation!
 - *Remote Activator:* 73 and POTA on!
- **Activator:** 73 from AA1N, CQ POTA, QRZ?

“Favorite” Parks

- Great Brook Farm State Park (Carlisle, US-2435)



- Probably the club’s most-activated location. Great open space and lots of parking, not to mention ice cream!
- Minute Man National Historical Park (Concord, US-0745)
 - Near the Visitor Center / Old North Bridge - but also along the Battle Road

- See Wiki for more ideas / submit locations!

POTA Parks Wiki: <https://groups.io/g/PARTofWestford/wiki/38914>





Activating as a Club

Let's put WB1GOF On the Air!

- Club Activations have specific rules
- The club callsign is the only one used on-air and earns the Activation ...
- ... but Operators are also logged and get credit for their contacts as well!
- We have a WB1GOF account set up with POTA and we're ready to go
- Station/operator logs need to be collected and uploaded via the Club account

Club Activation Wiki:

<https://groups.io/g/PARTofWestford/wiki/38883>



Activating as a Club

Advantages (and Disadvantages)



- Club Activations are mostly like “joint activations”, but...
 - “Passing the mic” between multiple operators is discouraged
 - Can’t make contacts within the park between stations
 - Operators get QSO credits, but not get park-to-park (we think?)
 - Need to log operators accurately, and upload logs via the club account
 - Spotting is more complex due to multiple concurrent spots (use /R01, /R02, etc)
 - Easier to get an Activation since all contacts are pooled
 - Great way to introduce new operators to POTA Activation



World Amateur Radio Day

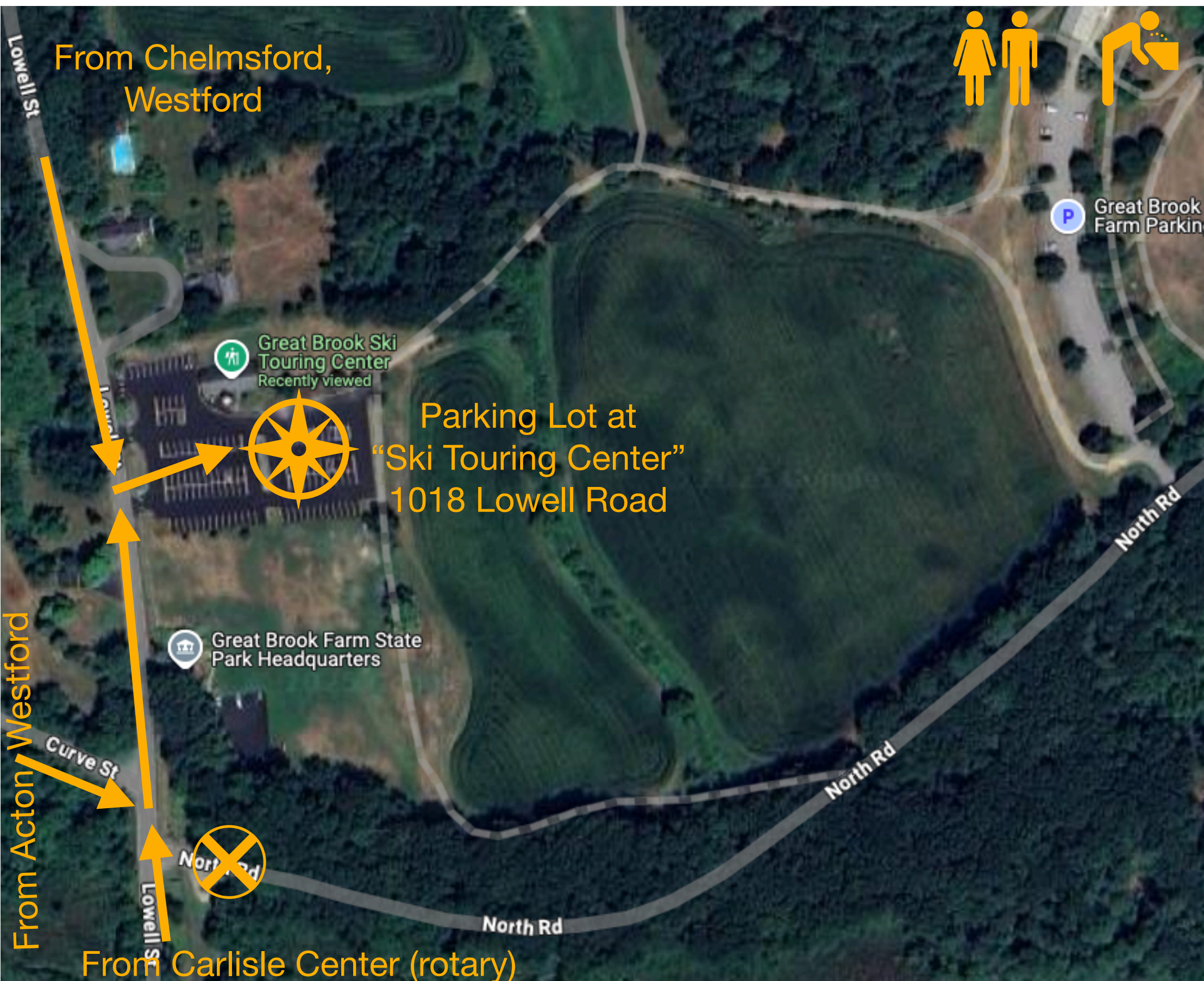
(or month?)

- *World Amateur Radio Day* is April 18 - this year is the *100th anniversary of IARU's founding*
- ARRL (with HamSCI and SciStarter) is encouraging *Ham Radio Open Houses* in the month of April
 - Focus on STEM, scientific advancement, and cutting-edge technology
 - Suggest showing weak-signal digital modes and emphasizing ham radio as a stepping stone to STEM and high-tech jobs for young people
 - Contribute to “one million acts of science” this month



WB1GOF Activation and Open House

April 26th, Great Brook Farm State Park



- Combine W.A.R.D. and a WB1GOF Club POTA
- Near “Ski Barn” at Great Brook Farm (US-2435)
GPS: 1018 Lowell Road
- Digital Station and Info Table for Open House
- Open House 11AM - 1PM (advertised)
- SSB and CW stations for POTA
(club equipment - just come operate!)
- POTA during and afterward
(weather and band conditions allowing)

Planning info at: <https://groups.io/g/PARTofWestford/wiki/39102>

WB1GOF Activation and Open House

We Need Your Participation!

- Volunteers to talk with visitors about ham radio
- Canopies / tents, tables, batteries (for two stations)
- Computer for Open House / Digital Modes Station

- Come and operate during the POTA Activation (during open house, and afterward according to how weather, band conditions, and battery power hold out)

Watch the [groups.io](#) mailing list for updates - contact Adam AA1N with questions or to volunteer

POTA and CW

A Perfect Match?

- Morse is great for low-power and lightweight setups
- Works with simple and small radios, batteries, and antennas
- Can be less obtrusive in the park (headphones, key rather than mic)
- Great excuse to improve your sending and opportunity to improve your listening
- Challenge yourself to do more with less!

Typical / Minimal Exchange

Activator: CQ CQ CQ POTA DE
[activator's call x2] K

Hunter: [hunter's call]

Activator: [hunter's call] TU UR [signal report x2] [activator state x2] BK

Hunter: BK TU UR [signal report x2]
[hunter state x2] BK

Activator: BK TU 73 DIT DIT

Hunter: DIT DIT

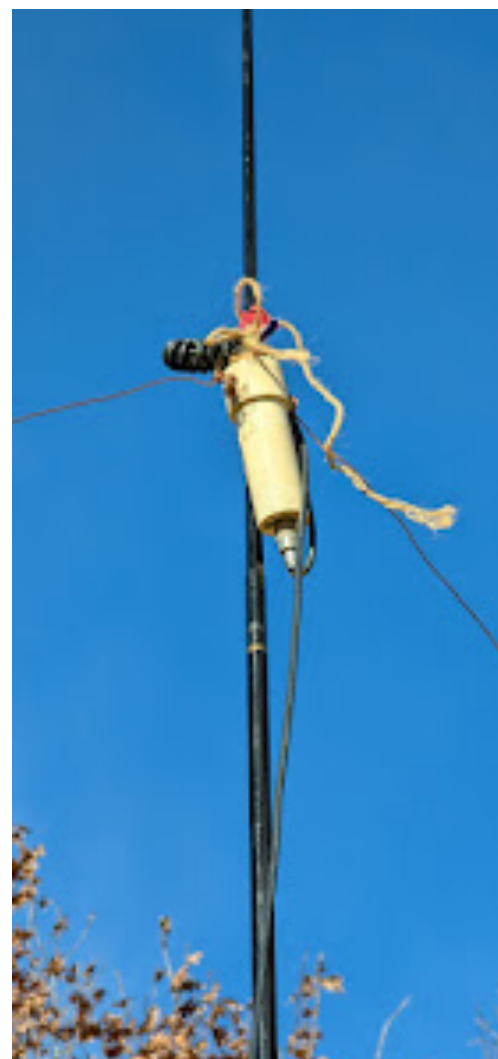
Goin' Mobile - for POTA!

Which One is Will?

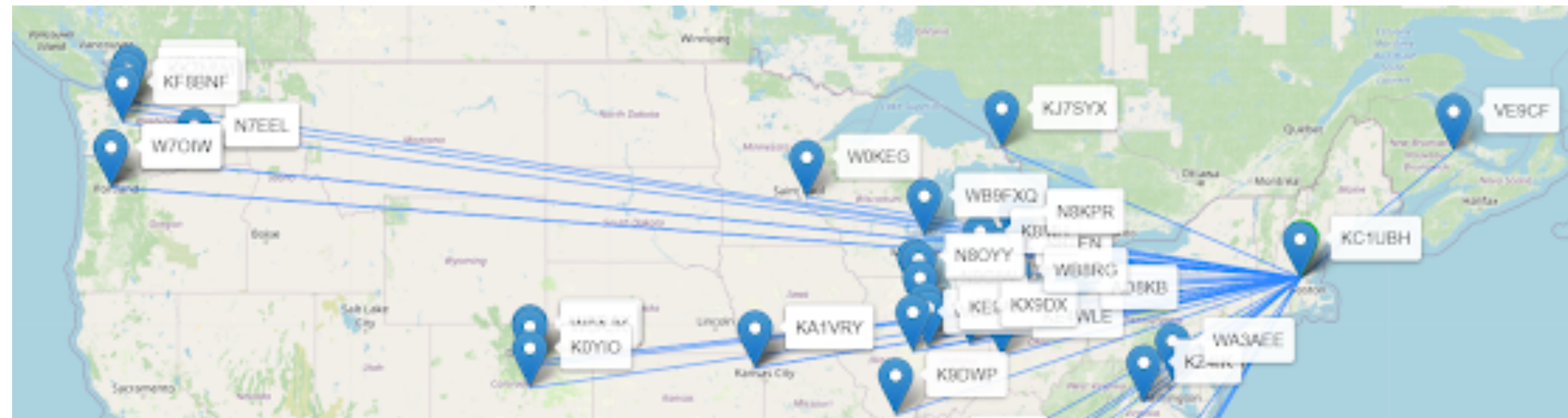




Many thanks to KC1UML, KA1ULN, WJ1WJ, KC1UBT, KB1OIQ, KB1GMX, KC1TJD, K1IG!



Q & A?



- **What didn't we cover that you'd like to know?**
- Where else should we activate?
- What antenna would you use on POTA?
- Do you have a battery for field use?
- Should we start a POTA-specific mailing list?
- Will you come to the Club Activation in April 26th?

