

SOTA (SUMMITS ON THE AIR) ACTIVITIES OF MIKE CARTMILL, ACØPR

Summits on the Air (SOTA) is radio sport program where Activators hike to summits and get on the air, thus “activating” a summit. Chasers call to contact them and each get points. Point values are determined by elevation in a given association (for example Utah) but have nothing to do with the difficulty of the hike. Only qualifying summits are eligible (must meet certain requirements



including a 500' prominence from any other geography around it). The main goal of most activators is to reach 1,000 points (often over a period of years) to achieve the status of “Mountain Goat”. 1,000 Chaser points merits the “Shack Sloth” award. The following are only the activator portion of my activities.

Shinob Kibe W7U/WS-124

Stats: 8/27/2016

Points: 1

Elevation: 3,306 ft

QSO's: 24

Farthest: 2,232 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 15 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)
OCF dipole
AME porta-paddle
Acid-lead battery (7 Ah)

Activation: 2nd (my 1st)



Trail report: Shinob Kibe has a pretty decent trail at the north end. You do have to go through a residential neighborhood to gain access to the BLM area and trail. The trail is not readily seen from the base, but if you start up the "ATV road" just after passing into the area, you'll see it. The summit has an aerial navigational arrow in concrete at the top (where there is also a logbook).

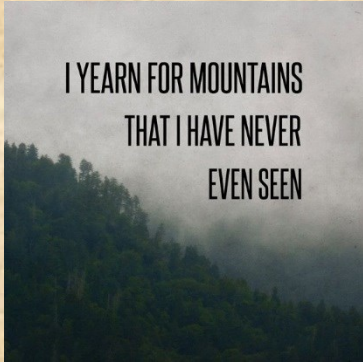
The experience: This was my first successful activation! I wanted to start with something simple and I had hoped it would be a first activation ever for this summit (however, after I submitted my information, someone else submitted that they had activated it three weeks before, but for some reason waited to input the information—hmmph!).

The hike was steep but short. It has a nice view of the city being right in the middle of Washington. At the time there was no one up there (on the way back down I ran into a couple on a hike). I set up using the equipment I packed up—for a mast I used a painter's pole, but it was really long and a pain to take up, so I probably



won't be using that again, I'll have to come up with something else. I also used a 7 Ah lead acid battery—which was much more than I needed (especially if I'm only going to be on the air for less than an hour each time). It's quite heavy, heavier than my radio and other equipment, so I'll cut that down in the future as well.

I was excited to get so many calls for a summit that was only worth 1 point. In only 15 mins. I had 24 contacts—that's keeping pretty busy! Of course when it was over I was really excited. I've started a new area of the hobby and really enjoyed it. It can be done any day and you can use any band (not true of contests) and you're only competing against yourself really. Very cool!!



Menan Butte W7I/ER-098

Stats: 9/3/2016

Points: 2 (total=3)

Elevation: 5,619 ft

QSO's: 13

Farthest: 1,842 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 15 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Acid-lead battery (5 Ah)

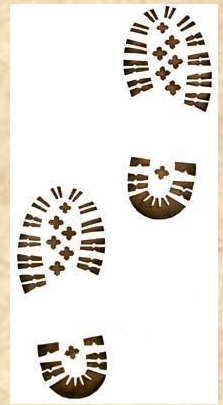
Activation: 2nd (my 1st)

Trail report: I approached from the south end (lower elevation lip of the butte) where there is a small parking lot and trailhead. It can be seen from the road but is a little tricky since a few entryways go to houses instead of the lot. The trail is well-traveled and some parts are "slippery" with small volcanic pebbles on smooth, hard rock at times. Not a strenuous climb with a few informational markers along the way. The summit is where all the towers are located (of course).

The experience: This was a quick one while visiting Mom and Dad in Rexburg. Dad and I drove to the trail head and started up the trail. I was going to make it a fast one so went on up ahead and Dad took it easy as he got to the rim. The trail



is good and very obvious since lots of people go up on the butte on a regular basis. I set up out of the way (had a hiker or two pass by) and got on for a quick 15 minutes and had a successful second activation ever. Good stuff, I will be doing this a lot in the future I think.



“Mount Moo” W7U/WS-016

Stats: 9/6/2016

Points: 6 (total=9)

Elevation: 7,660 ft

QSO's: 23

Farthest: 2,089 miles (AB)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

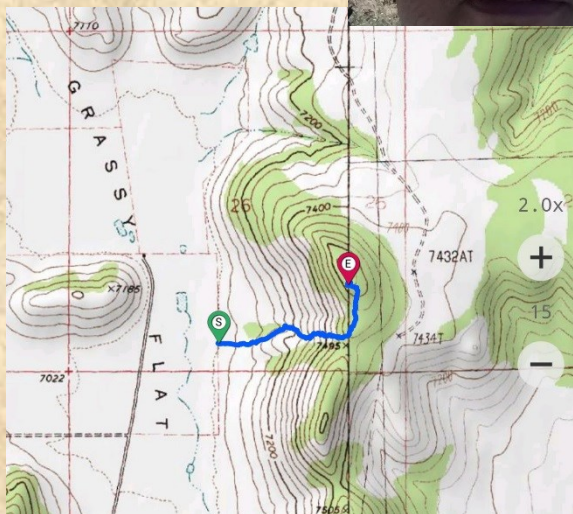
Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)
OCF dipole
AME porta-paddle
Acid-lead battery (5 Ah)**

Activation: 1st



Trail report: There are two access roads, one on the west and one that goes all the way around to the east at a higher elevation. I opted to go to the west as the drive to the east would take almost as long as the hike up to the top. There is a good access road right up to the base. There is no visible trail other than cattle/game trails, but not too bad. There's a nice outcropping of rocks at the top to operate/take pictures.



The experience: This was my third summit and the very first one that I had activated before anyone else—that was a pretty cool feeling to know I was the first ham to operate SOTA from here. It wasn't hard to get to, but definitely tucked away and not visited by many. The hike wasn't bad—some high sage and some trees. The top had some more trees, but enough open air to put up an antenna without much issue. Cool views and you can see into Pine Valley (lots of emergency vehicles lights there today for some reason). Had some good contacts and then hiked back down again. Great activation!



Navajo Point W7U/IR-002

Stats: 9/9/2016

Points: 10 (total=19)

Elevation: 10,575 ft

QSO's: 13

Farthest: 1,932 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 25 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)
OCF dipole
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)**

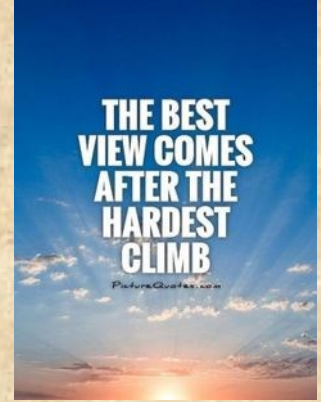
Activation: 2nd (my 1st)

Trail report: This is a very easy accessed summit as it is part of the ski resort Brian Head. From I-15 you can either take SR-14 from Cedar City then 143 or from Parowan take Highway 143. Navajo Point is easily accessed by dirt road when there is no snow. There are ATV trails that get fairly close, but even with a 4x4 pickup I opted to park much lower down. The final approach has no trail and has numerous fallen trees to overcome. Bear and cougar country. Nice little area at the summit clear enough to operate (facing south). Mountain a ski area in winter. Very close to Brian Head summit (W7U/SU-016). In winter access through Cedar Breaks National Monument



may be closed.

The experience: It was interesting to me that Brian Head, just a mile away, had 13 activations while Navajo Point, also fairly easily reached, only had one. The area had a few people around, but not busy. The actual mountain point, however, didn't have anyone on it. It is a bit of a rise, there's lots of downed trees. The top is bushy and has trees all over so putting up a wire is a challenge, but it can be done. With the bushes and trees, there were some bugs, but the breezes were tempered and you have a nice view of Cedar Breaks National Monument.



Brian Head W7U/SU-016

Stats: 9/9/2016

Points: 10 (total=29)

Elevation: 11,307 ft

QSO's: 17

Farthest: 2,059 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 20 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 14th (my 1st)



Trail report: This is a very easy accessed summit as Brian Head is a popular ski resort town. From I-15 you can either take SR-14 from Cedar City then 143 or from Parowan take Highway 143. There is a road that goes all the way to the



summit in good weather. Most vehicles can make this route. At the top there is a parking area and a stone shack which marks the actual highest point of the summit.

The experience: This was the second of two activations this day, my first double. Both worth 10 points and both fairly easy to reach—I was looking to boost my points since I started off a little slow. The summit is quite barren—rocks, dirt, no bushes or trees or even grass beyond a couple of inches.

It was windy, and not many people around so I used the shack itself to brace the mast. Even then the wind was heavy and right in the middle of a run of contacts it came down. I could hear the person calling even while the wire was completely

on the ground. I got up and put it back up as fast as I could, and was still able to get him. But it didn't take long until I just shut it down for the day. Still 20 points in a day was a nice boost. Below is the view of Navajo Point from Brian Head.



“Baker Hill” W7U/WS-107

Stats: 9/20/2016

Points: 2 (total=31)

Elevation: 5,672 ft

QSO's: 12

Farthest: 1,023 miles (KS)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

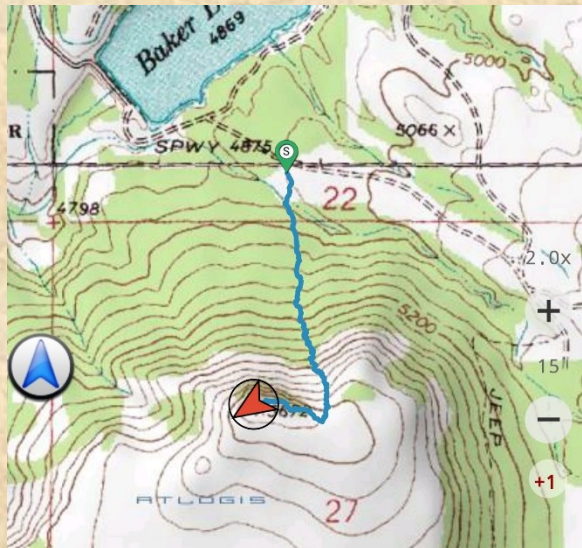
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st



Trail report: I opted to stay completely on the north side (although steeper) since it is BLM land. The south belongs to a private ranch. There is no trail to the top, just game trails and natural terrain features to follow. Very rocky at times. Access is across the Baker Dam and then a road that follows the base. The summit has a nice, large area; for my equipment a very easy setup with rocks holding my mast in place with enough trees to tie a wire to but not too many to get in the way.

The experience: Another summit that had never been activated before and that I was excited to get on the air. Since the easiest approach was on private land, I just took the steep one. The sage was high, lots of lava rock which made it a little difficult. It was a nice



day though, a little warm, but not bad at all. The activation went fine and I got it on the air. On the way back down it seemed someone was calling out to me, but I wasn't sure—like maybe they were on the top as I was almost all the way down. It sounded like a “helloo” but since I was hiking down, quickly and noisily, I couldn't be sure. I figured it might have been someone from the ranch wanting to know what I was doing or something, but never saw them. Oh well, no big deal.



“Cartmill Point” W7U/WS-066

Stats: 9/23/2016

Points: 4 (total=35)

Elevation: 6,835 ft

QSO's: 14

Farthest: 2,252 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st



Trail report: Access is gained by a road on BLM land which goes all the way to the top of West Mountain Peak and passes near a good place to start the hike. There is even a leveled-off area and a place to park by the fence line. The road up is definitely for 4-wheel drive, however. The first section is the steepest and care should be taken with the loose rock. There is no trail, but a number of game trails do help the ascent. Quite rocky. Beautiful view on top!

The experience: This is one I see from my back deck about every day and wanted to be the one to activate for the first time ever. I took just under an hour to drive to the start of the hike. The road can be tricky though. The first part of the hike is really steep. From there it's not as bad although it's still steep and rocky. I scared up a few deer on this one as well.

Set up is easy as there's plenty of room and rocks to steady the mast. It was an enjoyable activation and I was excited to get this one done.





Strawberry Point W7U/KA-006

Stats: 10/8/2016

Points: 8 (total=43)

Elevation: 9,016 ft

QSO's: 19

Farthest: 1,969 miles (FL)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 1st



Trail report: There are two ways to reach the point, a long road along Strawberry Ridge (used for hunting) or the valley road (Strawberry Point Rd). WAY faster to take the valley road. This is one where you may want to park on the top loop (a few parking spots) then hike down to the minimum elevation and hike back up. The actual point is rocky and extends out over an incredible view. Caution should be taken. There are a few trees nearby and a nice flat, dirt area to operate from.

The experience: This was a quick one that my Dad (KC7EC) did after some morning hunting, which yielded no results.

Because of that I didn't take the time to take as many photos and videos as I usually do. It's pretty easy to get to once you're in the area and there's even a little parking area nearby. I strapped the mast to a tree stump and made a few contacts. I didn't



want to continue on too long since I didn't want it to end up being boring for Dad, but he's always a good sport with such things. The actual highest point is probably on the outcropping of rock there, but the drop offs are really far down and the outcropping is thin and not very safe looking.



Veyo Volcano W7U/WS-113

Stats: 10/20/2016

Points: 1 (total=44)

Elevation: 5,329 ft

QSO's: 24

Farthest: 2,135 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 2nd (my 1st)

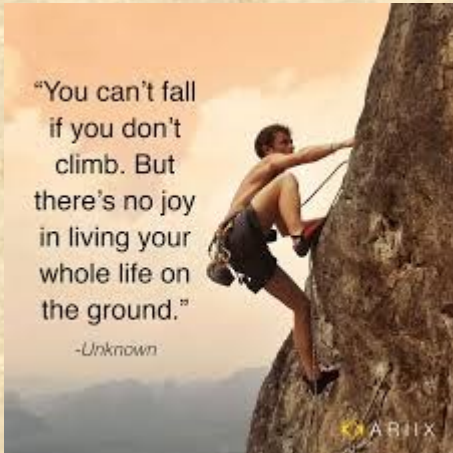
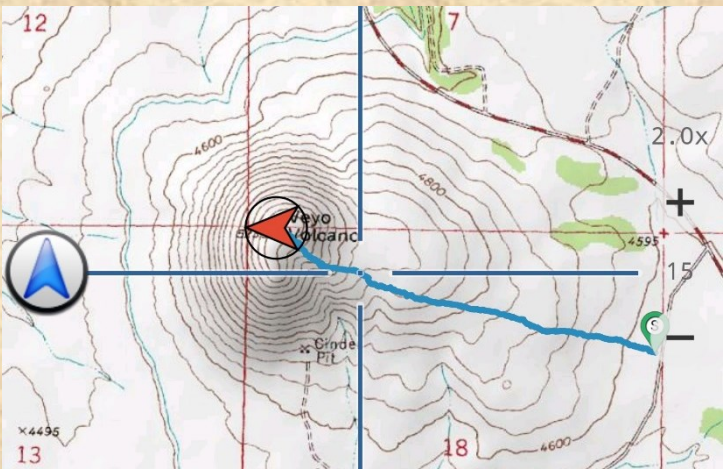
Trail report: I

decided to go with an approach from the east where the slope is more gradual, although the hike is longer. There is a recreation access road, but no good place to park until you're at the south of the volcano, so I got off as far as possible. There is a small parking lot to the northeast of the volcano, however there is a barbed wire fence to negotiate if



you park there and is a little more inclined. Careful footing is required with all the lava rock. I scared up a coyote a little over halfway up. Benchmark and geocache at the summit.

The experience: This is one I wanted to do since I started doing SOTA. It's fairly close, impressive looking, and I like volcanos as it is. The side is really steep, so going the longer yet easier route was the way to go. Of course, lots of lava rock. Pretty interesting all the way though. At the top there's plenty of room to set up and still have a nice view. I didn't get a lot of pictures on the way up and the coyote was too fast to get a camera out in time as well. This is another one that I will probably do each year even though it's only worth a point.



Big Mountain W7U/SU-051

Stats: 10/22/2016

Points: 4 (total=48)

Elevation: 7,230 ft

QSO's: 21

Farthest: 2,251 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 4th (my 1st)

Trail report: There is a pretty good road to the north of the mountain that leads all the way to the very top, where all the towers are located. Of course, for purposes of activation, you can park at the first tower reached (lower elevation) and hike down to the required elevation change and then proceed to the top (no other parking areas available until that is reached). The numerous towers cause a lot of QRN on certain bands.

The experience: The mountain road is pretty nice and can be



accessed in good weather without any problems by a pickup. Lots of antennas create a bunch of interference though—it was REALLY noisy on the bands and hard to hear the calls, but still got 21 contacts so it wasn't bad enough to stop it from being successful. The top is mostly cleared near the shacks. There's a fence and on the other side is still natural brush. You can see to Enterprise to the north and pretty far to the south as well.



"E' Mountain" W7U/WS-098

Stats: 10/27/2016

Points: 2 (total=50)

Elevation: 6,312 ft

QSO's: 30

Farthest: 2,135 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 50 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 1st

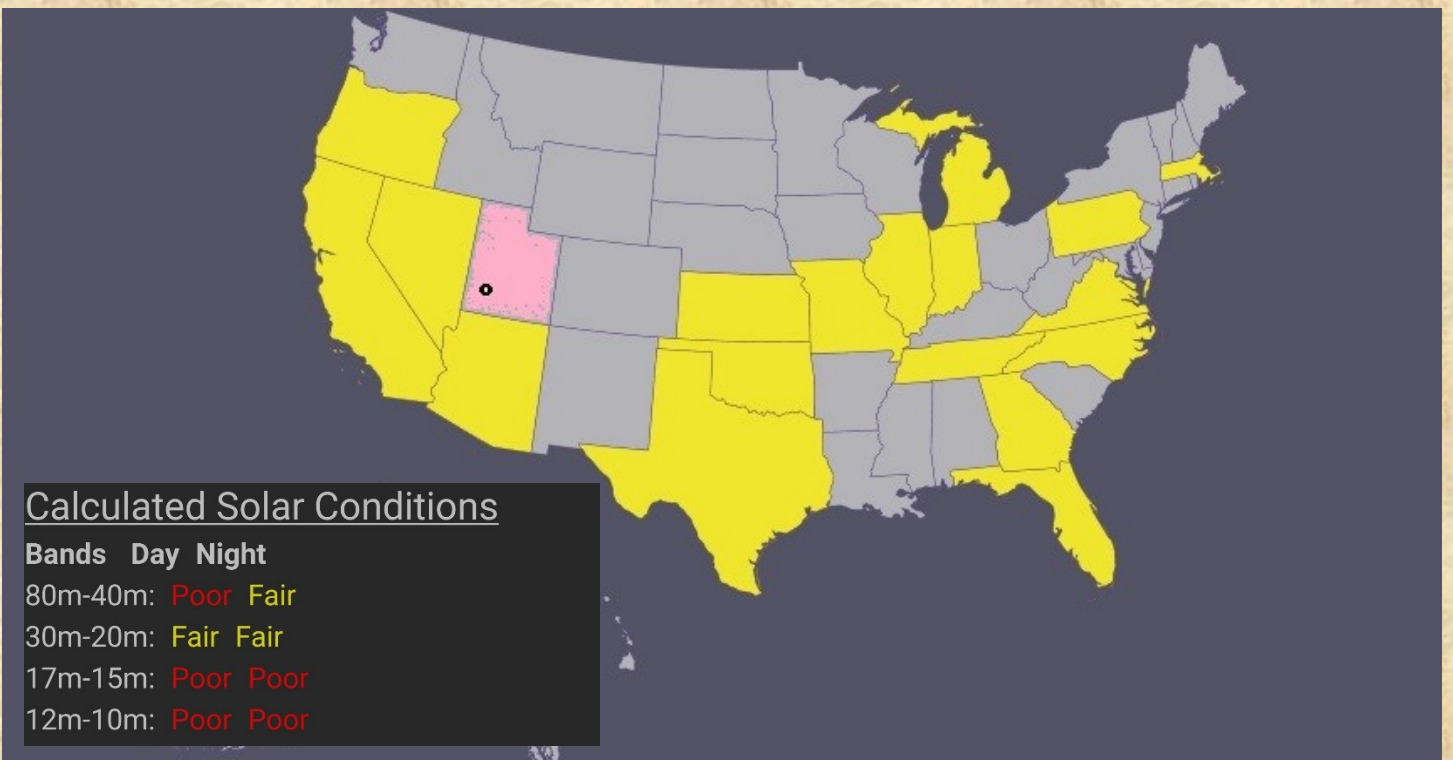


Trail report: Access is gained through the town of Enterprise, 200 W. Once past the farms it is a known hunting area. There are roads which approach from a number of directions. I used the north route (I was on the eastern approach earlier in the season, that road was much rougher). I opted to park a bit to the northeast and hike in from there. There are a number of routes to go to the "E", but I went for a gentler slope approaching to the north and just past (west) of the gravel pit. It was actually fairly nice and a bit grassy. There is an



ATV trail to the summit from a different approach. Plenty of sage and scrub oak to move past otherwise. The summit itself is small lava rock, but there are plenty of trees.

The experience: Another nice day and a good hike. It's not a big mountain, but it is steep at times. Most sage brush and a few trees. Didn't see anyone else the whole time I was out there. The top had some trees and was a "rounded" summit (pictured above). This was the first activation for this summit, which is always cool. (Below is my first attempt at showing a contact map and using conditions)



Little Black Mountain W7A/NM-136

Stats: 11/3/2016

Points: 4 (total=54)

Elevation: 3,504 ft

QSO's: 20

Farthest: 1,932 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 15 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 2nd (my 1st)



Trail report: I gained access by taking the Southern Parkway (leads to St. George, UT airport). There is a very new community being built to the northwest of the mountain.

It was easy to access the mountain from that community.

Private property in the future may change the current accessibility. There is a barbed wire fence that is the Arizona-Utah border which I found pretty easy to cross. However, to avoid it, you may continue to a point where you don't have to cross it in the



neighborhood, but then you would have a farther hike. There is no trail. Watch for cacti and loose rock. For some reason there are three benchmarks at the summit within 15 feet of each other.

The experience: The Utah-Arizona border crosses right through this mountain. You have to cross the border which is a regular barbed-wire fence. It's kind of rocky, and they are indeed, black. It's a good hike and the top gives you a nice view of the St. George area.



Snow Benchmark W7U/WS-109

Stats: 11/10/2016

Points: 2 (total=56)

Elevation: 5,570 ft

QSO's: 10

Farthest: 1,932 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 15 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 2nd (my 1st)



Trail report: I would not suggest trying to access this peak from Snow Canyon State Park. There is a trailhead between Dammeron Valley and Veyo, there is a sign indicating the entry--"Red Mountain Trail". There is a nice parking lot and trail map. It is about 3 miles on the trail before needing to leave the trail and climb to the summit. The trail is somewhat rough (just hiking and horses)--very rocky in parts, so plan a little extra time. The last part of the hike off-trail gets a little technical near the top. There's a benchmark at the summit.

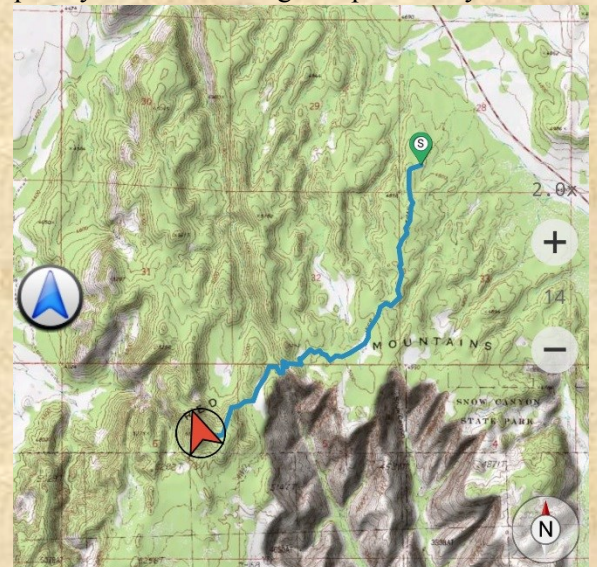


The experience: The hike was a little rougher than I had figured. There's a very distinctive trail, but it was really rocky in parts so you have to watch each step.

Along the way there are some great views of the canyon. After a while I left the trail to reach the summit. There's definitely a right route and a wrong route, but you'll see the wrong route quickly as there is a large drop off and you won't be able to go that way.



The summit is pretty "pointy" and there's not a lot of room to set up, although it still can be done. I didn't stay on long as I needed to get back and go to



some meetings that night. That's the hardest part about some activations—the time. I don't always want to wait until a weekend to go out, but there are often times when you got to get back so time management becomes important.

Anyway, it was successful although short. A good activation.



Bloomington Hill W7U/WS-123

Stats: 11/17/2016

Points: 1 (total=57)

Elevation: 3,470 ft

QSO's: 20

Farthest: 2,253 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 7th (my 1st)



Trail report: The hike can either begin at the base of the hill or up much higher. There is a road that goes up to near the end, although it is better suited for a jeep or ATV. Personally, I chose to start hiking from the base. There are numerous trails in the area, the road



begins to the south of the power station. Once at the end of the road, a hiking/bike trail continues. The most scenic route runs through the huge boulders slightly to the north. You eventually come up out of the boulders

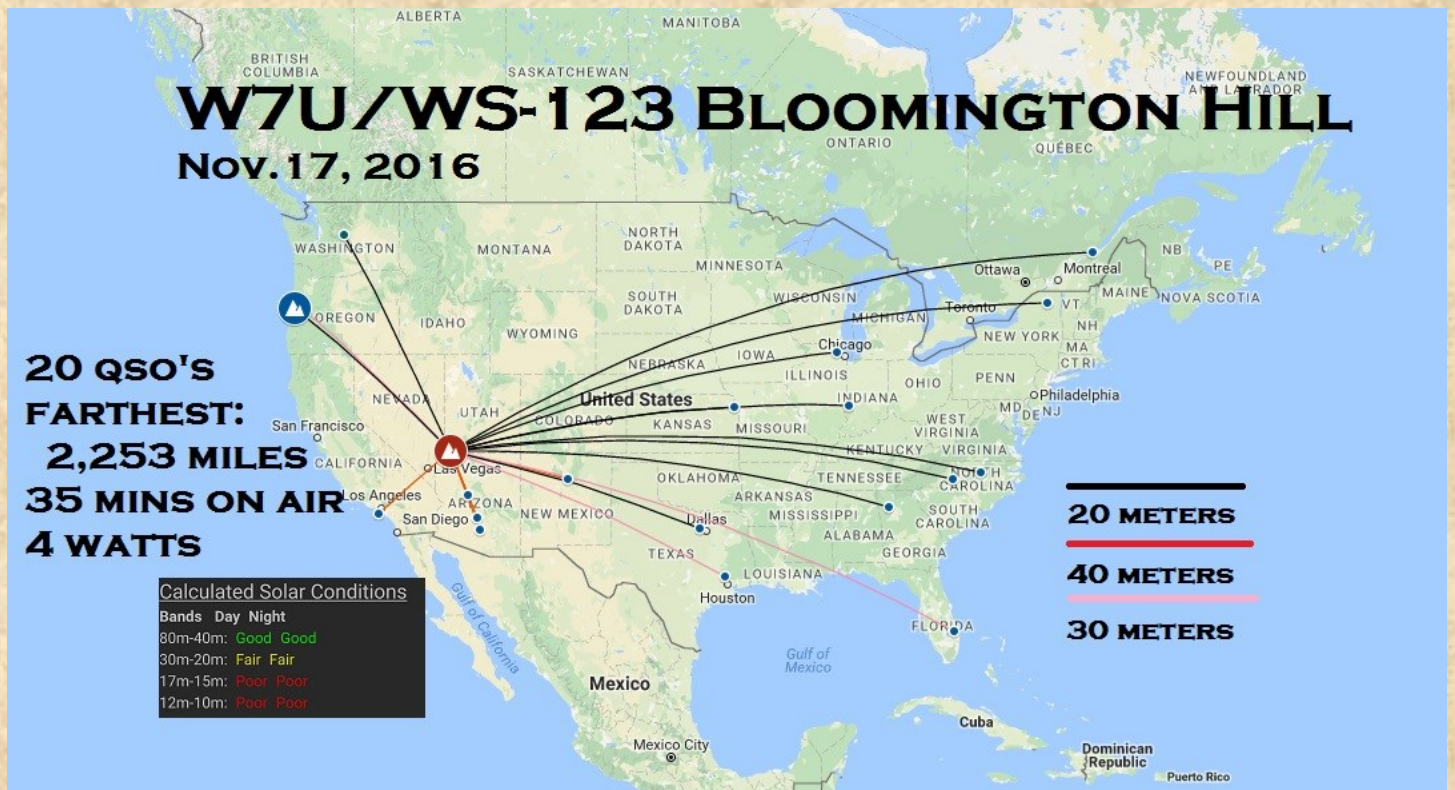


(following stacked-stone trail markers) to the top. There is another, more-traveled trail, but not as scenic.

For operating there is a very nice rock formation just to the southeast of the summit that provides nice wind protection and a place to set up.

The experience: This has become a favorite being the closest to my house as well as being a really cool hike. It's only worth a point, but I'll probably do this one for years to come. This was just an after-school activation which I have come to enjoy in the nice weather here in St. George.

The route I chose is among large boulders, also a route mountain bikers take until a certain point. Once you turn from the trail to reach the summit, you have to go between some rocks that are too narrow to take a bike. In fact, I had to take my pack off to get through. Then you go up and up going from cairn to cairn until you can see clearly again and make it to the summit. There's just a pile of rocks, but you see all the mountains in the background. I set up by a larger rock that let me just lean my mast against it. Fun one!



"Bunny Hill" W7U/WS-093

Stats: 11/19/2016

Points: 2 (total=59)

Elevation: 6,468 ft

QSO's: 27

Farthest: 2,154 miles (NY)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)



Activation: 1st

Trail report: Access is gained by using the Old Modena Rd from 200 W Enterprise. This is a dirt road, although in good weather a 4x4 is not

required. There are cattle in the area so there is a gate that has to be opened (and closed). There is another road that runs to the south of the hill/mountain to get closer to start the ascent.

Personally I just started from the Old Modena Rd, almost due east of the hill, not a bad hike. Some grass, rock. Trees and rocks on summit.



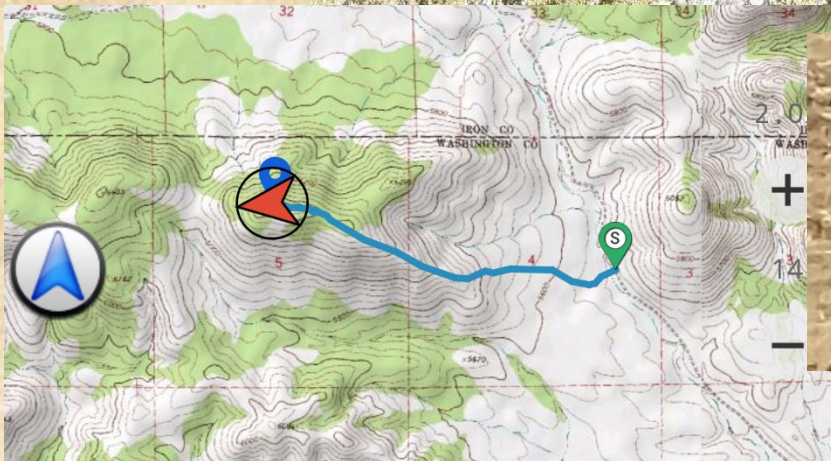
The experience: There was a little snow left, but it didn't really affect the hike. On top there was some more snow but



being a nice day, it was melting away. I had to go through a bunch of cows at the start, there was no way around that. Cows are mostly skittish, but you never know if a bull is going to get all upset. No problems though.

It wasn't a bad hike and not long. I enjoy being the first to activate a new summit, that's always kind of exciting. It was a good activation and got plenty of calls. On the way down the hill, I ran into a bunny that let me walk right up to it (hoping I didn't see it). I took a picture

and some video and then shooed it away by taking a few more steps towards it. Saw a few deer as well.



Starvation Point W7A/NM-134

Stats: 11/23/2016

Points: 4 (total=63)

Elevation: 3,581 ft

QSO's: 39

Farthest: 2,130 miles (NY)

Time on Air: 45 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

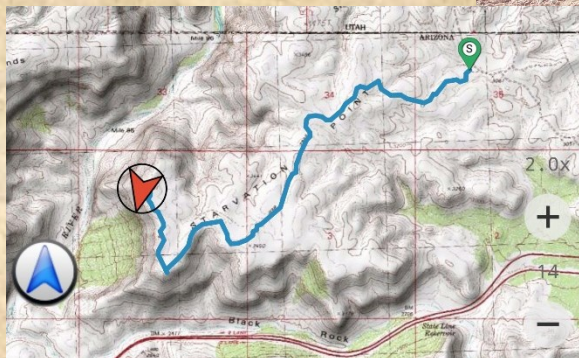
Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 4th (my 1st)



Trail report: There is a road that goes all the way to the summit, but most of it is really Jeep trail. I opted for driving my 4x4 a couple of miles in and then taking a mountain bike from there (about 4 miles each way from where I started on the bike). Those who are experienced could bike all the way--personally, I walked the bike a number of times, but it was well worth taking one. LOTS of ups and downs. The views are great once on top.

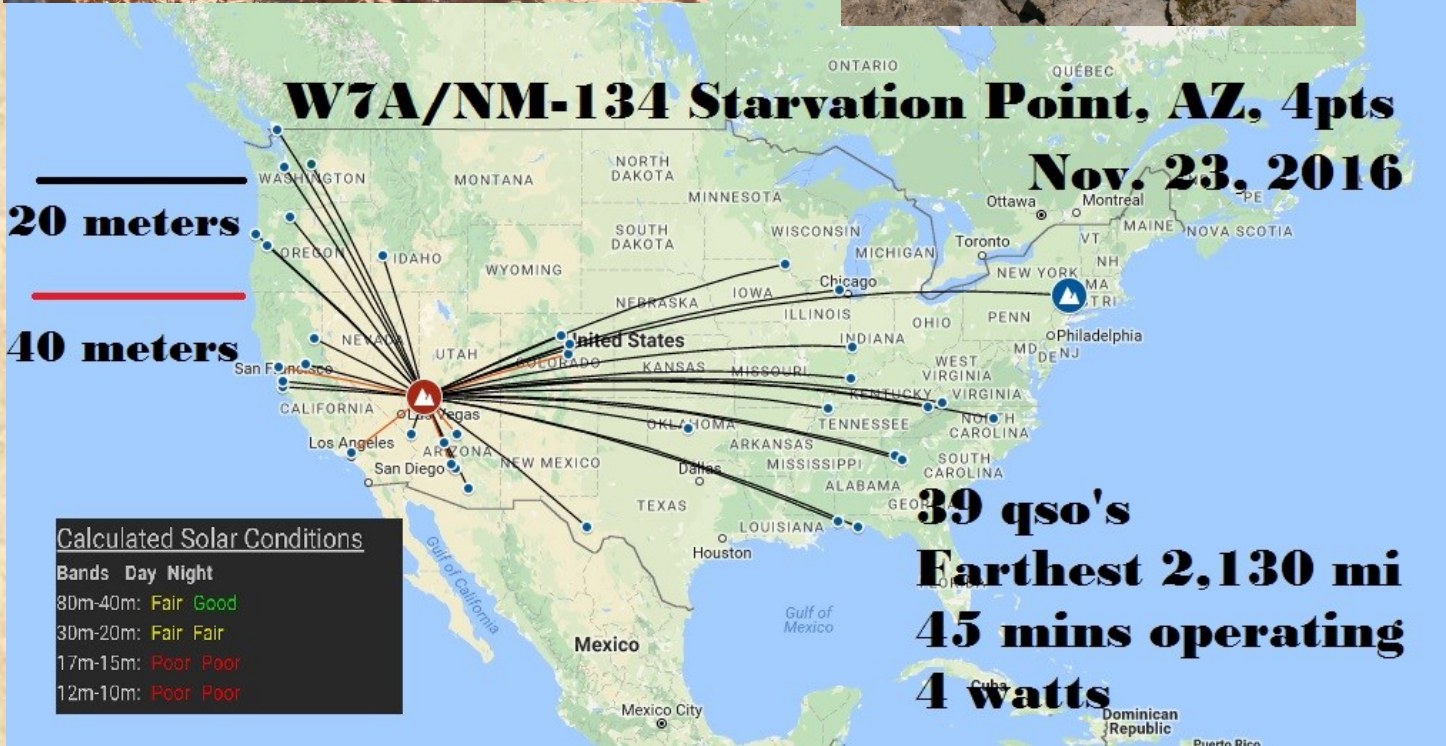
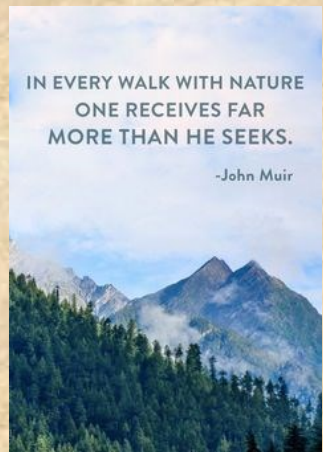
The experience: The biking on this one was pretty fun, although a challenge and pretty far out there. It's the first exit off of I-15 after crossing into Arizona. The dirt road starts right off to the north of the freeway. The area to get out



there isn't all that impressive, but once you get closer to the end, you start seeing the gorge and canyons and those are quite impressive. It's all desert with some cacti and all, but the rock face carved by the Virgin River are the coolest. I set up using my bike to keep the antenna propped up and then tying ropes as guys as well.



The bands were really open and I got a lot of calls, in fact the highest number I've gotten thus far. It was a lot of fun and very enjoyable.



“Mustang Hill” W7U/IR-052

Stats: 11/25/2016

Points: 2 (total=65)

Elevation: 6,422 ft

QSO's: 28

Farthest: 1,983 miles (FL)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)



Activation: 1st

Trail report: Access is gained by the Old Modena Rd, a dirt road off of 200 W. Enterprise. In decent weather conditions a 4x4 isn't necessary but a pickup is highly recommended. Since there is no trail, a number of approaches are possible. I opted for the gentler slope on the southwest. For a lot of that area of the road, the sides are



lined with rocks making a place to get off and park more challenging. There is high sage brush around the base, gets rockier as you ascend.

The experience: As with many activations, I did not see another person the whole time I was in the area. The hike is pleasant enough with high sage brush and some evergreens. The easiest approach was not direct, but it's not a long hike from the dirt road.

Once at the summit, which is somewhat rocky and just right for setting up an antenna. The views into the rest of Iron County are really nice. On the hike back down I came across a small herd of wild horses, hence the name “Mustang Hill.”



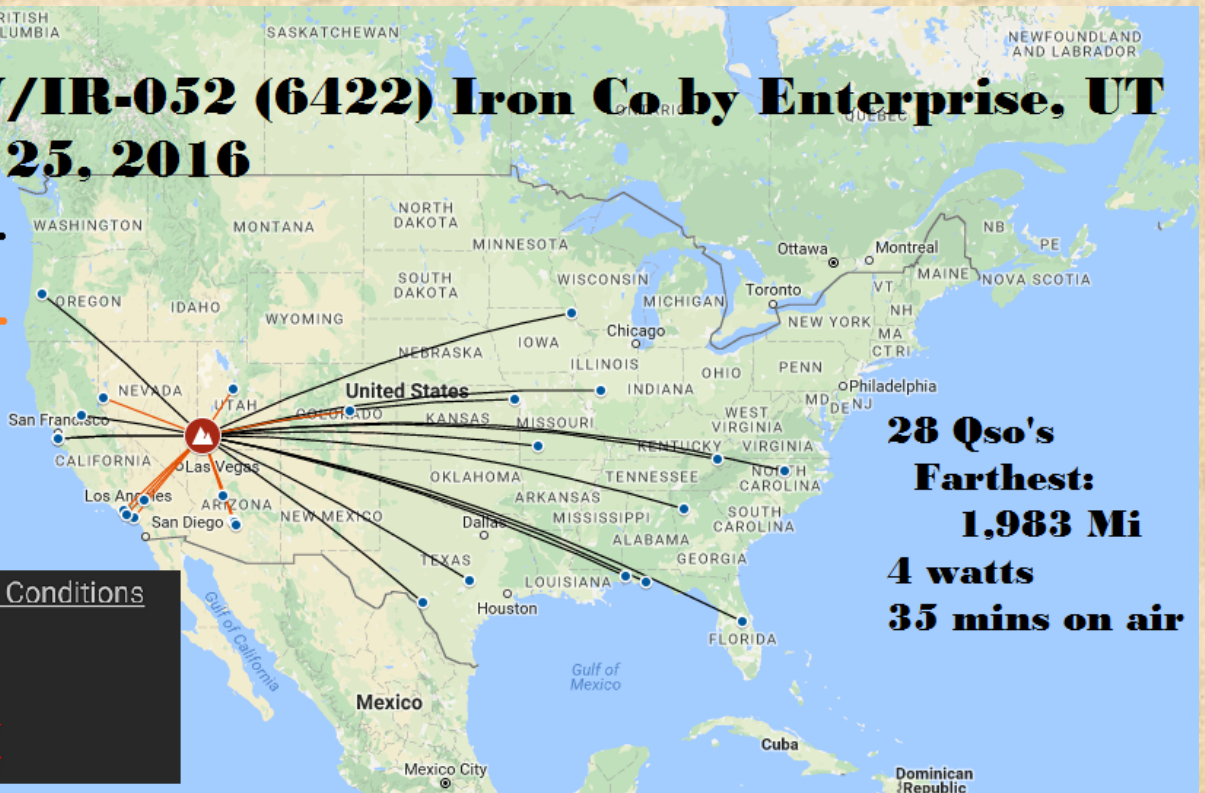
FILL
YOUR LIFE WITH
EXPERIENCES,
NOT THINGS.
HAVE STORIES
TO TELL,
NOT STUFF TO SHOW.



W7U/IR-052 (6422) Iron Co by Enterprise, UT Nov. 25, 2016

20 Meters

40 Meters



28 Qso's
Farthest:
1,983 Mi
4 watts
35 mins on air

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Poor	Fair
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

West Mountain Peak W7U/SU-045

Stats: 12/1/2016

Points: 6 + 3 winter bonus

(total=74)

Elevation: 7,680 ft

QSO's: 24

Farthest: 1,948 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 40 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 3rd (my 1st)



Trail report: Access comes from Old Hwy 91. You take Beaver Dam Mountain Rd from there (just past the reservation border while heading south). This road leads up to the very top. It is fairly nice until the last bit before switchbacks to the summit, but still a 4x4 is highly suggested. The last part should be attempted with care, especially in less-than-ideal conditions.

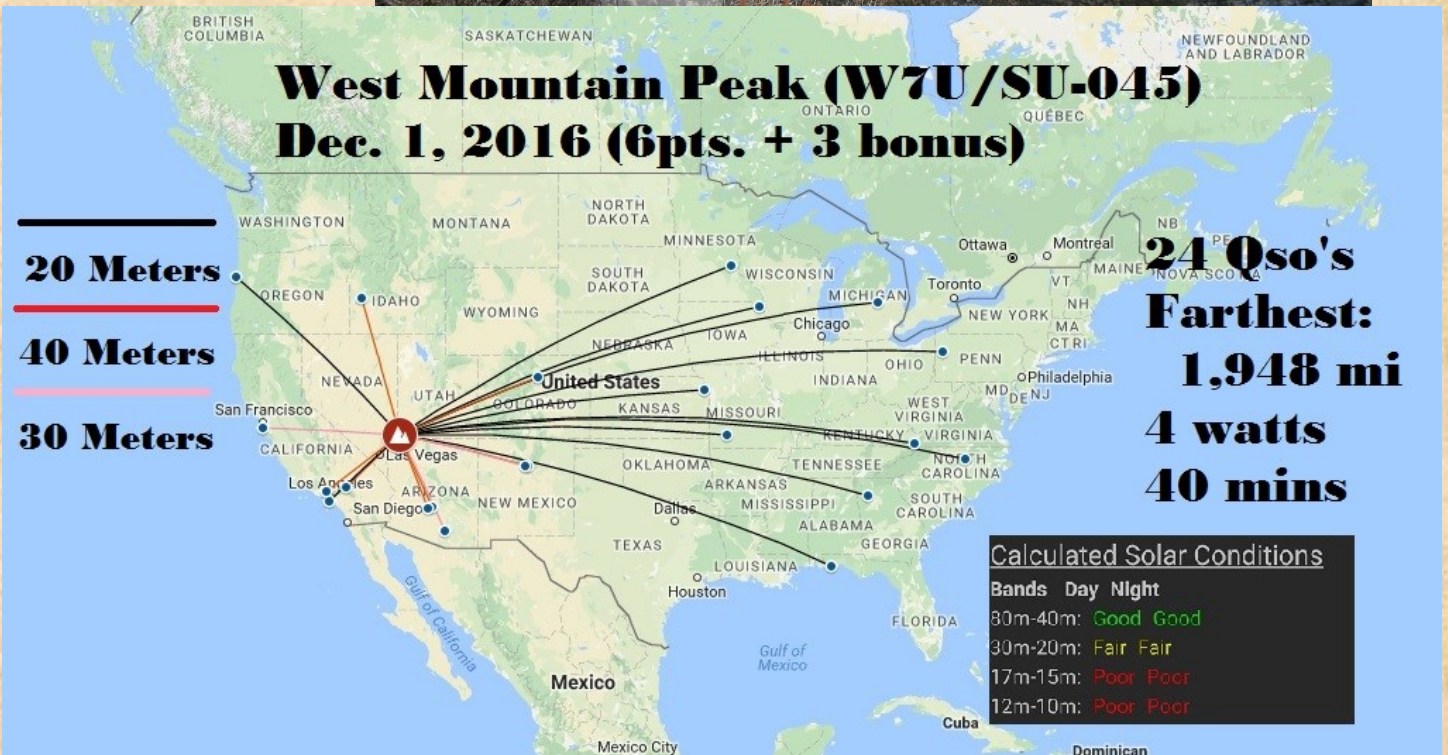
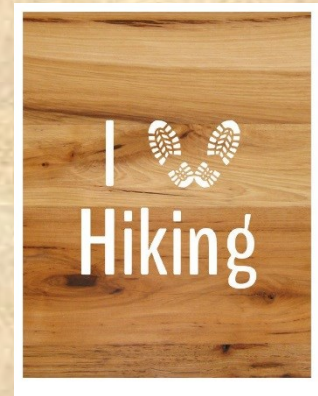
The experience: (The view above is from my back deck). There is a road that goes to the top, but I didn't want to try and get my pickup up there, very iffy for it. I parked near the base and hiked on the road to the top. There was some snow on the top, but not too much. Notice I did this on Dec. 1st, the first day



of winter bonus in Utah. I was saving this peak just for today and hoped it wouldn't snow so much that I could still do it.

The top has lots of antennas and shacks so a lot of interference, plus finding a place to set up wasn't easy. I ended up using a log on a piece of road and standing doing the contacts. But, got my first bonus ever in! After getting 3 points just for time of year, I wanted to get LOTS of peaks with bonus points. I think of three different activations, all the

hiking and time for 1-point summits, and I got 3 extra points here just for going in winter—that's the way to go!



Jarvis Peak W7U/WS-087

Stats: 12/3/2016

Points: 4 + 3 winter bonus

(total=81)

Elevation: 6,529 ft

QSO's: 9

Farthest: 697 miles (OR)

Time on Air: 8 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

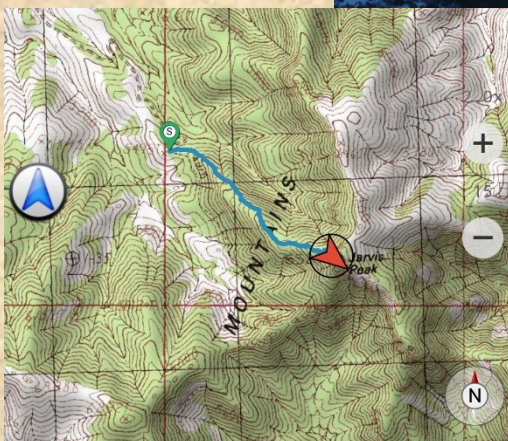
Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)



Activation: 1st

Trail report: There are two roads to access the mountain, one from the west using Old Hwy 91 and from the east Mojave Desert Joshua Tree Rd.

For the activation, I used Old Hwy 91. (Mojave Desert J.T. Rd is almost completely a dirt road and results in a much farther trek, although not quite as rough terrain). From Old Hwy 91, there is a dirt access road that leads to the base of Jarvis Peak. A relatively short antenna tower marks the crest of the gradual hill and entrance to the road. The dirt road itself is fairly rough for most of the 1.9 miles to the ideal



parking area. However the last .5 miles of the road is rough enough that had I to do it again I would have walked instead of using my 4x4 pickup--which made it, but I had to go very slow and I was quite nervous about damage with the very rough and high rocks. I would park after the first major turn/twist where there is also a small turnout for overlook about 1.5 miles from the start of the dirt road.

There is no trail to the top so some topographical planning is highly suggested, especially nearing the summit. There is plenty of brush, and trees, to navigate as well. Nearing the top very large boulders and rock formations necessitate skirting around instead of a more direct final approach.

The experience: This ended being a real rush job—didn't like it. I went Saturday morning, but had to be back for obligations by noon. Not enough time with the road and the hike. I was pressed for time and the drive out of the area was on my mind as well because it was so rough. In addition, there was still snow being as it was on the north side and didn't get much sun. So in places where it was icy and rocky, it was a little dangerous at times.

I didn't reach the actual summit, which was killing me internally, I've never not been to the actual top, but once I reached the activation zone. It would have taken at least another half hour. I got setup up, only used 40 meters (close states only) so my far away contact was just in Oregon. I got 9 contacts and stayed on for a mere 8 minutes, and then got out of there. It was probably the only activation to this point that I did not enjoy at all. I did make it back in time for my obligation though. I didn't even bother to make a map of contacts for this one.



Scrub Benchmark W7U/WS-071

Stats: 12/9/2016

Points: 4 + 3 winter bonus

(total=88)

Elevation: 6,786 ft

QSO's: 27

Farthest: 2,243 miles (VT)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 1st



Trail report: Access to the base is by taking the Mojave Desert Joshua Tree Rd either from the Shivwits Reservation off Old Hwy 91 from the north or from I-15 to Old Hwy 91 from the south (AZ). Once at the base, there is a road that leads up the mountain (and a sign that tells you there's no outlet). I would have a 4x4 to enter this road. It can change quickly with no good place to turn around. It is a long, rough hike. Know that there is a gate that crosses the road about 1/2 way up, but there is a bypass. I would not take my 4x4 pickup once the elevation changes greatly because of the very rough and



steep road at times.

There are two main antennas at and near the summit. As the name indicates, there is a physical benchmark at the actual summit. There are a number of places to set up once there. Great views of the Beaver Dam Mountains.

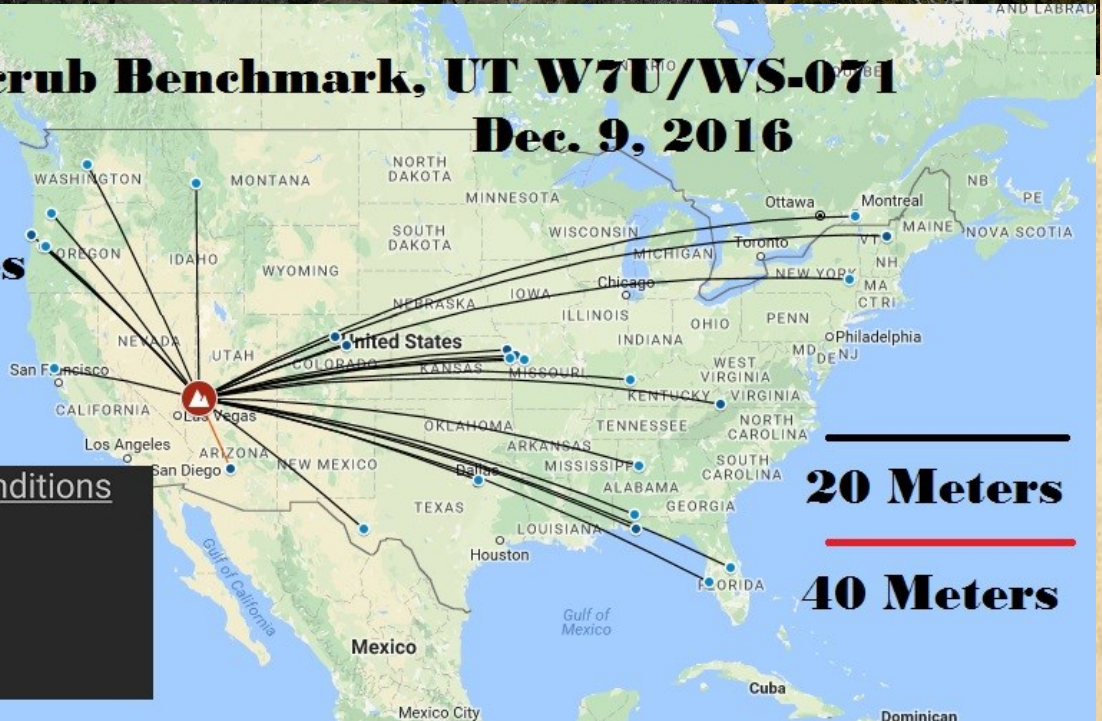
The experience: This was actually the second attempt for me. The first time I started up and started not feeling well, so turned around and went home (actually got sick and stayed in bed the next two days). But, at least I had somewhat scouted out the area. I parked a little further down this time (not as steep) and hiked up. It was a somewhat long and steep hike, I was pretty tired when I reached the top. It was only 2½ miles, but with how steep it was, it made it tiring.

The top has a couple of antennas and shacks. There is also a benchmark in some pink rock at the top. It had a great view though!



**Scrub Benchmark, UT W7U/WS-071
Dec. 9, 2016**

27 Qso's
Farthest:
2,243 miles
4 watts
35 mins



Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Poor	Fair
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

20 Meters
40 Meters

Punchbowl Dome W7U/WS-122

Stats: 12/13/2016

Points: 1 (total=89)

Elevation: 3,554 ft

QSO's: 29

Farthest: 1,962 miles (FL)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

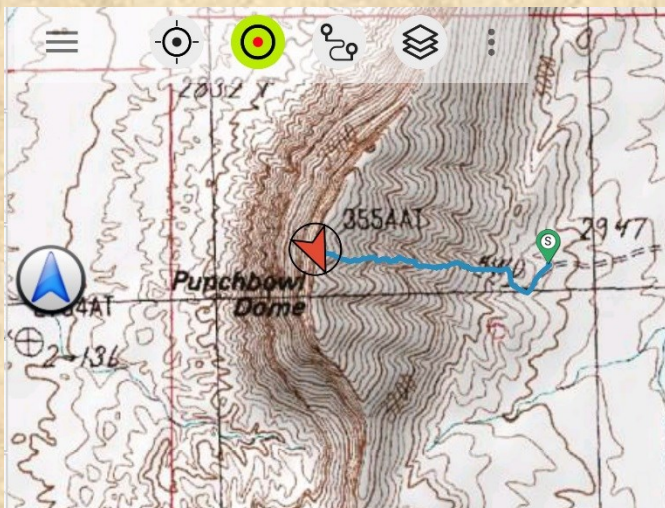
Activation: 6th (my 1st)

Trail report: Punchbowl Dome is easily seen from most areas around St. George as it's at the edge of Washington. The approach is from the east, however, on BLM land. There is a road that goes to the base, although it's not that well

maintained and is used as an ATV trail more than a pickup road, but can be reached either way. There is a road that goes a little way up, but gets pretty steep where it ends off. There's really no trail from there, but it's a short hike.

The top has a post and a few guy wires as well as some old wooden structure. Nice view of the area below and Sand Mountain to the east.

The experience: This is another summit that can be seen from several vantage points around town. The hike is fairly easy and is short. The view of the area is really nice. The day was pleasant and got lots of calls.

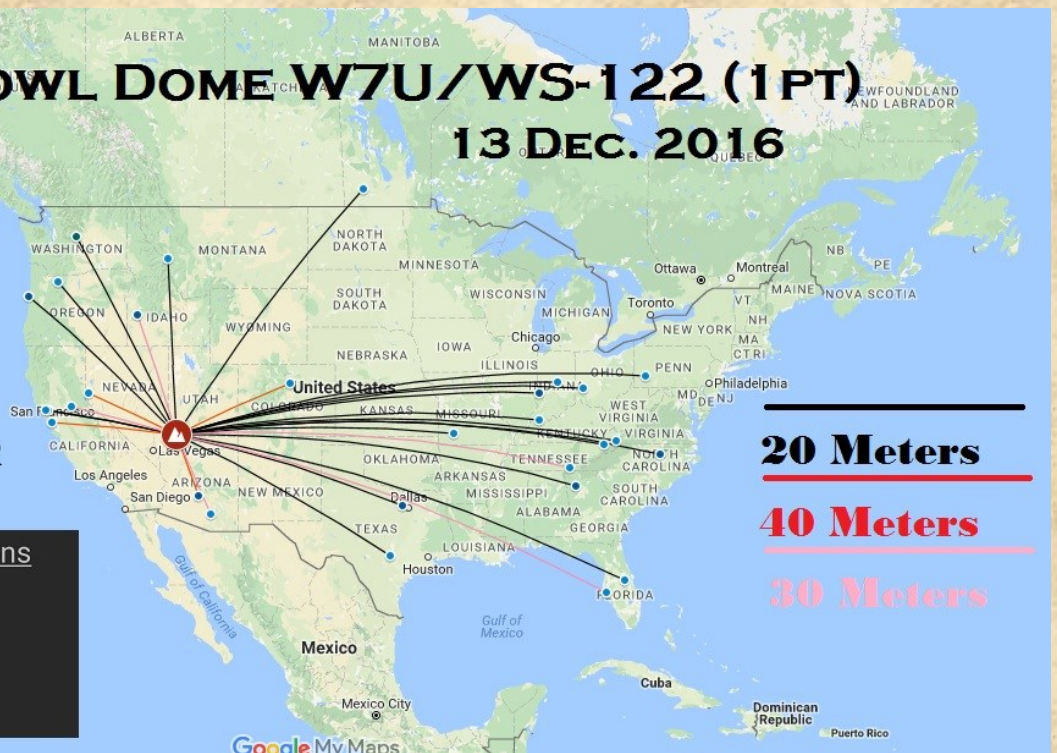




PUNCHBOWL DOME W7U/WS-122 (1PT)

13 DEC. 2016

29 Qso's
FARTHEST:
1,962 MILES
4 WATTS
35 MINS ON AIR



20 Meters

40 Meters

30 Meters

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

?

Seegmiller Mountain W7A/AW-035

Stats: 12/20/2016

Points: 8 (total=97)

Elevation: 6,220 ft

QSO's: 32

Farthest: 6,886 miles (New Zealand)

Time on Air: 40 mins.

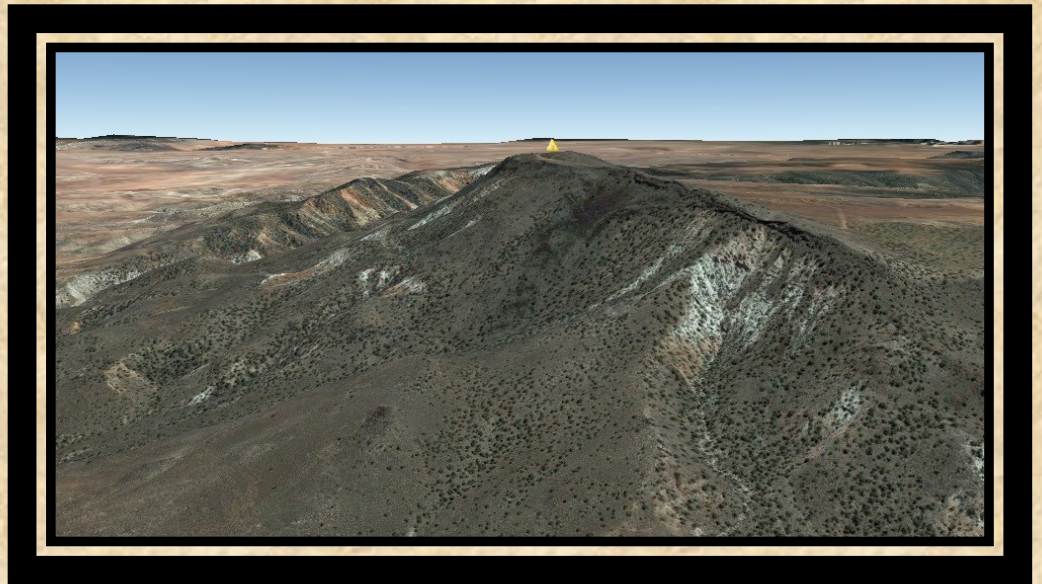
Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)



Activation: 2nd (my 1st)

Trail report: Mt Trumbull Loop is the road to access the side road leading up Seegmiller and is a pretty good most of the way. I approached from the north using the Southern Parkway (7), just on the Utah-Arizona border. The turnoff to go up the mountain is on the southern end of the mesa, BLM 1020. The sign is badly worn and nearly unreadable at this time however. From the turnoff it's almost 9 miles to the top. The route goes around a large gorge and takes a while. A 4x4 may not be required but is recommended. You can park below the tower and hike up or park on top and hike down and back up again. There are a few antennas right near the summit but there is plenty of space to



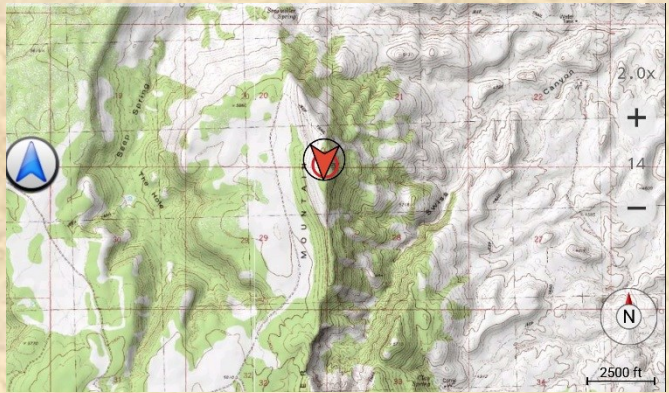
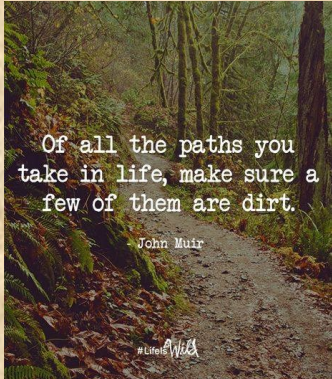
find a place to set up.
(This is near W7A/NM-035 Wolf Hole Mt. and both can be done fairly easily in the same day).

The experience: This was a really good activation. First, I wanted to get this one in before the year changed so I could do it a second time. Next, Dad (KC7EC) came with me on this one, so it's nice doing an activation alone—he helped me get set up too. Then, I

got my first DX and it was all the way to New Zealand! Very nice. I was a little on the cold side, but not too bad.



On the way up I had Dad drop me off so I could hike up and he drove the pickup all the way to the top. There was some snow, but not much. It was breezy and the mast came down a couple times. Got lots of contacts and then we headed back home!



SEEGMILLER MOUNTAIN W7A/AW-035 DEC. 20, 2016

32 Qso's
FARTHEST:
6,866 MILES
(NEW ZEALAND)
40 MINS ON AIR
4 WATTS



Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

Sullivan Knoll W7U/WS-121

Stats: 12/26/2016

Points: 1 (total=98)

Elevation: 4,024 ft

QSO's: 32

Farthest: 2,237 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)

Activation: 5th (my 1st)



Trail report: Access is gained off of Highway 9 on the way through Hurricane. From the highway you take Rlington Pkwy and then Ridge View Dr which leads up into a dirt road. At the time there was a gate leading into the hill, but it was open. You can drive a certain distance up and then it becomes really steep. There is a trail that goes to the top, looks like an ATV trail, but it's steep enough you may want to plan on just hiking it. The summit has rocks for setting up a mast.



The experience: It was during Christmas vacation, the day after Christmas in fact, and we had just had a big snow. This was low elevation so the bottom didn't have snow but the top did. I was dying to get out so chose this one. The hike up was steep, but with the snow and dirt underneath, I didn't slide going up. I used a tarp for the first time to keep everything somewhat snow free. Because it was so close to a holiday, plenty of people were on the air and I got a steady stream of

calls, 32 in 35 mins is a busy activation. The mountains nearby (Pine Valley Mts) looked really cool with the new snow. Got my fix in.



Swett Hills W7U/IR-040

Stats: 12/30/2016

Points: 4 +3 winter bonus

(total=105)

Elevation: 7,028 ft

QSO's: 13

Farthest: 2,222 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 10 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st

Trail report: Easiest access seems to be from the base of the hill off Highway 56. There is a dirt access road to get close to the base. Once "on top" of the initial ridge, staying to the southern ridge provides a pretty straightforward approach without having to lose much elevation as you continue on. Taking that route is about a 2.5 mile hike. The summit itself is covered with trees but still enough spaces to put up a wire antenna. (Lots of deer along the way!)

The experience: Last activation for the year, and getting a winter bonus. As I headed up the side I came up on very large boulders. I didn't really see a way through them and thought I might have to turn around. It wasn't long before I found a steep, yet fairly easy path through them and reached the top. It was full of snow and cut down trees. The whole area had every tree cut down which, combined with the snow, made for LOTS of high stepping most of the way. It was hard, and after a while my feet started getting wet as well. I saw a bunch of deer though! That's always fun. On the



way up my foot got caught under a branch under the snow. I used my hiking pole to



brace myself as I was falling, but I put too much weight on it and it snapped. Not cool, used a branch for the rest of the way. Because I was cold and a little wet, I got on for 10 mins., got 13 contacts and got out of there. 1st time activation ever for this summit which is always good. I tried the small LiPo battery for the first time (since I knew I wasn't going to be on long). Worked great! Will most likely change to that in the future.

(I made my goal of over 100 points before the end of the year!).



SWETT HILLS W7U/IR-040 (4PTS + 3 BONUS) DEC. 30, 2016

13 QSO'S
FARTHEST:
2,222 MILES
4 WATTS
10 MINS ON AIR

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

20 METERS

40 METERS

Google My Maps

Duffer Benchmark W7A/CN-044

Stats: 1/16/2017

Points: 8 +3 winter bonus

(total=116)

Elevation: 6,561 ft

QSO's: 12

Farthest: 2,044 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 10 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

Lead-acid battery (5 Ah)



Activation: 2nd (my 1st)

Trail report: I accessed the area using Highway 89A (from the northwest). House Rock Rd (a BLM road) off of Highway 89A that leads to the entrance to the mesa is 13 miles of very rutted dirt road, very wide. A 4x4 is definitely needed. May even be impassible after heavy rains. After the 13 miles there is a sign near Lone Tree Reservoir for a well-known hiking area in the Vermilion Cliffs wilderness. From this point a hiking permit is required (currently \$7 and can be purchased online) as well as a 4x4 as per the sign for the deeply rutted, high center sandy route. For those who made it with 2-wheel drive to this point, there is a parking area and you can hike from there (adding a



few extra miles). This area is famous for rock formations and is frequently photographed.



I drove in on this sandy access road (with an ATV) for a few miles before reaching a major fence line (the point where you reach a BLM gate) and hiked from there. The hike is pleasant (about 2 miles from the gate) and mostly sandy with it being rocky only at times. You do have to circumvent some craggy rocks to reach the summit. There is a metal benchmark in the rock near the top (you do not have to make any dangerous climbs to see it).

There are a number of other geological sites to see in the area if you plan the time.

The experience: This really was an adventure. I had no idea it was going to take me three hours to get there (dirt road estimates can vary greatly). It was really cool looking, but way far—and I ended up only staying on for 10 mins!



That's because I had such a long ways to get all the way back home. I did it for the high points and bonus in Jan. when things around here were to snow-bound to activate. Didn't see another soul the whole time. It was so far out my GPS had trouble tracking me.



W7A/CN-044 DUFFER BENCHMARK
8 PTS/3 BONUS **JAN. 16, 2017**

12 QSO'S
FARTHEST:
2,044 MILES
4 WATTS
10 MINS ON AIR

20 METERS
40 METERS

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

Google My Maps

Sand Mountain W7U/SU-061

Stats: 1/17/2017

Points: 1 (total=117)

Elevation: 4,182 ft

QSO's: 17

Farthest: 1,921 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 25 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

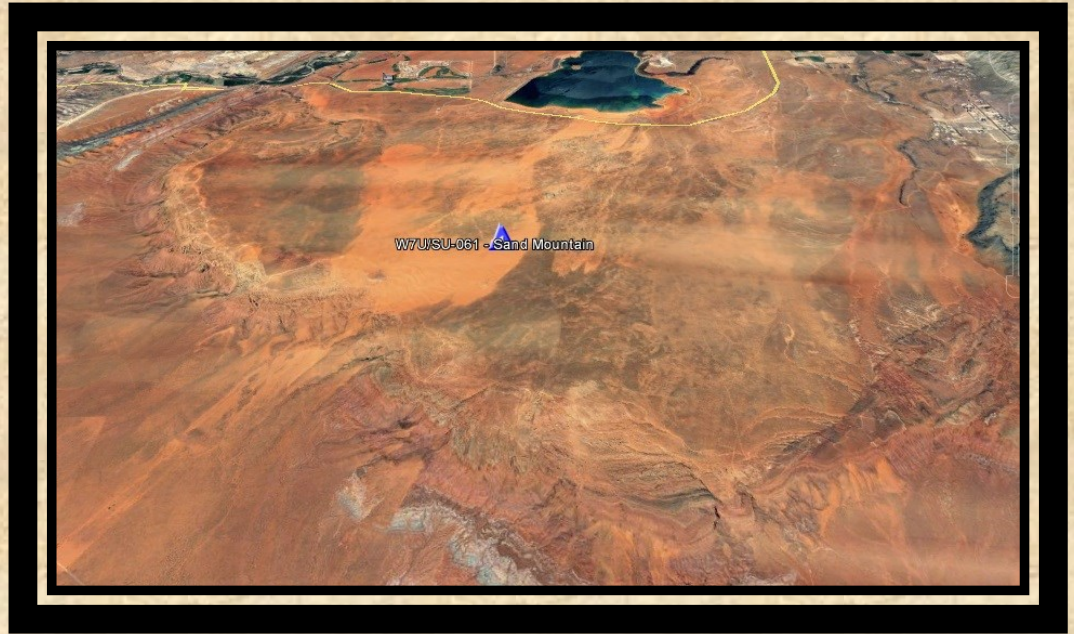
(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 6th (my 1st)



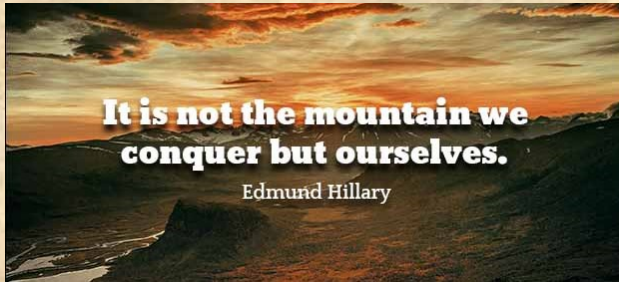
Trail report: This mountain is not far from town and really close to Sand Hallow State Park (just to the south of it). It's just off of Southern Parkway, in fact when you pull off of it, you're already on the mountain and ready to head on up. The whole mountain is an ATV haven with sand dunes, trails all over, etc. That's its main use! There's a main trail that goes straight up to the upper end of the mountain, from there all it takes is a little maneuvering to reach the high point.

The experience:

This was a fun activation that I did after school one day. I had the ATV loaded and went straight from school up to the mountain. The ATV trails were fun and sandy, naturally. It wasn't long before I was at the top. The main challenge was getting the antenna up. With all the sand, there weren't that many rocks, but luckily at the "summit" there were enough to brace the antenna. This was one of very few times I had other people around. The summit doesn't have a great view and since it's rockier than other areas, most weren't interested in it. Some people looked, but never got close enough to ask or talk to really.



I had some audio problems, but still had a successful activation. I used a LiPo battery again as well. I was looking to lighten my pack and the lead-acid 5ah battery was just really heavy. Since the ATV did most of the heavy work, I took both to try it out. Worked great! I'll be using that from now on, huge difference in weight.



Bloomington Hill W7U/WS-123 & Winter Field Day

Stats: 1/28/2017

Points: 1 (total=118)

Elevation: 3,470 ft

QSO's: 27

Farthest: 2,440 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 60 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 8th (my 2nd)



Trail report: This summit is the closest to my house and one of the easier ones to do. I can see it from my kitchen window. It's accessed from Dixie Dr. and then S. Canyon View Dr. You have to go on some dirt roads and when you reach the power station, you're at the right trail. The hike is pleasant and gradual. The Zen trail can be taken through large boulders to the top, or



a little more round about and in the open, but the boulder route is really interesting. There are rocks piled at the summit. Popular mountain biking and hiking area.

The experience: I read about Winter Field Day and decided I wanted to participate and incorporate it with a SOTA activation. Since it was January and we had had a number of heavy snows in the mountains, I stuck with something close and simple. Winter Field Day started at noon, so the plan was to do SOTA before noon and then the rest would be Field Day (there was a specific exchange on the

radio you need for Field Day that you don't have with SOTA). However, any contact made on the summit counts towards SOTA as well, so that's cool.

The hike was great, a little cool with some ice seen along the way. As the photos shows, the mountains had fresh snow on them. I took a thermos of hot chocolate to enjoy while I stayed up there a little longer than I usually do. It went well and I got numerous SOTA contacts, I only stayed on for a few Field Day contacts, but I participated which was my goal!



W7U/WS-123 BLOOMINGTON HILL

1 PT. JAN. 28, 2017 (WINTER FIELD DAY)

27 Qso's

FARTHEST:

2,440 MI (QC)

4 WATTS

60 MINS ON AIR

20 METERS

40 METERS

WINTER FIELD DAY

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

Google My Maps

South Hills W7U/WS-120

Stats: 2/4/2017

Points: 1 (total=119)

Elevation: 6,786 ft

QSO's: 9

Farthest: 2,234 miles (VT)

Time on Air: 20 mins.

Equipment:

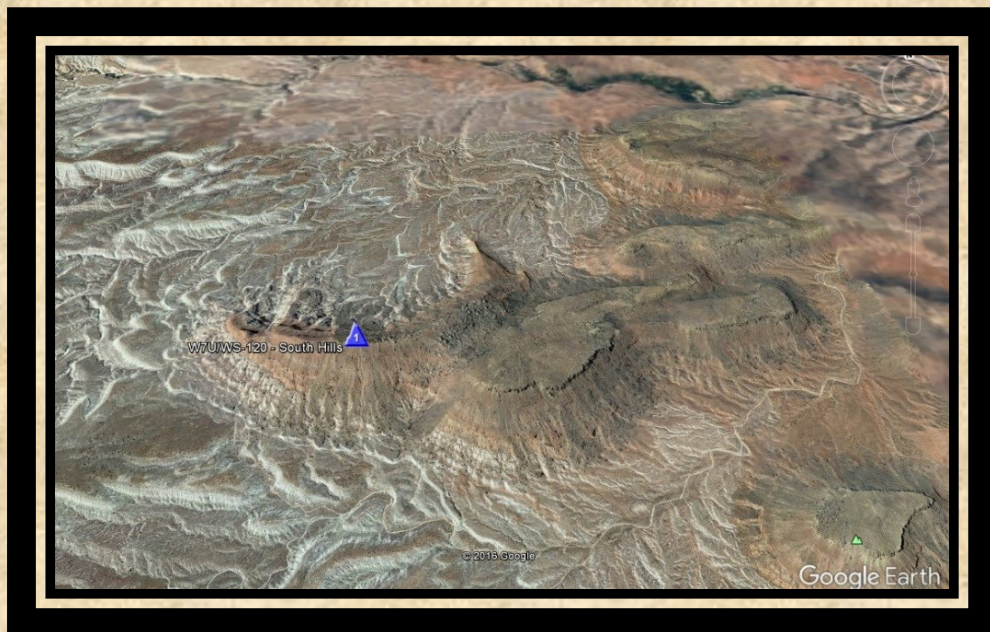
DC20B (2 WATTS)

Homebrew dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 3rd (my 1st)



Trail report: The start of the trail is a very popular biking area in the Santa Clara River Reserve. To get to the summit there are three different biking trails (they can, of course, be hiked as well). There is a parking area and sign with a map of the trails at the beginning. The first trail is the Barrel Roll which leads into the Sidewinder to take you to the top of the bluff adjacent to the actual bluff you want. The final connection is the Suicidal Tendencies trail. As the name indicates, it really is for experienced mountain bikers (personally I rode a bike to that point, stashed my bike and hiked from there).

Once on the last trail (Suicidal Tendencies), stay to the right of the loop and at some point you have to leave the trail and hike to the summit. There are large boulders which make thinking out a proper approach wise. The very top is basically a huge boulder which I did not climb but there is a nice area in the activation zone that works fine though a little more challenging for a dipole antenna.

The experience: This is a summit I see from my house about everyday. Just the day before, I made a 20-meter radio from a kit. Those kind of radios are not fancy—you can't change frequencies, you can't adjust the volume, there are no displays to give you any readouts. They only work low power (2 watts in this case) and

using CW (Morse code). I was excited to see if and how it would work. I made a very light, thin antenna cut just to the right frequency for it and took that along as well. In order to have everything homebrewed (made myself), I also made a key to do the CW. The bike ride was a challenge, as was the hike afterwards. Setting up wasn't bad and I was really happy to get nine contacts, and some far ones, using this for the first time. Not really worth the 1 point, but had to do it at least once!



W7U/WS-120 SOUTH HILLS (1 PT) FEB. 4, 2017

**20 METER RIG
FIXED AT 14.060
QRP, CW**

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor



**9 QSO's
FARTHEST:
2,235 MILES
20 MINS ON AIR
2 WATTS!**

Scrub Benchmark W7U/WS-071

Stats: 2/9/2017

Points: 4 + 3 winter bonus
(total=126)

Elevation: 6,786 ft

QSO's: 12

Farthest: 2,266 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

DC20B (2 WATTS)

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw(4 WATTS)

Homebrew linked dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 2nd (my 2nd)

Trail report: Access to the base is by taking the Mojave Desert Joshua Tree Rd either from the Shivwits Reservation off Old Hwy 91 from the north or from I-15 to Old Hwy 91 from the south (AZ). Once at the base, there is a road that leads up the mountain (and a sign that tells you there's no outlet). I would have a 4x4 to enter this road. It can change quickly with no good place to turn around. At the time of this writing, I've done this summit twice: once hiking almost the entire way up and the



second time taking an ATV to within a 1/2 mile of the summit. It is a long, rough hike.

Know that there is a gate that crosses the road about 1/2 way up, but there is a bypass. I would not take my 4x4 pickup once the elevation changes greatly because of the very rough and steep road at times.

There are two main antennas at and near the summit. As the name indicates, there is a physical benchmark at the actual summit. There are a number of places to set up once there. Great views of the Beaver Dam Mountains.

The experience: This was the second summit ever that I have been two for a second time, and I came in the winter for the bonus. Since acquiring an ATV (thanks Dad!), I

knew this would be a much more enjoyable mountain. I didn't take it all the way to the end, one, in order to do some hiking, and two, there's a part that is a little too steep for me on an ATV.

It was a very nice day, cool with the snow on top, but not cold. The views from this one are some of the best as well. This is the second time I have taken out the radio I made from a kit as well, not lots of contacts with it, but I was still happy with it. (Desert view is from the drive up)



“Mount Moo” W7U/WS-016

Stats: 2/14/2017

**Points: 6 + 3 winter bonus
(total=135)**

Elevation: 7,660 ft

QSO's: 23

Farthest: 2,237 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 40 mins.

Equipment:

DC20B (2 WATTS)

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw(4 WATTS)

Homebrew linked dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 2nd (my 2nd)



Trail report: There are two access

roads, one on the west and one that goes all the way around to the east at a higher elevation. I opted to go to the west as the drive to the east would take almost as long as the hike up to the top. There is a good access road right up to the base. There is no visible trail other than cattle/game trails, but not too bad. There's a nice outcropping of rocks at the top to operate/take pictures.

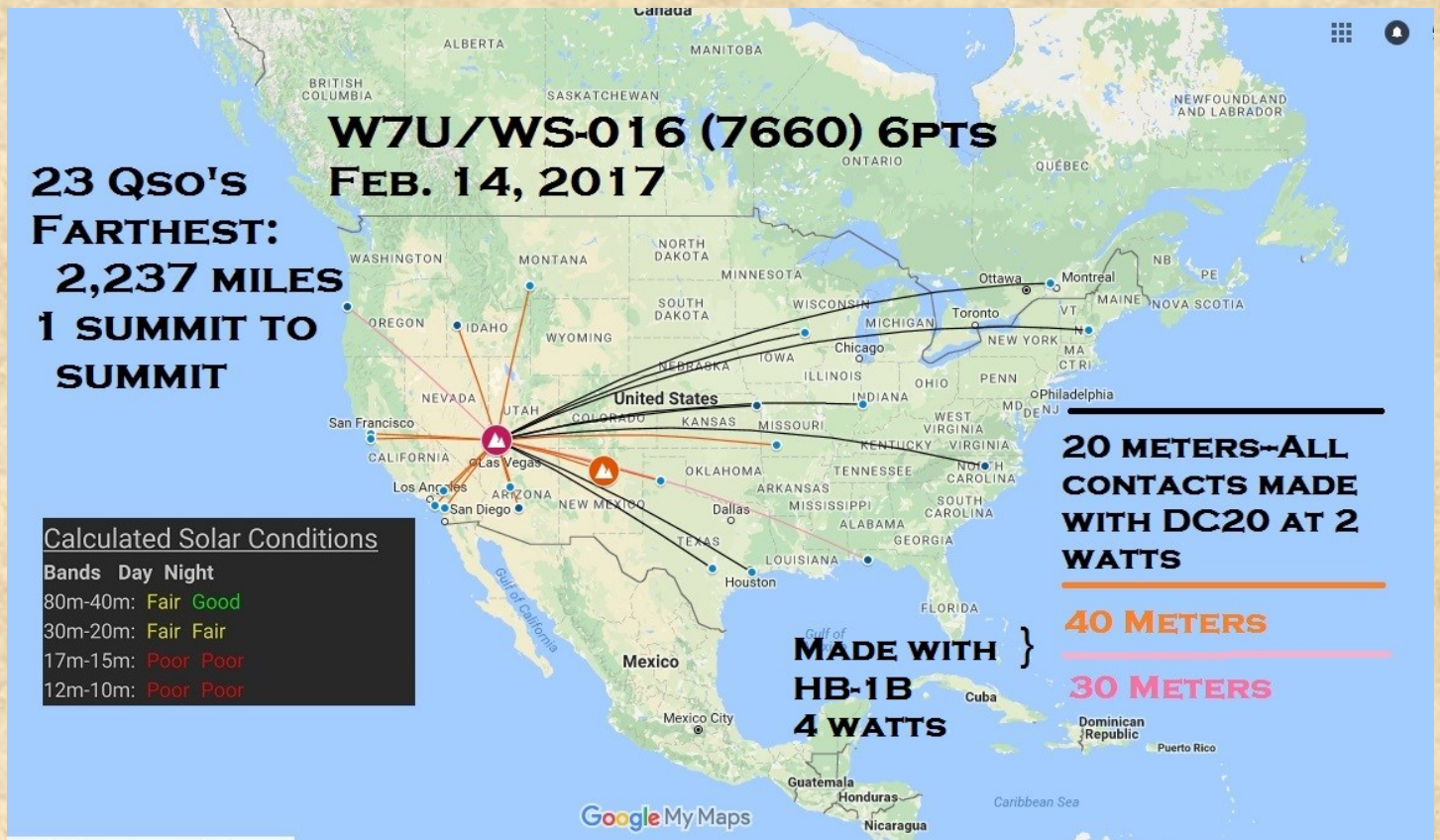
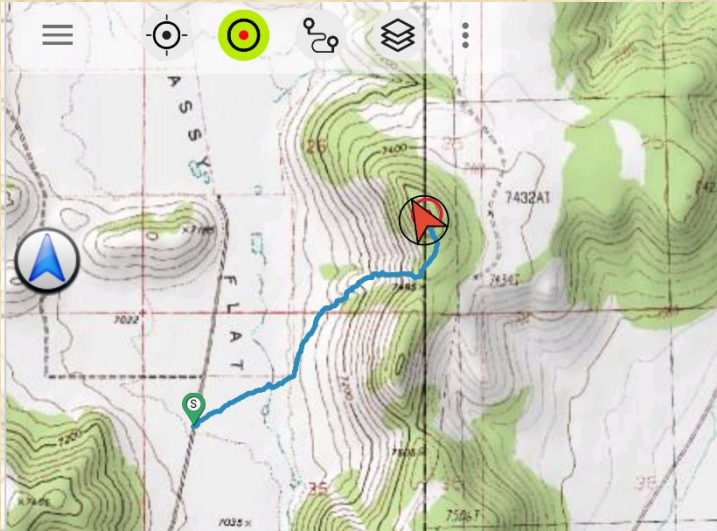
During the winter, the snow and run-off make the approach more challenging. I had to park farther away and hike in more snow and ice due to the depth in some places.

The experience:

Having been to this summit before, I felt I was up for the challenge of a winter activation (and as always, I was looking for the extra points as well). I was much snowier than I was expecting. I'm not sure why I don't have more photos of it. The hike wasn't bad and the snow was hardened in a lot of spots so it made it easier to not have to slog through deep snow. It wasn't overly cold either.



It was a sunny day and some snow was melting. I setup with a nice view of the area. I started with the radio I put together DC20B and I also made a CW key from plastic knives to use for this activation. Then later I switched to the regular radio and key. Got a Summit-to-Summit (S2S) contact as well. Fun stuff! (Named in honor of Daniel)



West Mountain Peak W7U/SU-045

Stats: 2/25/2017

Points: 6 + 3 winter bonus
(total=144)

Elevation: 7,680 ft

QSO's: 28

Farthest: 2,265 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 40 mins.

Equipment:

DC20 (2 WATTS)
YouKits HB-1B qrp cw (4 WATTS)
Homebrew linked dipole
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 4th (my 2nd)



Trail report: Access comes from Old Hwy 91. You take Beaver Dam Mountain Rd from there (just past the reservation border while heading south). This road leads up to the very top. It is fairly nice until the last bit before switchbacks to the summit, but still a 4x4 is highly suggested. The last part should be attempted with care, especially in less-than-ideal conditions. The ATV made it ok.

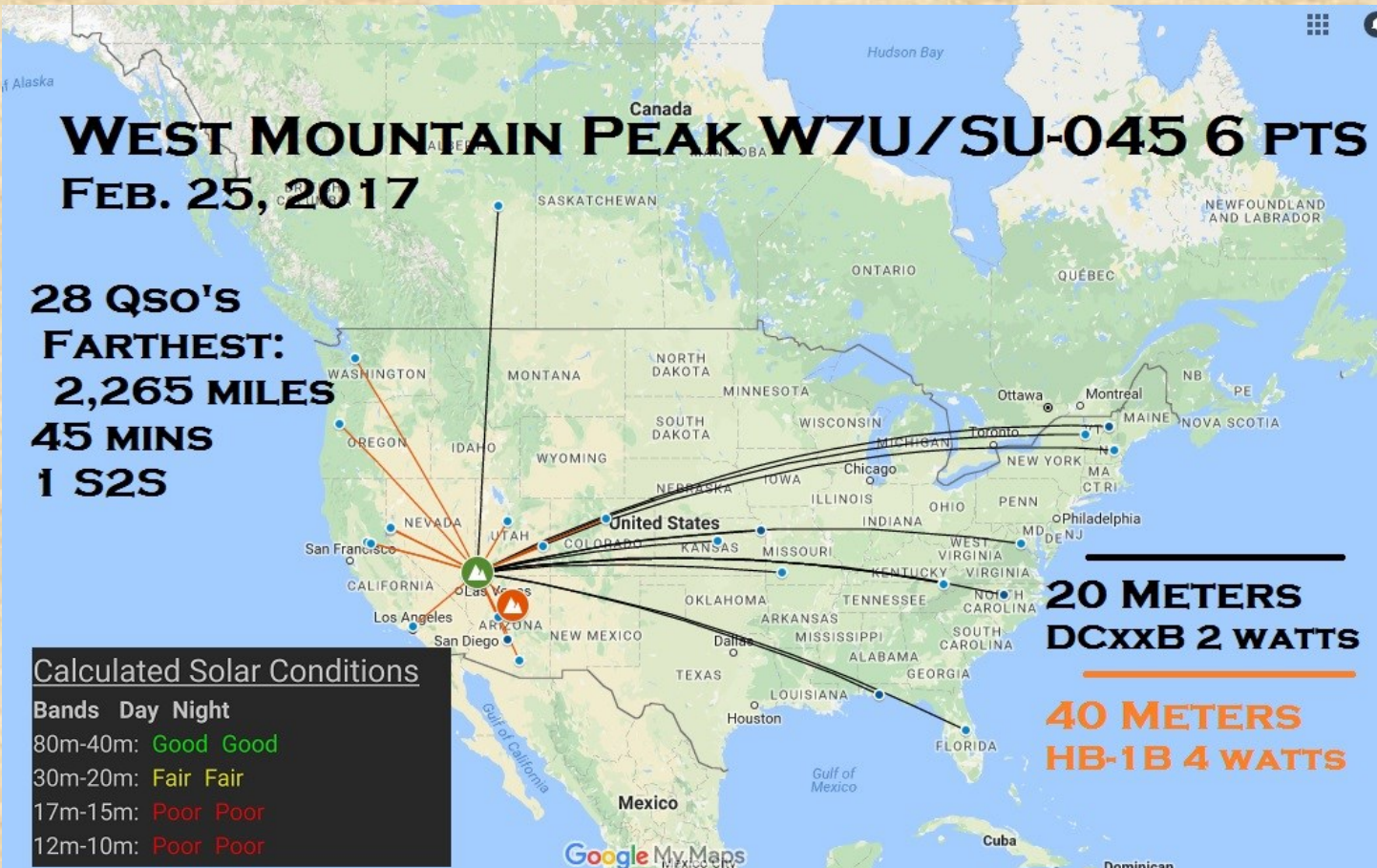
The experience:

Second time activating this summit as well, but this time it was in winter for the bonus. The ride up was challenging but fun too. I parked in the lower hill and hiked up to the top.



Interestingly, there was another OHV around and driving in the area. They found my thermos (filled with hot chocolate) and left it where I parked the ATV—that was nice!! I guess I had lost it in the switchbacks.

It was hard to find a good place to set up. There's a number of antennas, wires, and towers around, but also a lot of snow, and some of it really deep. I set up by some rocks on a snow bank. For 20 meters I used a small radio I made from a kit (DC20B) and my regular radio for 40 meters. It did great and was fun!



Big Mountain W7U/SU-051

Stats: 3/2/2017

Points: 4 + 3 winter bonus (total=151)

Elevation: 7,230 ft

QSO's: 9

Farthest: 1,705 miles (TN)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

DC20 (2 WATTS)

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw (4 WATTS)

Homebrew linked dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 5th (my 2nd)

Trail report: There is a pretty good road to the north of the mountain that leads all the way to the very top, where all the towers are located. Of course, for purposes of activation, you can park at the first tower reached (lower elevation) and hike down to the required elevation change and then proceed to the top (no other parking areas available until that is reached). The numerous towers cause a lot of QRN (static) on certain bands.



This time, in early spring, still lots of snow and although I could pass with the ATV, I did have to go over a hardened snowbank to do it (would not have been possible with pickup).

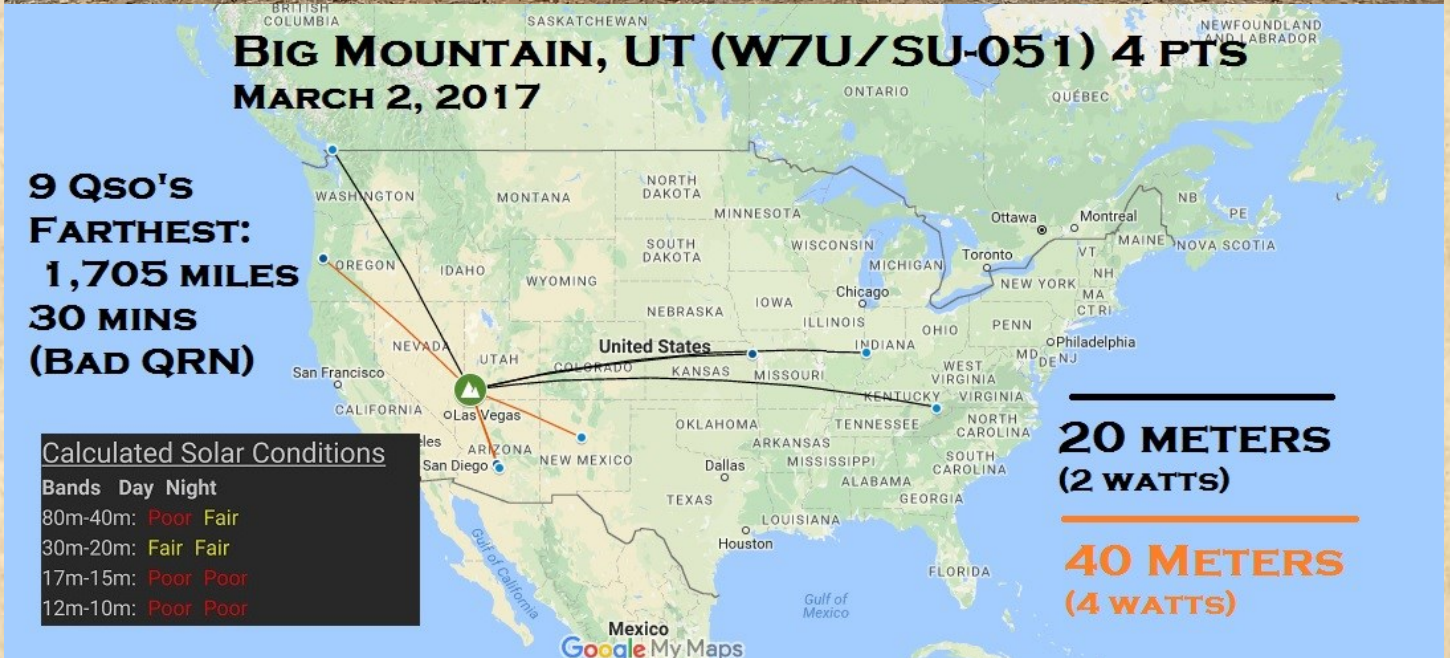
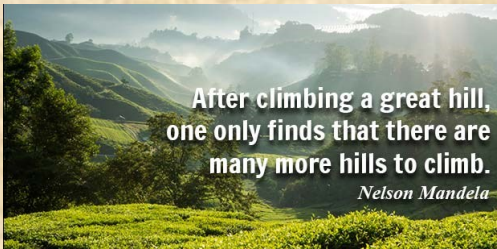


The experience: This is a simple summit as the road goes all the way to the top. The main problem is the antennas and interference they cause in the signal. At the top there's a shack and a fence (just an older wooden and barbed wire fence). I strapped the mast to a fence post and set everything up. The interference was really bad though. Plus the conditions were bad as well. Many of the signals I would normally hear, I could not pick out—only the strongest got through, very frustrating. Only nine QSO's (contacts) isn't good at all.

However, one good thing was I started using the DC20—a radio that I put together from a kit, very small, low power (2 watts output). The first five contacts I got (including the longest) was using that, which is pretty good in and of itself. So, I wasn't too bummed when it was over.

I scouted a better spot that will have less interference but will still be in the activation zone for next time.

(DC20 in the sandwich container)



“Cartmill Point” W7U/WS-066

Stats: 3/4/2017

Points: 4 + 3 winter bonus
(total=158)

Elevation: 6,835 ft

QSO's: 28

Farthest: 2,242 miles (VT)

Time on Air: 40 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 2nd (my 2nd)

Trail report: Access is gained by a road on BLM land which goes all the way to the top of West Mountain Peak and passes near a good place to start the hike. There is even a leveled-off area and a place to park by the fence line. The road up is definitely for 4-wheel drive, however. The first section is the steepest and care should be taken with the loose rock. There is no trail, but a number of game trails do help the ascent. Quite rocky. Beautiful view on top!

The experience: Second

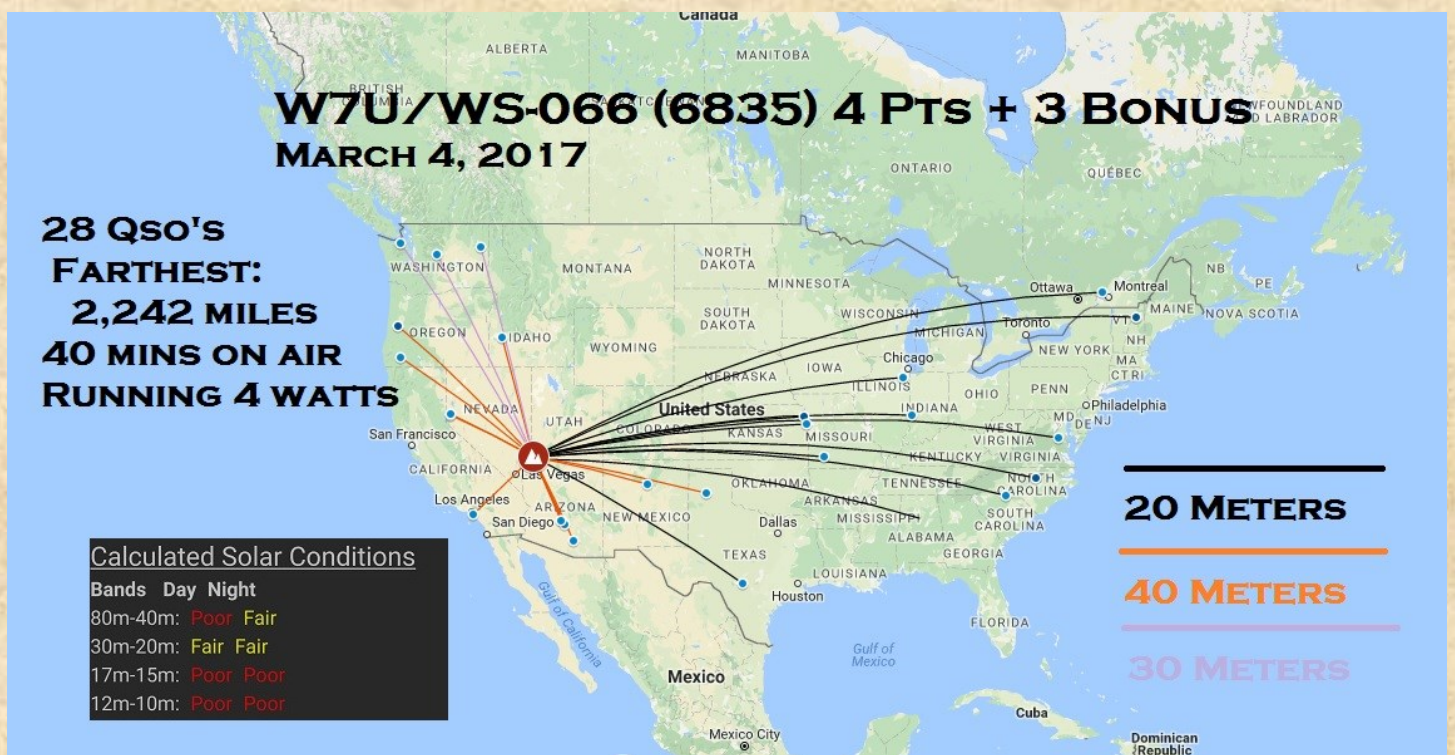


time up this summit. It was icy a few weeks earlier so decided to come back. There is snow in the picture, but not on the areas I would be hiking along the ridge. It was a good activation and I did it early enough to do a little scouting of another mountain. I went hiking after the contacts were finished, but decided I wouldn't do the other mountain today.

The way back (being a different route), had a lot more brush and I had to do a little bushwhacking. Unfortunately, at

some point along the I lost my camera. I did not realize it until I got back home, however. The trail I took was not marked and difficult. I did go back to the summit the next day just in case it was there, but I wasn't going to try and retrace my steps through the whole extra hike—it's still out there somewhere!

(I chose this name being as it was one of the very early ones I activated first with no name, and it can be seen from our deck)



"Scout Peak" W7U/WS-056

Stats: 3/13/2017

**Points: 4 + 3 winter bonus
(total=165)**

Elevation: 6,980 ft

QSO's: 19

Farthest: 5,415 miles (France)

Time on Air: 25 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

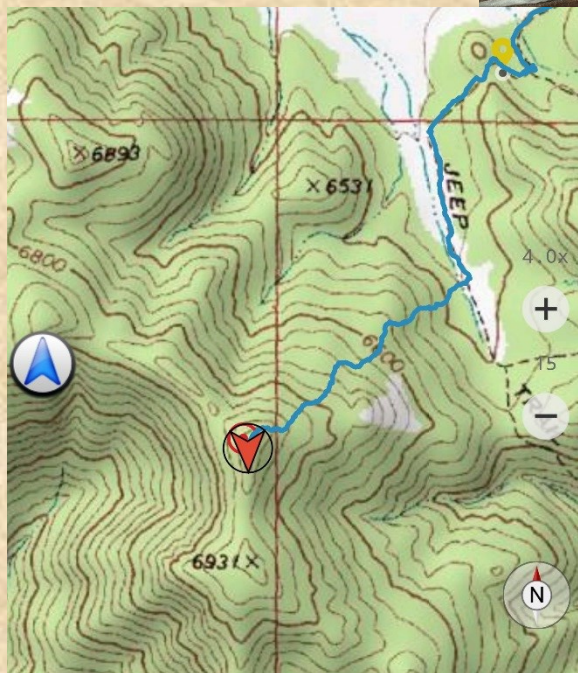
OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st

Trail report: There is a road that allows access up to the saddle of this mountain and the hike is quite enjoyable. It approaches from the north (200E in Enterprise). The road, in good weather, could be taken all the way to the saddle, although to get to that point a 4x4 is recommended for some of the last bit. Personally I went during early spring (March) and an ATV could not quite make it all the way because of snow. Once at the base or saddle it's



rocky yet grassy with some scrub brush and no trail, but not bad at all.

The experience: This is one of the brand-new activations that I wanted to try while getting the winter bonus. It's out of the way and tucked into the mountains south of Enterprise. Being so early in spring, there were large patches of snow and, in fact, I have to drive over some snow to make it to the beginning of the hike. It wasn't a bad hike at all and was a nice day.

Once on the summit, there was some rock outcroppings that aided in antenna setup. It wasn't long before I heard a call from F6HKA, Bert, in France, who I know from the Straight Key Century Club—the farthest contact of the day. Interestingly, he was also QRP (low power) running only five watts. Very cool!

Another successful 1st activation! (Name in honor of Sara).



Atchinson Mountain W7U/WS-010

Stats: 3/17/2017

Points: 6 + 3 winter bonus
(total=174)

Elevation: 7,859 ft

QSO's: 32

Farthest: 6,891 miles
(New Zealand)

Time on Air: 40 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)
OCF dipole
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 1st

Trail report: The route I chose started off of the main road running through Central, UT which leads to Forrest Service road 823. A good pickup or Jeep can take this road to FR-824, although from there I would suggest an OHV of some kind. My ATV did just fine on this road. It leads to the base of the adjacent mountain to Atchinson Mt. but seemed to be the best approach in my opinion. The end of the road is a natural spring with a few places to park.

From that point it's the beginning of the hike. There is a trail that can be followed to the top of the first stretch where it levels out for a bit as you go around the adjacent mountain. From there I followed the 7200 ft. contour to the base of Atchinson. While there are a number of game trails to follow, there was also some bushwhacking involved along the way.



At the base I took a fairly direct route from there going up the nice, grassy side until the last couple of hundred feet which is more rocky and has some more trees and brush to navigate. The top is fairly flat with some trees, brush, etc. At the actual summit there is a fairly-easy-to-spot benchmark.

The experience: I've been intimidated by this mountain since I started SOTA. So of course, I needed to conquer it. I had been close to doing it

before, but the driving route was going to rip my up my pickup with branches scratching the whole way. With an ATV,

though, I could take it on. Plus, I definitely wanted the three points bonus for winter if I was going to go through the trouble.

It was one of the longer and steeper hikes I had tackled at this point, and the highest in Washington County to attempt thus far. The hike was tough at times and once getting to the actual mountain, it was steep. It was cool to be on top (and there was still snow which did determine my route some).

I actually got Czech Republic and New Zealand! That, in itself made it worth it, but I also got 32 contacts, only once before had I gotten more. Great hike and activation!



"Deadwood Hill" W7U/IR-035

Stats: 3/18/2017

**Points: 4 + 3 winter bonus
(total=181)**

Elevation: 7,450 ft

QSO's: 29

**Farthest: 5,607 miles
(Czech Republic)**

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)
OCF dipole
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)**



Activation: 1st

Trail report: This summit, coming from St. George, can be accessed either by Cedar City or Enterprise and then passing through New Castle on Hwy. 56 (same Hwy. if coming from Cedar City). From the highway take Desert Mound Rd, a very nice and wide dirt road that circles around the south of the mountain. There is a main road that heads north into the mountain from there (although there are other roads).

You should check map or GPS as there are a number of turn offs on the

road and you'll need to take the correct ones to arrive near the summit. ATV or other OHV is preferable to a pickup. The summit is most covered in trees, and at this time, lots of deadwood.



The experience: This is another in a string of first-time activations I have been looking forward to. With the ATV this one became quite doable. There are trees all around, it was a nice day with a good road/trail within close proximity to the summit. The hike from there was pretty easy. Although the area is covered, when you get to a place where you can peak out from the summit you see some awesome views.

With all the dead trees it was easy to setup the antenna—the antenna is basically what determines the placement of the radio station for the day. It has to be a place where the mast will stay in place and the wire can go up without much obstruction.

GREAT contacts and I got TWO of the few DX contacts I've had with running 4 watts—got the Czech Republic, and Spain, so a really good day, plus one of the higher number of contacts total I've gotten as well. Plus, I contacted three others on summits today, it was a good one!



Pinto Peak W7U/WS-038

Stats: 3/21/2017

Points: 4 + 3 winter bonus
(total=188)

Elevation: 7,280 ft

QSO's: 12

Farthest: 2,235 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 15 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 1st

Trail report: This is a pretty simple peak, but out of the way. Pinto road, which can be reached either from the west (between Central and Enterprise) or the east from Cedar City, is a fairly-well maintained dirt road. FR-014 is the road to take off the Pinto road, directly north



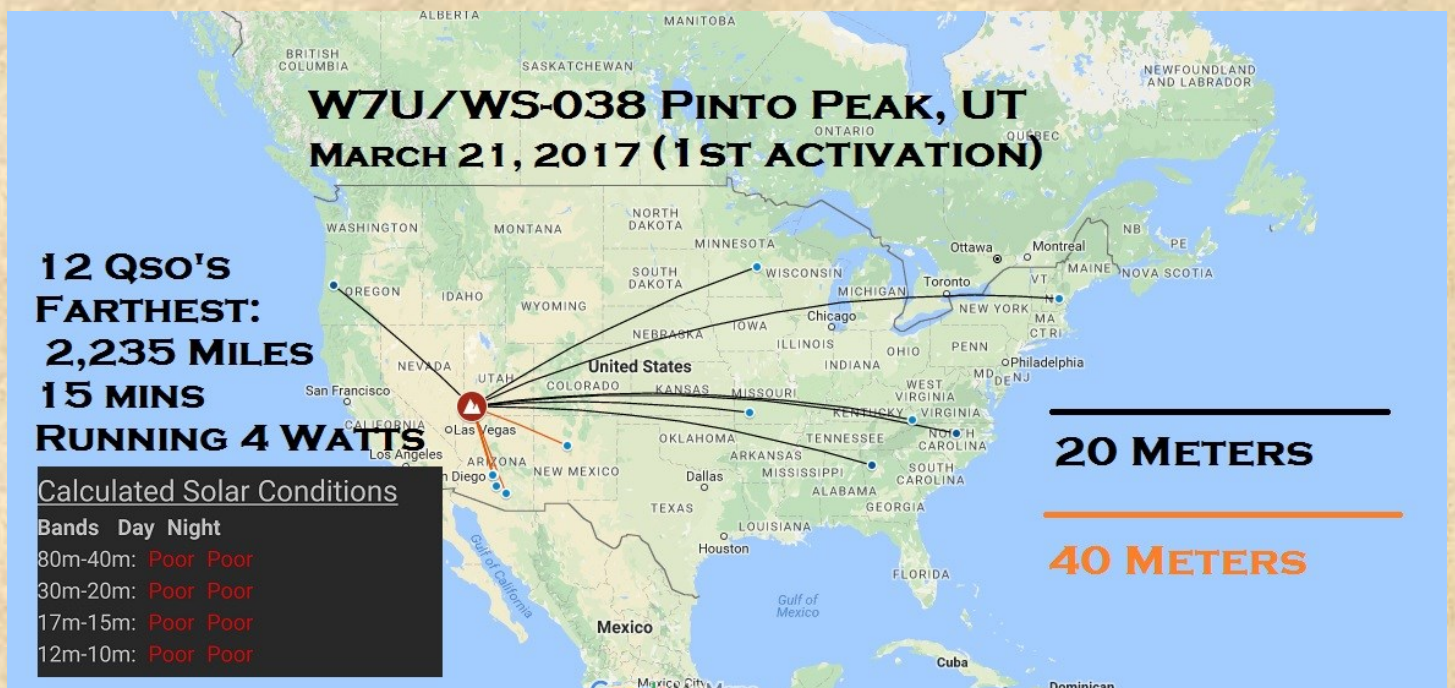
of the peak. Actually FR-014 is a better road than the Pinto road. Once there, there is heavy sage and trees in places, but a short hike to the summit. No benchmark that I could find, but a pile of rocks as is typical with many peaks.

The experience: I always enjoy a new summit that has never been done before, it makes a bit more exciting. This one is definitely off the beaten path. It's somewhat close to the town of Pinto,

but the town itself is out of the way of most everything.

It was windy but the trees help. As expected, I didn't see anyone else that day. The hike was pretty nice, a bit steep at times, but nothing that slows you down too much. I was a bit disappointed that this named peak didn't have a benchmark. As usual there was some wire around the top and a pile of rocks. The wind in the trees and the solitude sometimes is relaxing, but sometimes is creepy. This time it was a little creepy.

The radio conditions were really bad (all "poor" in the prediction model), and the wind shaking the mast made the telescoping sections slide within each other and come down a couple of times. After 15 mins. I had 12 contacts and decided it wasn't worth putting the antenna up another time, so packed up and started back to the pickup.



"Fossil Rock" W7U/WS-105

Stats: 4/4/2017

Points: 2 (total=190)

Elevation: 5,885 ft

QSO's: 17

Farthest: 2,264 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 40 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 4th (my 1st)



Trail report: The mountain is accessed by old Hwy 91 either north from Shivwits Reservation or south from I-15, and then taking Beaver Dam Mountain Road (not marked but good sized). This is a dirt road that can have some ruts, but a four-wheel drive vehicle is not necessary. There is an area to park right off the road that has a view to the mountain, but there is a small access road that will get you a 1/4 mile closer.

There are a couple of smaller hills to cross to get to the base of the mountain. There are a limited number of approaches due to the roughness of the mountain itself (see tracks on mapping project). I liked the route I chose



in order to bypass some of the larger rock formations. Just to the east of the summit you'll see two large rock formations with a little saddle in between them. I chose to go between them and would do it again in the future as well.

It is a very rocky climb at times (pay attention to the grey stones as you go up and you may find

some shell fossils) and it is steep most of the way. The summit is rocky as well and does not have large spaces for a long-wire antenna run north-south, but it can still be done.

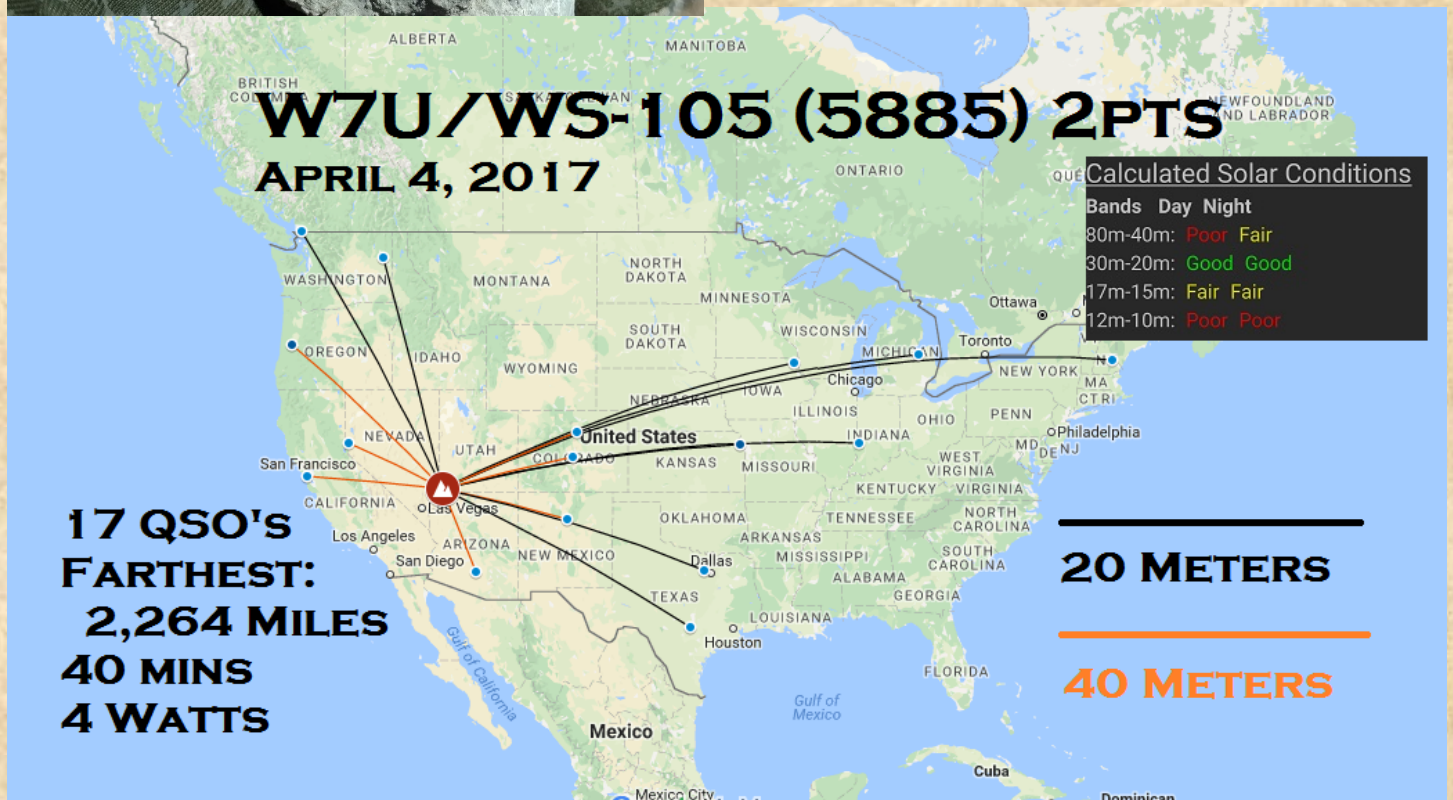
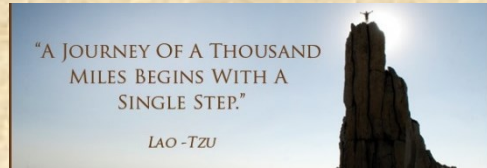


The experience:

This was one I wanted to do for the challenge and proximity, but not really worth the 2 points. Lots of rock and quite steep. The fossils every once in a while in the gray rock that's higher up is pretty cool though. There were numerous times I considered turning back, but decided just to take my time, not try and go straight up like I usually do and I would make it fine.



I was glad I did this one and was hoping to find some fossils worth taking down with me, but only saw one or two (didn't spend a lot of time looking though).



Iron Mountain W7U/IR-028

Stats: 4/14/2017

Points: 6 (total=196)

Elevation: 7,831 ft

QSO's: 15

Farthest: 1,915 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 45 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st

Trail report: Iron Mountain is accessed by a road at the edge of the quarry pit and bypasses the train to the west. There is a dirt road that goes all the way to the top, although near the end it starts to get rough and narrower (a good place to hike from) as the road splits to the right for final ascent. There are numerous small buildings & antennas at the

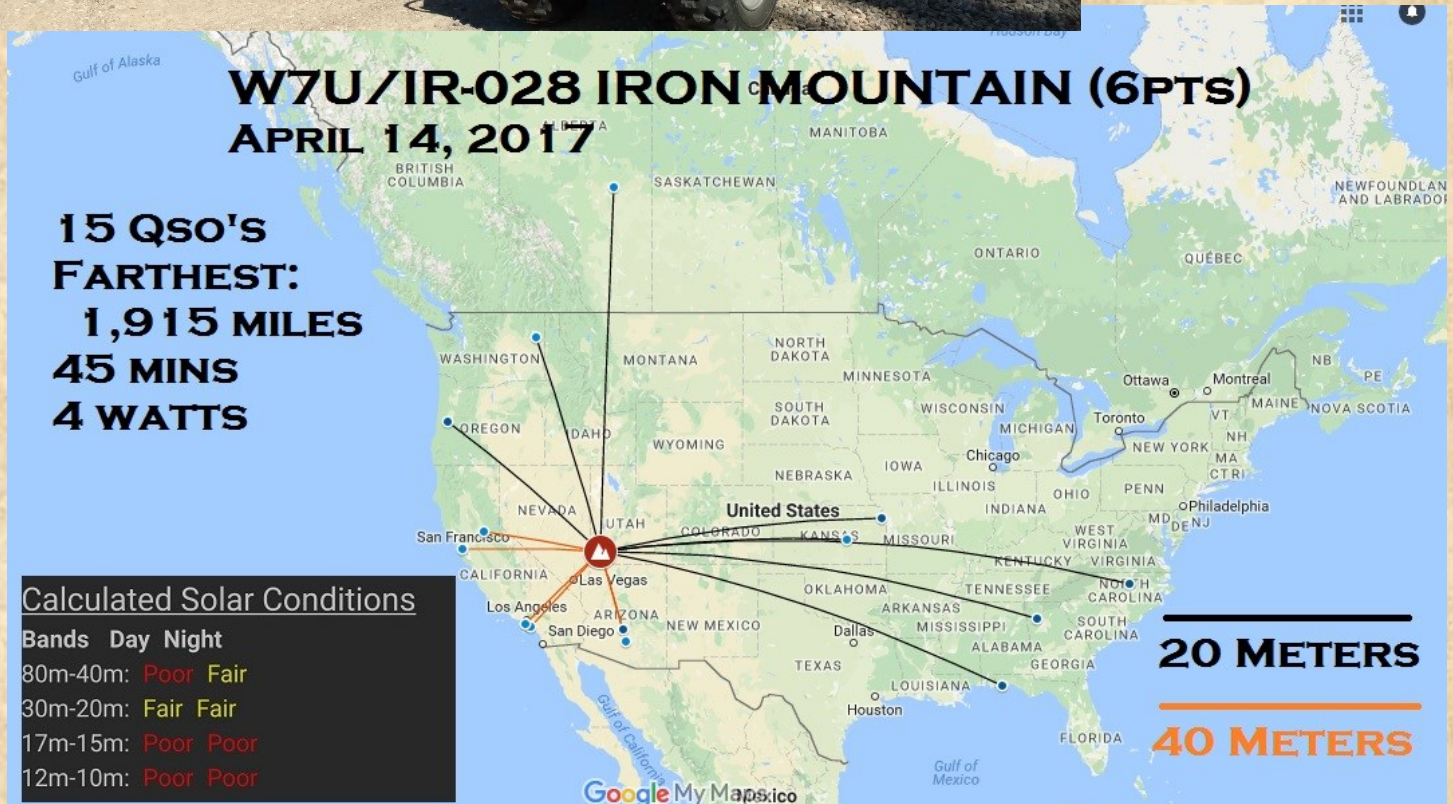
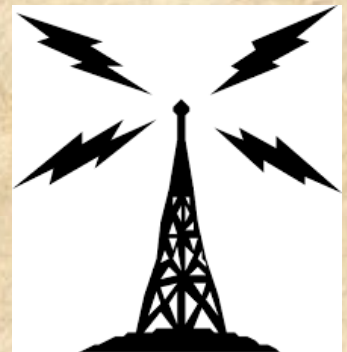
summit. Even so, there is ample room to setup a station and be out of the way.



The experience: This was a summit I wanted to do long ago. I had passed by it with other activations and because the train was so long, and I only saw one road in (blocked by the train), I thought it was just at a time when they were loading it up and I'd have to come back. It turns out, there is another road in that is just barely open at the end of the train (which never goes anywhere). The route was pretty easy and fun by ATV. Half of the mountain is a mine and quarry.

The top has numerous shacks and towers. With the strong winter storms, a number of the towers were down—heaps of metal all around. One of the shacks was open—a door just open. I closed it and left a note in case something was missing or damaged inside.

I setup using a downed tree. Conditions weren't great, and it took me a while to get going and get the contacts I got.



Swett Hills W7U/IR-040

Stats: 4/22/2017

Points: 4 (total=200)

Elevation: 7,028 ft

QSO's: 13

Farthest: 1,915 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 25 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 2nd (my 2nd)

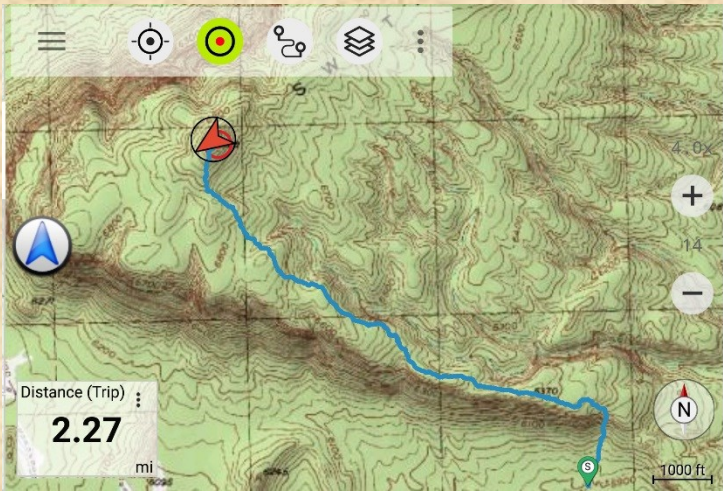


Trail report: Easiest access seems to be from the base of the hill off Hyway 56. There is a dirt access road to get close to the base. Once "on top" of the initial ridge, staying to the southern ridge provides a pretty straightforward approach without having to lose much elevation as you continue on. Taking that route is about a 2.5 mile hike. The summit itself is covered with trees but still enough spaces to put up a wire antenna.



The experience: This was my second trip up this summit. I would have liked to have done it during the winter bonus season, but my first time up was in snow and was not pleasant. The hike isn't too steep, so not bad, but the BLM cut down tons of trees all along the way in the area (as with before), so stepping over all of them constantly was a pain. (This is the place I broke my first hiking pole).

I was working my way to the very top when I saw a deer right on the summit. She didn't hear me even though I was wearing Dad's bells. After setup I could not tune the antenna. I brought it back down and saw one of the wire had broken. It took a few minutes to fix and then it went back up. I was up there about a half an hour, and then packed it up and headed home.



W7U/IR-040 SWETT HILLS 4 PTS
APRIL 22, 2017

A map of the United States showing call paths from Las Vegas, NV to various cities. The paths are represented by lines connecting Las Vegas to San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Dallas, Houston, Chicago, Toronto, Philadelphia, and New York. The map also shows state boundaries and major cities.

13 QSO's
FARTHEST:
1,915 MILES
1 SUMMIT2SUMMIT
25 MINS ON AIR

20 METERS
40 METERS

Google My Maps

Flat Top South W7U/SU-050

Stats: 4/29/2017

Points: 4 (total=204)

Elevation: 7,309 ft

QSO's: 13

Farthest: 1,985 miles (FL)

Time on Air: 15 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

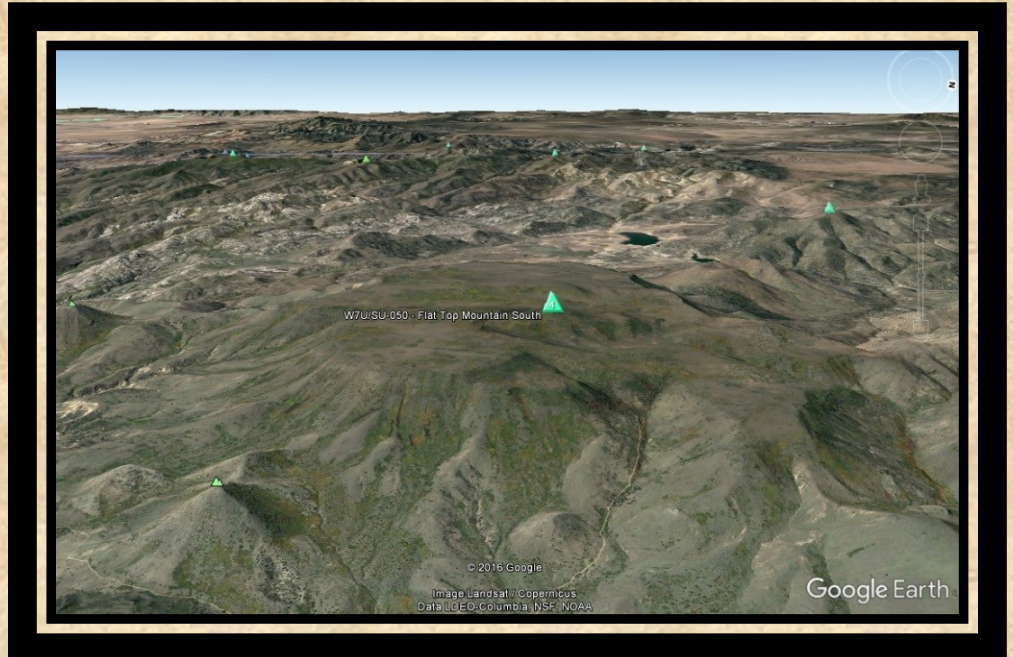
(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 2nd (my 1st)



Trail report: Access is gained from Enterprise, UT, 200 E. then a dirt road that goes up almost to the top. A 4x4 pickup can make it most of the way. There is a small turn off near the top to get to the base of what remains of the hike, an ATV is preferred or just hike that portion. In winter and spring these are often filled with snow. Once at the base, it is a pleasant hike, easy grade with grass and dirt until the very end when it becomes rocky. There are two benchmarks on the top.



The experience: This was my second attempt and getting up to the top—the first one I had to turn around because of snow too early in the season. It was a nice ride until near the end when the road got really rocky (would not have taken a pickup). Yet again, no one else in sight anywhere.



The hike was pleasant, and pretty easy. There were lots of small dead trees at first, but then it was rocky at the top. It was windy and cold. I didn't stay up there long, I setup, got 15 contacts, and started seeing a flurry or two and a storm coming at me (not big, but still...). So at that point I packed up and got out of there. On the way back down, I saw over 65 deer (I had seen none on the way up).



FLAT TOP SOUTH, UT W7U/SU-050 4 PTS.

APRIL 29, 2017

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

13 QSO'S
FARTHEST:
1,985 MILES (FL)
15 MINS
4 WATTS

20 METERS



Harmony High Point W7U/IR-019

Stats: 5/4/2017

Points: 6 (total=210)

Elevation: 8,390 ft

QSO's: 15

Farthest: 2,086 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 15 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw

(4 WATTS)

OCF dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st



Trail report: Access is gained through the town of New Harmony, go all the way through main street and to Harmony Dr. [Old State Hwy 144] until it enters Dixie National Forrest and becomes FR-029 which is on the west side of town. Trying to gain, what appears to be, more direct access heading north through the center of town will result in many "no trespassing" signs and a locked gate at the entrance of the mountain road.

Once in the National Forrest, there is a small dirt access road which will lead to the mountain road and is not obvious or present on a number of maps, but you can see it off to the right (east).

From this point I pulled over and used an ATV. (The entire route will be posted on the mapping page for clarification). This road leads to the mountain road that goes to the High Point.



There would be a number of challenging areas for a 4x4, but doable for an experienced mountain driver. Naturally, time of year needs to be taken into account (still had snow across the road in two small spots in May). It actually gets nicer higher up at times. No problem for the ATV. There is currently an older partial tower on the summit. The final approach is clear of trees and is not a bad climb, although the road does go all the way up. No benchmark that I could find.

The experience: Since I tried the direct route first (gates don't show up on maps) I ended up getting frustrated, but once I found the actual, open route, it was really good. The ride is nice and not risky like a number of

mountain roads. Once again, as with many of these experiences, once on the mountain I didn't see another soul the whole time. I couldn't believe I hadn't seen or tried this summit before.

Had I been a couple of weeks earlier, I don't think I could have passed a certain point on the ATV because of the snow, but there was just enough room to bypass the melting snowbank. The road basically goes all the way



to the top. I hiked up past the structure up there and into some rock formations just a bit higher and behind it. Setup was pretty quick and easy.

I wanted to have a good video on CW so I was going to do several bands. I had trouble with tuning the antenna other than 20



meters though. This wasn't the first time, something was wrong with the antenna. From then on, I used an antenna I made myself (homebrewed) instead.



Gillies Hill W7U/SU-044

Stats: 5/6/2017

Points: 6 (total=216)

Elevation: 7,888 ft

QSO's: 22

Farthest: 2,168 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 25 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 4th (my 1st)



Trail report: Access is gained right off of I-15 (as seen from the photo). Exit 120 is just north of Manderfield and the road just west leads all the way to the top. It's a nice road as well. Personally I parked below and used the ATV to reach the top.

The experience: I went out to this summit, even though it's quite a drive, because I knew it would be fast and simple. I didn't even take pictures really or video. It was REALLY windy though. Like many summits with antenna towers, this had two "sections." The very top was too full of towers, shacks, wires, etc. to find a nice place to set up, plus the wind encouraged me to move to the slightly lower area which had some vegetation to temper the wind just a bit.

I found a nice spot to set up using some rocks (my preferred method to steady the mast) and get the antenna up. With it being pretty windy I didn't stay up there very long. It seems my average on a summit is becoming about half an hour.

Of course, I could stay for much longer at times, not needing to rush to get down for anything specific. However, the number of contacts dramatically drops off after about that time. So to me, getting 10-15 more contacts in another forty minutes or so isn't usually worth it. At some point I will probably stay longer to see how many I can get, but more often than not, I'd rather be on my way. It was probably the farthest I've gone for one activation, but it was really easy, so I will probably do it again in the future.

This is my homebrew (home-made) linked dipole for three bands. Each length of wire is cut for a certain band (20meters=30 ft. for a halfwave). When you change from one to the next, you bring the antenna down a bit, link the wires with the clip and you have a new length of wire.



Since I didn't take tons of pictures on this one, here is my pack. From the TOP: walking stick, collapsible mast, guy-wire kit, spare string, protein bars and water bladder. RIGHT: pack fly (bright orange so can be used for signaling), leather gloves, compass, pocket knife, bug spray, poncho, mini tripod, Leatherman tool, bandana, and small bungees. BOTTOM: VHF/UHF radio, matches, batteries, toilet paper, chem sticks, lip balm, head lamp. LEFT: rain jacket, 1st aid kit, spare socks, bandana, backpacker's fly, beanie. CENTER: clipboard with logbook and key mount, SOTA flag, radio case with HB-1B radio, AME key for Morse code, clock, external speaker, headphones, LiPo batteries, bag with antenna and spare small homebrew radio.

When put all together with water filled, it's about 27 pounds—originally my pack was closer to 35 lbs., but that didn't last very many activations before I looked for ways to cut it down. It all goes in my black and red pack.



"Flower Top" W7U/WS-089

Stats: 5/12/2017

Points: 2 (total=218)

Elevation: 6,494 ft

QSO's: 22

Farthest: 2,230 miles (VT)

Time on Air: 20 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st



Trail report: Access is gained from W. Center St. in Veyo which leads to Veyo Shoal Creek Rd (dirt) at the bottom of the canyon. Veyo Shoal Creek Rd is a well-maintained dirt road that can be taken all the way to the base of the mountain. Personally, I parked at the entrance of Dixie National Park and rode an ATV to the base, but certainly not required to reach it. The access is fairly easy and the ascent is only a few hundred feet. The ground is soft dirt with some scrub brush and many flowers in the spring. Some rock outcroppings on the top allow for easy antenna set up.



The experience: This was a very pleasant activation and much easier to reach than previously thought. The mountain road goes right past the mountain and there's



even an ATV route that gets really close. As mentioned, and as the name I dubbed it implies, in



spring it was full of lots of different flowers. There was a stiff breeze and the hike wasn't bad at all. However, on the top the breeze got strong and I had to brace the mast with my leg so it wouldn't get pushed over.



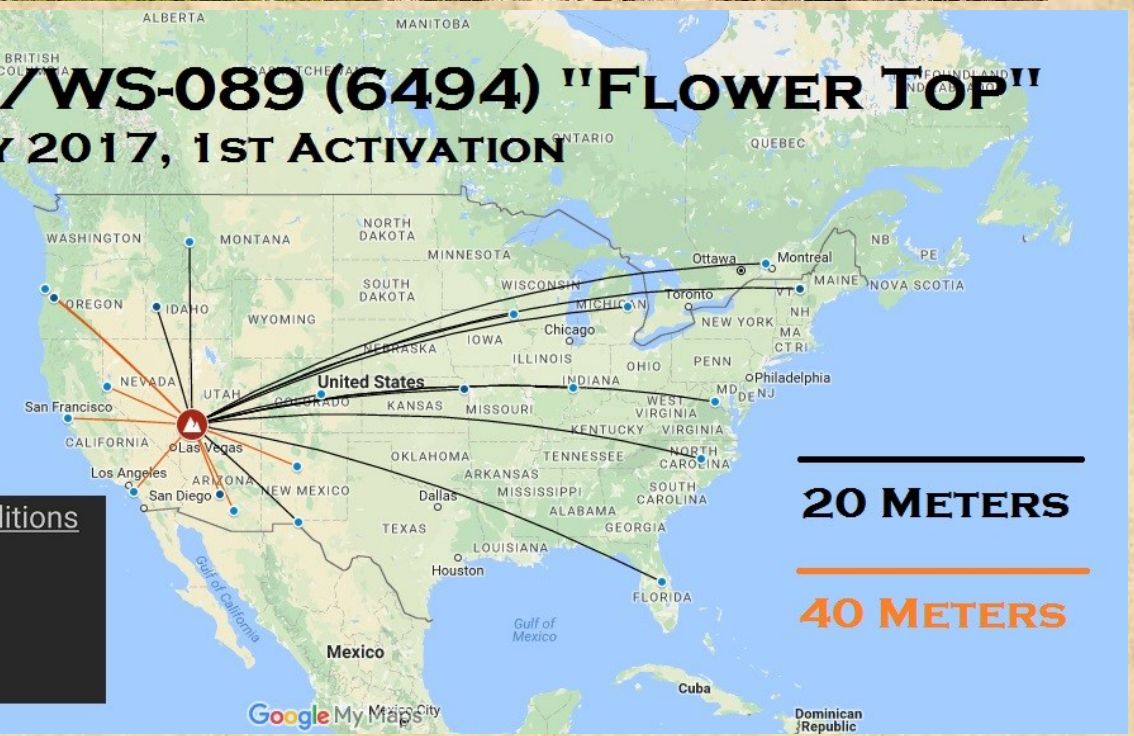
W7U/WS-089 (6494) "FLOWER TOP"

12 MAY 2017, 1st ACTIVATION

22 QSO's
FARTHEST:
2,230 (VT)
20 MINS
4 WATTS

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Poor	Poor
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor



20 METERS

40 METERS

Punchbowl Dome W7U/WS-122

Stats: 5/15/2017

Points: 1 (total=219)

Elevation: 3,554 ft

QSO's: 20

Farthest: 1,421 miles (IN)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 7th (my 2nd)



Trail report: Punchbowl Dome is easily seen from most areas around St. George as it's at the edge of Washington. The approach is from the east, however, on BLM land. There is a road that goes to the base, although it's not that well maintained and is used as an ATV trail more than a pickup road, but can be reached either way. There is a road that goes a little way up, but gets pretty steep where it ends off. There's really no trail from there, but it's a short hike.

The top has a post and a few guy wires as well as some old wooden structure. Nice view of the area below and Sand Mountain to the east.



The experience: This was a pretty quick one as it's close and easy to get to. There are some cool rock formations on the way up and of course a number of cacti. I used the wood structure at the top to strap the mast to and on which I could place the radio.

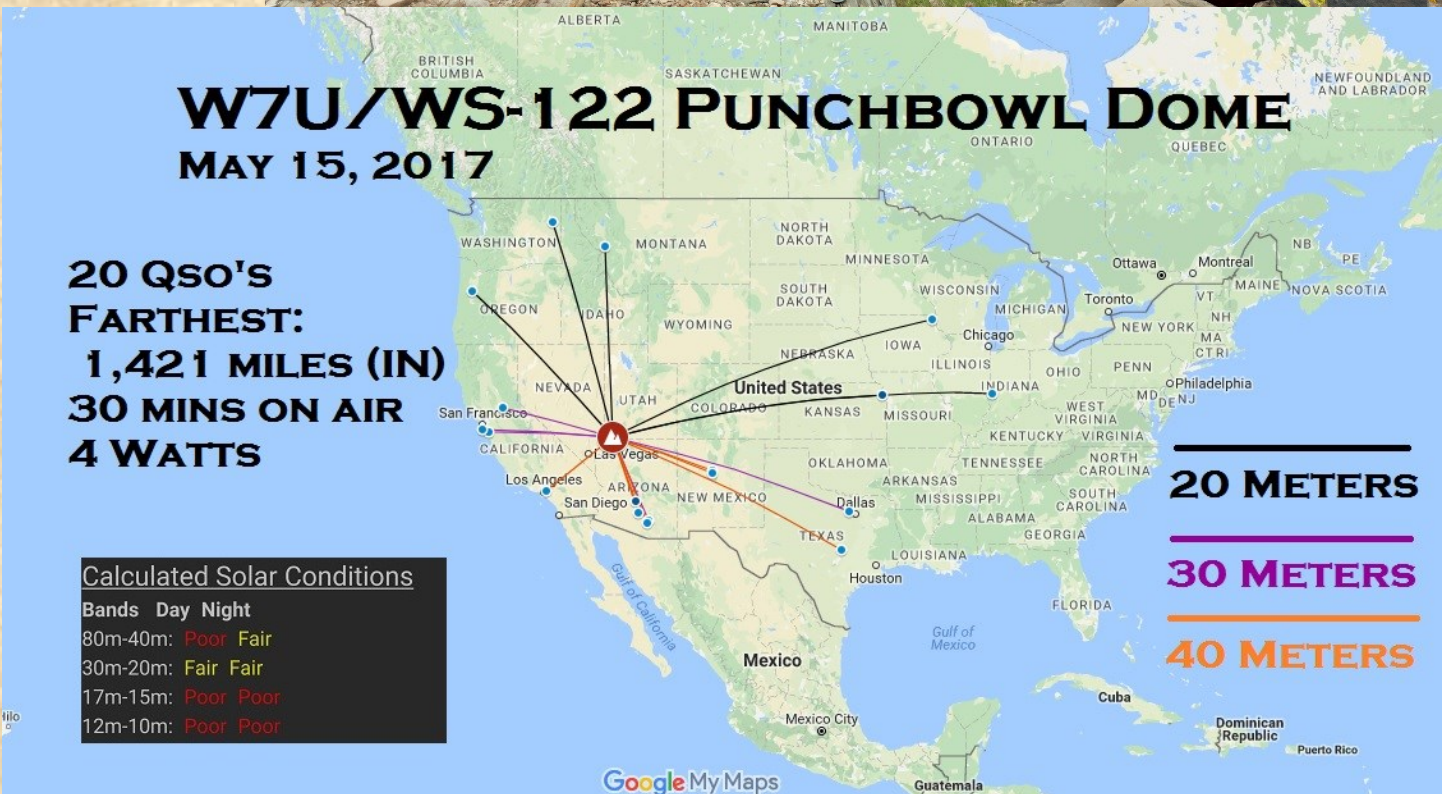
Conditions were not great and even though I usually can get pretty far no matter the conditions, today was not one of those days.

I saw a storm coming and stopping and packed up. Just as I started down really strong winds came up and started pushing hard. Almost got my hat blown off and

it pushed me around some, but luckily didn't lose my balance. Got back to the ATV and quickly back to the pickup.



FILL
YOUR LIFE WITH
EXPERIENCES,
NOT THINGS.
HAVE STORIES
TO TELL,
NOT STUFF TO SHOW.



Lost Peak W7U/WS-018

Stats: 5/19/2017

Points: 6 (total=225)

Elevation: 7,516 ft

QSO's: 17

Farthest: 1,990 miles (FL)

Time on Air: 20 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st



Trail report: Access is gained by going through Enterprise and taking Veyo Shoal Creek Rd. past Enterprise reservoir. On a map or Google it looks like FR-003 is the more direct, faster route right off of Veyo Shoal Creek Rd. bypassing the reservoir completely to the south. However it leads down a creek bed and has been washed out and access is questionable even with an ATV--a horse would be fine.

It's better to go on Reservoir Rd., go past both the lower and upper reservoirs and from that direction FR-003 is a nice, maintained road. From there you take FR-274 which continues to be a pretty decent mountain road. You end up at the base of the mountain with a couple of places to pull off the road and hike.

The hike itself is not bad at all. Lots of scrub oak but no so thick as to have to fight your way through it. The summit has two different benchmarks--one right on the high point and a second just to the west and a little off the top. Great views!



The experience: This was a great peak, I'm sure it's not used often at all. (It's the farther back one in the main photo). The hike wasn't bad at all and almost the whole time I had a view of where I parked the ATV. There was a lot of brush, but not so bad that you have to power through or change routes greatly.

The last bit was a little steep, but still an enjoyable hike. As always, activated a summit for the first time is exciting. It's equally exciting to "collect" another benchmark. It was a good day and successful

activation. Because of my troubles getting in the right route to start, I didn't have time to do a 2nd, but I did scout it out for the near future.

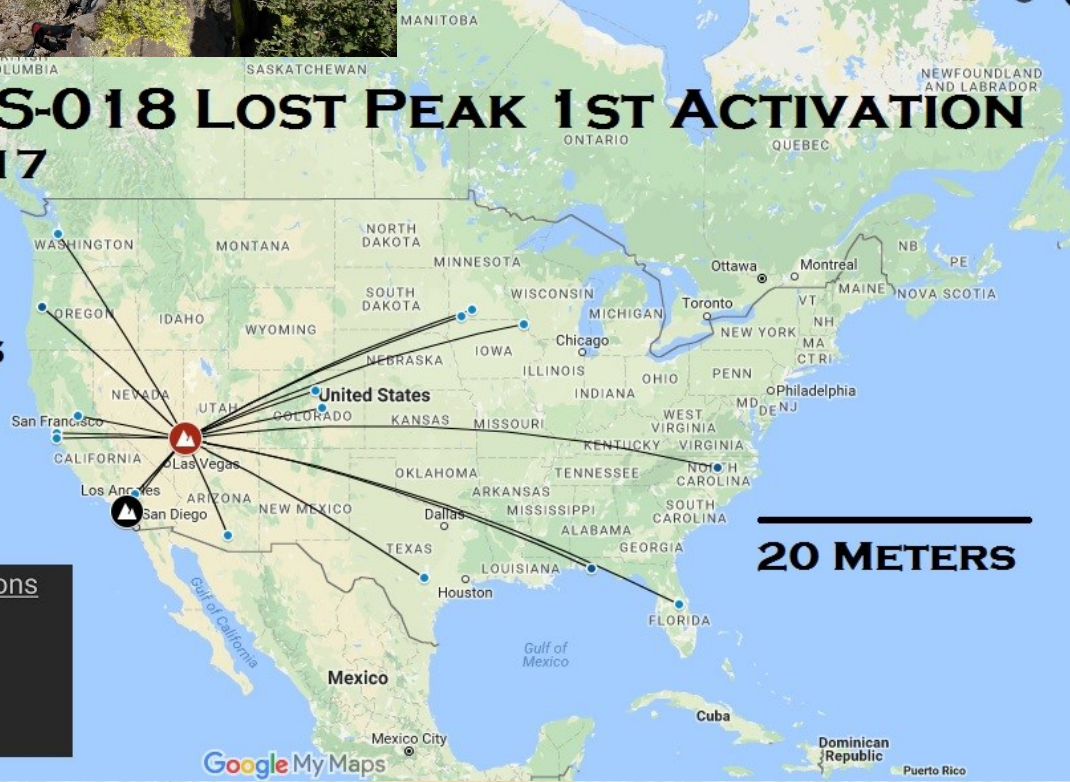


Nobody ever climbs a mountain, gets to the top, and says, "I should have just been content to stay where I was."

W7U/WS-018 LOST PEAK 1ST ACTIVATION

MAY 19, 2017

17 QSO'S
FARTHEST:
1,990 MILES
1 S2S
20 MINS
4 WATTS



Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Poor	Fair
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

"Keychain Mountain" W7U/WS-032

Stats: 5/26/2017

Points: 4 (total=229)

Elevation: 7,340 ft

QSO's: 13

Farthest: 2,138 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st

Trail report: Access is gained through Enterprise, UT on route 216 (Main St.) then Veyo Shoal Creek Rd. toward Enterprise Reservoir. Take the route that goes around the Upper Reservoir until on FR-003. This leads to the base of the mountain. The road is nice for a mountain dirt road. I took a direct approach which is a bit steep, but it is mostly vegetation and dirt. Fairly brushy until past half-way up. No cell phone access.

The experience: This was the first of two summits for the day. The hike was a little bush-wacky, but not terrible.



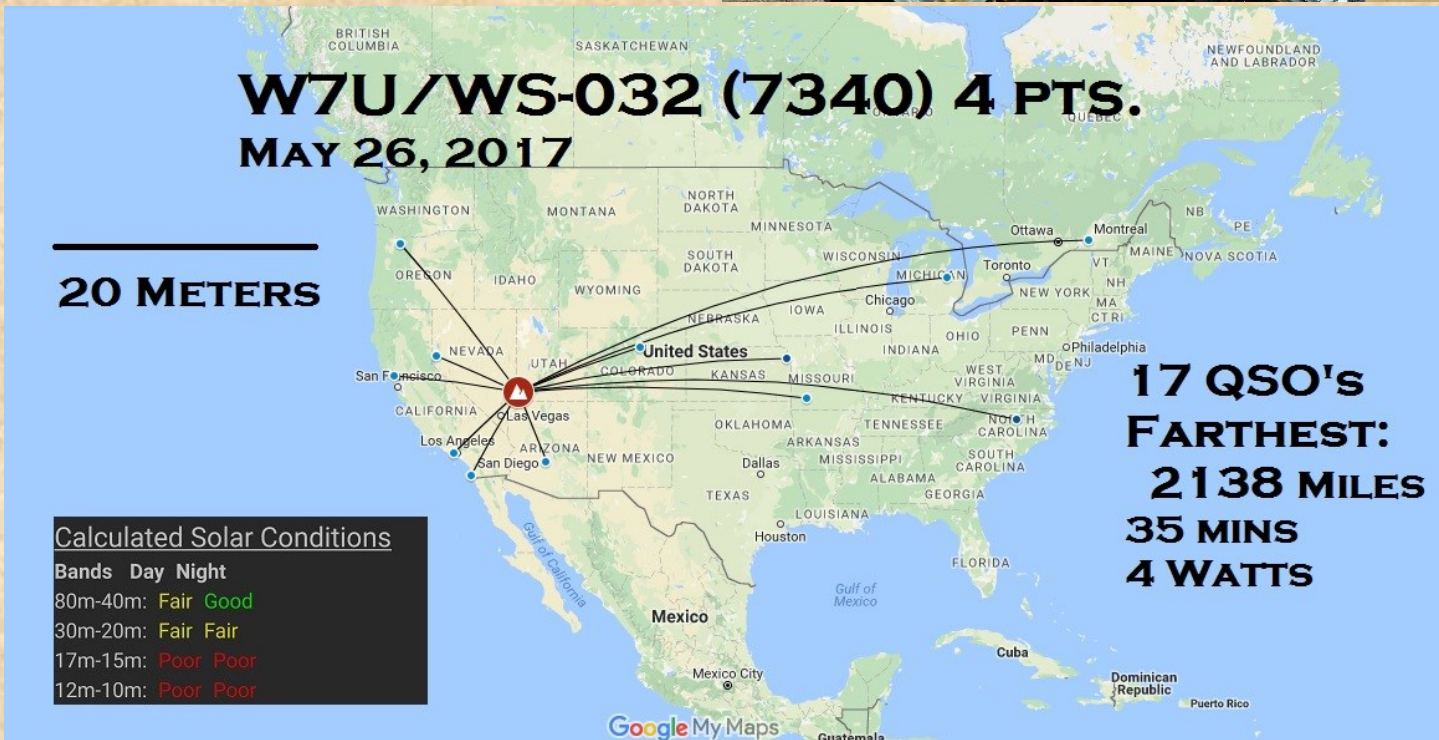
Finding a route was a little challenging because of the vegetation. Once near the top it cleared up and there were some rocks to use to brace the mast. I may mention this a few times, but I usually on fly the SOTA flag when it's a 1st activation ever of the summit, so it went up today. Winds were strong so I set up just off the summit on the protected side, but still couldn't put the mast up too high (meaning no 40 meters, longer wire and neighboring states).

I mistakenly believed I would have cell phone coverage on this summit as I had it on a summit very close by (but higher and in the direction of

Enterprise). With that it took some time to get the 1st few contacts, and then, gratefully, one of the chasers, Alan, N6ZI, spotted me on the website and I got a number of calls.

I didn't stay long as I wanted to get to the second summit planned for the day. Plus I had wasted a bunch of time calling waiting to be heard. The hike down to the ATV was uneventful.

Oh, I should mention the name "Keychain" is in honor of my wife, Joan. When we were younger and I'd go on a trip I'd bring her back a keychain as a gag gift saying "this is what I got you." This one is hers.



"Scrub Oak" W7U/WS-034

Stats: 5/26/2017

Points: 4 (total=233)

Elevation: 7,321 ft

QSO's: 4

Farthest: 1,838 miles (PA)

Time on Air: 10 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st

Trail report:

Access is gained through Enterprise, UT on route 216 (Main St.) then Veyo Shoal Creek Rd. toward Enterprise Reservoir. Take the route that goes around the Upper Reservoir until on FR-003. This leads to the turnoff to FR-274. The road isn't bad for a mountain dirt road. This leads past Lost Peak as well (WS-018).



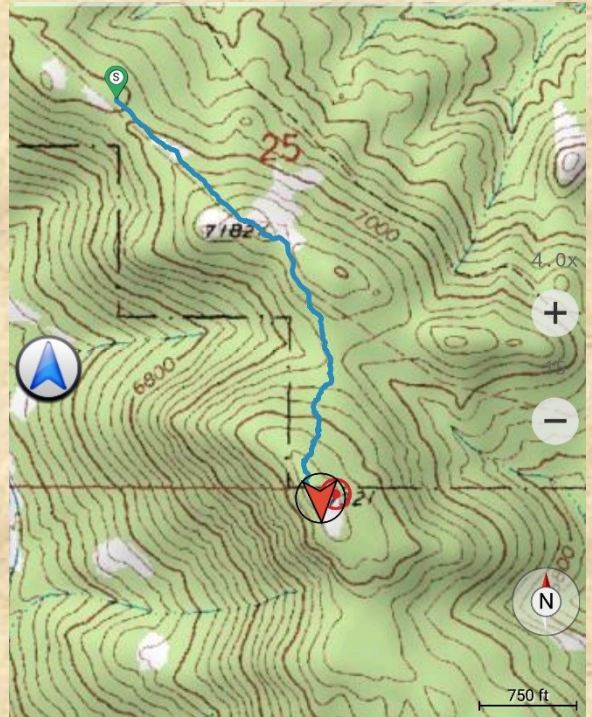
Once at the intersection with FR-004, you can take the Southern Border Trail (no motor vehicle access). This is somewhat overgrown and you have to leave the trail at some point to get to the mountain.

I personally took the OHV trail that is a little further up FR-274 (there is a small marker). This also is not very well traveled but at least it is free of scrub oak. This route, after a bit, follows a fence line and will lead directly across from the mountain, but you will still need to leave the trail and find a route to the summit. There is a downed fence line that can be followed that leads to the top. No cell phone access.

The experience: This was the second summit of the day and also one that had never been activated before. I love those! The OHV trail was rarely used and so it almost felt like you were riding across the mountain. I didn't follow it all the way as it started looking steep and rough. I parked the ATV and started hiking. The route doesn't actually go on the mountain itself, just the neighboring one (photo above).



Once you leave the trail the brush gets thick (hence the name I dubbed it with in the title). There was an old, downed barbed wire fence that I followed for a while since it was a little clearer. I got to the top ok and had nice views, with zero towns in sight anywhere.



(← Stuff found on the trail)

The problem with that is that there was no cell phone coverage, which means no self spotting for the chasers to find you. This can be an issue since someone has to just hear you to contact you, and with 4 watts, it's not easy being heard. Plus I was in a bit of a hurry because

I had a long way to go back home. I finally got my four required contacts and shut down. First time ever doing that. In the future I used the alert function—if you announce beforehand using alerts, when you call CQ there are stations that find your callsign and spot you automatically, so you don't need cell phone service—great use of technology.



“Hidey Hole Mountain” W7U/WS-055

Stats: 5/29/2017

Points: 4 (total=237)

Elevation: 6,990 ft

QSO's: 26

Farthest: 2,135 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 20 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st



Trail report: From a paved road there are two ways to access the mountain. One from the south (in Gunlock) and one from the north (in a round-about way) from Veyo to Veyo Shoal Creek Rd. Since the backway goes past two other SOTA summits, I chose to approach from the north. To do this you go up Veyo Shoal Creek Rd. until you reach the turn off to reach Bull Valley ATV route (though you don't take that route). This road is FR-871 (and starts right at the base of WS-089).

You will pass the well-marked Bull Valley ATV trail and continue until you reach an intersection about a mile and a half after the trail. Stay left, which leaves FR-871. The road continues south until a while later you reach an area of highest elevation near the peak about due west one mile.

From there the hike is a little rough and steep at times, but once at the base of the actual mountain itself, it opens up and is fairly straight-forward. About half-way up I skirted to the south (right) for the gentler slope up until the last. There's a nice-sized pile of rocks marking the summit.



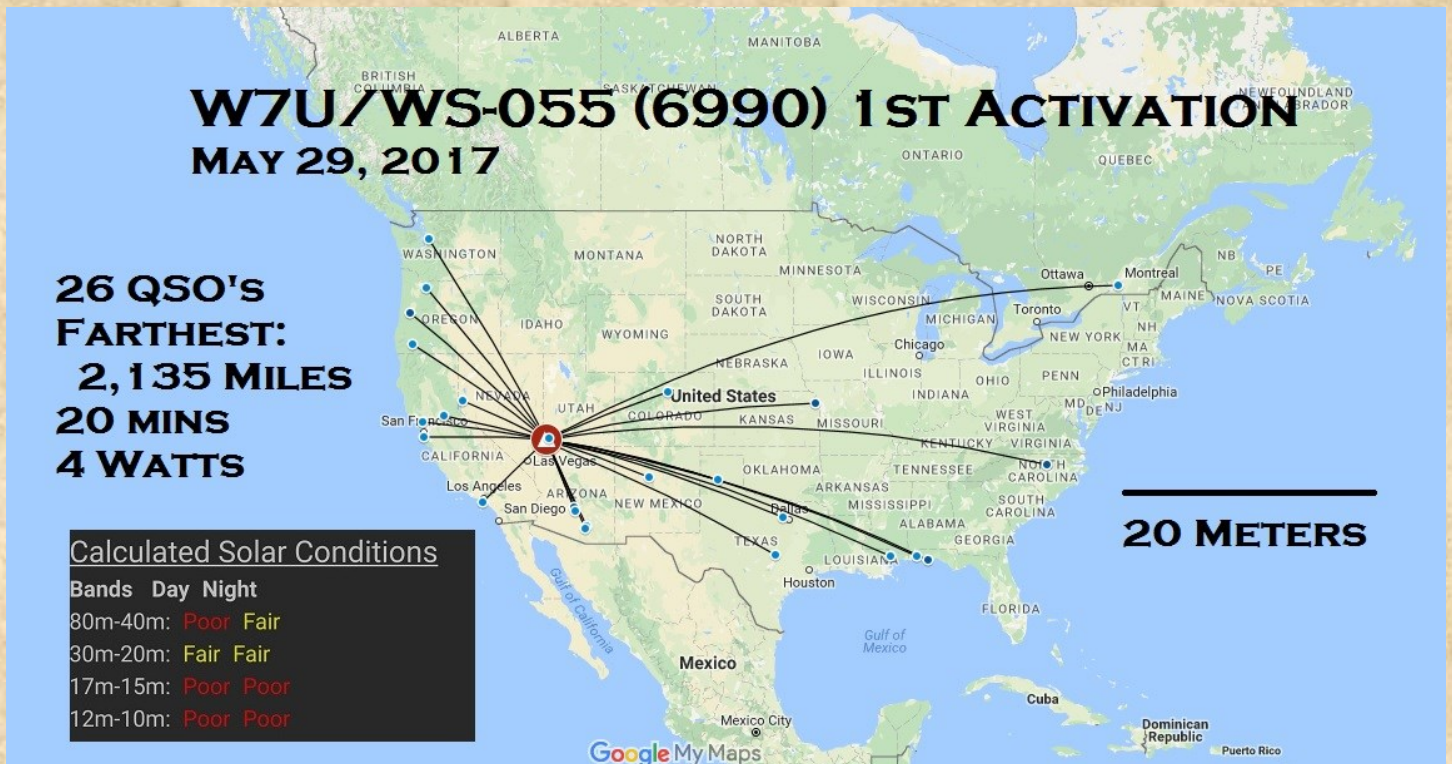
The experience: This was a full day summit as it took a while to get to the actual hiking, and then from there the hike was about 900 vertical feet and a mile to the summit. It wasn't an easy hike. The name “Hidey Hole” is my own name for it and comes from the hundreds of spider webs I saw in the morning light with a neat, little hole for each one. Then there were rocks that were like little shelters and also made me think of the same name.

There were plenty of nice mountain wild flowers and it was cool to see the area around. It's always

exciting to be the first to activate a new summit as well. The summit had a pile of rocks and set up was pretty easy. It was busy getting 26 contacts in 20 mins—lots of

calls coming in fast. I wanted to do a second activation, but I was nervous about the ATV route to the next summit (it had also never been activated).

The event of the day came on the way back home though. Hiking is a risky activity and I take care to watch my steps, watch where I place my hands and try not to rush it. I got back to the ATV and started back down the road. I had gone past all the hard parts—getting there, coming down, driving the winding mountain roads that were rough, etc. I was on the last part: an easy, open dirt road and was going fast—too fast.



The edge of the road had a sharply angled cut, as many mountain roads do, and my tire slipped into it and brought me and the ATV down into it. I knew I was going to wreck. I remember thinking “Oh no!” and then flashes of ATV, dirt road, sage brush, and dust. I got up really nervous that I was badly hurt—I checked myself over. Nothing major, just scraped up. It had the potential to be bad, but wasn’t. I was lucky, blessed.



Everything had been thrown off the ATV, even the gear that was strapped down. The ATV wouldn’t start. After several tries I noticed the kill switch had been hit. Then it started right up—no damage to the ATV at all. There was a tire imprint on my helmet in dust as well. That left me sore for days.



Wolf Hole Mountain W7A/NM-035

Stats: 6/16/2017

**Points: 8 + 3 Summer bonus
(total=248)**

Elevation: 6,416 ft

QSO's: 22

Farthest: 2,262 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

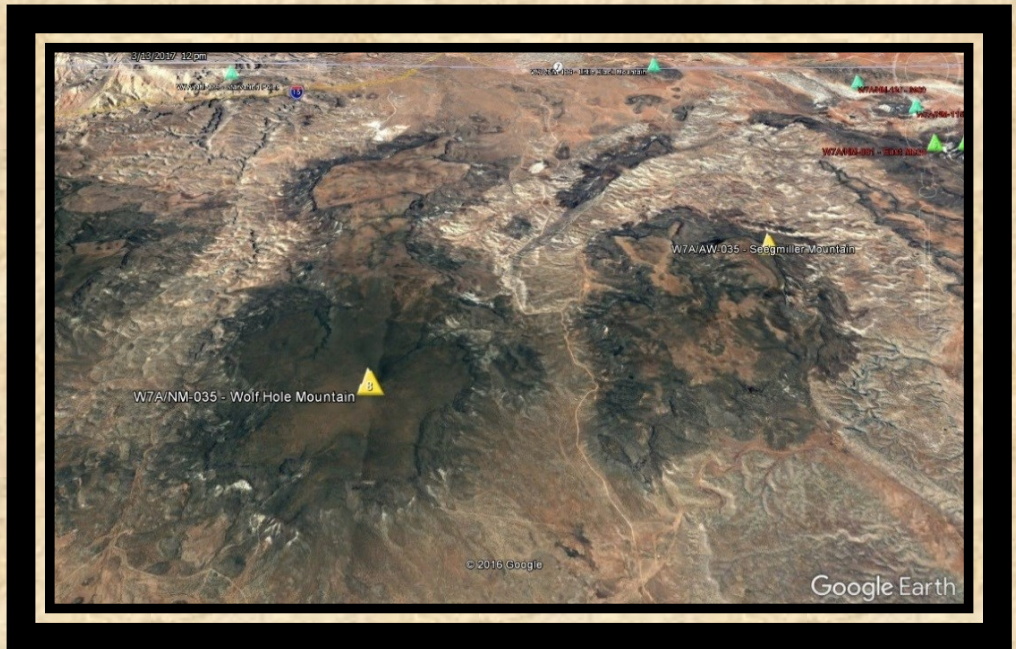
AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 2nd (my 1st)

Trail report: Access is gained through the Arizona Strip area, either from the north or the south. Coming from southern Utah, I approached from the north. BLM Rd. 1069 goes all the way through the area and is a well-maintained dirt and/or gravel road. There is a large area to park just before starting up BLM 1038 (it is marked although the sign is worn) if you plan on using an ATV or other OHV (which isn't a bad idea). The road is fairly rough at times and would be slow going without one.

Once on BLM 1038 you follow it up all the way to the flat. You do have to leave it for another BLM

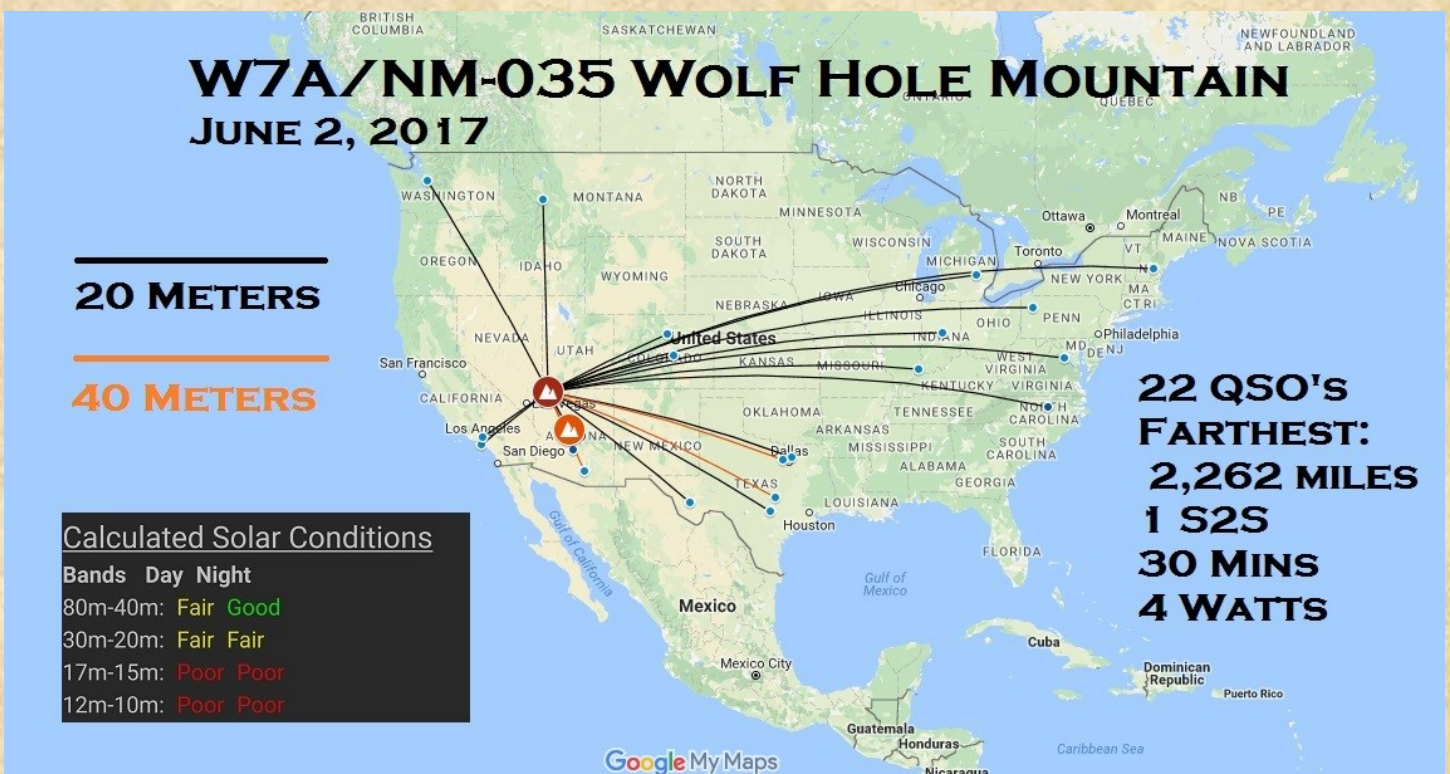
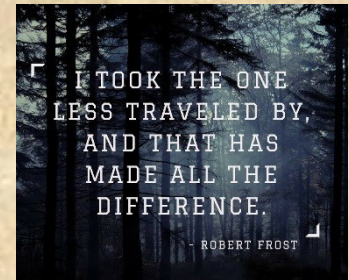


road to head south to get within close distance of the summit. From the dirt road directly west of the summit it's only half a mile to the summit and a very gentle slope. There is a benchmark and registry at the top. The area is covered with trees and brush, but no actual bush-whacking required with the spaces in-between them.

The experience: This was my first time on this mountain and the first of two summits for the day. The ride up on the ATV wasn't bad but I wouldn't do it in a pickup. It's the kind of area that you could go to and not see anyone for days. The hike was very easy and not long at all from the road. Once near the top there are a lot fewer trees and you can see the signs of people—some boards that many years ago was something at the summit, the common sight of wire around the top and there's a benchmark as well.

Since it was still early, it was fairly cool and enjoyable. There were some bugs, but nothing that made me want to leave early. It's always good to get those first few contacts

so you know you've been successful—but getting more after that is always enjoyable as well. After the short ½ mile hike back to the ATV, I headed back to the parking area. I had parked so I would be right in the middle of the two summits and would not have to load up the ATV to move and unload it again. On the road back down I saw my first snake (glossy snake) ever doing SOTA. It was sitting across the road, but I wasn't close to hitting it. I stopped to take a picture, but as a rule I don't play around or mess with them. It ended up being the first of two that day, the same type of snake.



Seegmiller Mountain W7A/AW-035

Stats: 6/2/2017

Points: 8 + 3 bonus summer
(total=259)

Elevation: 6,220 ft

QSO's: 20

Farthest: 1,930 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 3rd (my 2nd)

Trail report: Access is gained from St. George and taking the Southern Parkway to the River Rd. exit.

Heading straight south on the dirt road leads into the Arizona desert via the Mt. Trumbull Loop. This is a nice, wide dirt road and heads almost right to the base of the mesa on which Seegmiller stands. The mesa is large, and a rough canyon cuts through most of it so the route is a bit long. From there the FR-1020 route veers off towards the mesa and rises to the flat of the mesa.

This road is also pretty well-maintained. You'll notice the long, round-about way the road must go to avoid the canyon, but it does go all the way to the top where there are numerous towers and shacks. This does cause some interference but there is ample space to set up a station.

The experience: This was the second summit of the day and since I had been here before, I was confident in the route and how it would be. I took the ATV from my parking spot off of the mesa and had a good ride to the top. The first time I was here I was with my Dad and he dropped me off and I hiked up to the top, this time I went to the end of the road. There were a couple of guys working on one of the towers, but they didn't notice me.

I took a few pictures and headed to the area I would use to set up. It was fairly close to last year, but not exactly the same (I found a little shade which is always nice when it's summer).



It was a good activation, although it did start getting pretty warm. On the ride back I came across my second snake ever and of the day!



Mt. Bangs W7A/NM-002

Stats: 6/9/2017

Points: 10 + 3 summer bonus (total=272)

Elevation: 8,012 ft

QSO's: 11

Farthest: 1,950 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 7 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st

Trail report: The trailhead can be reached from the northeast or the southwest. The northeast is much longer a nicer road. I opted for the southwest approach (although in the future I would definitely at least try the other route). Access is gained from Scenic, AZ off of I-15 (near Mesquite, NV). From Scenic Blvd (the main road going into town), turn left on Red Hawk Rd which is a dirt road leading straight to the mouth of Elbow Canyon.

Once you see the old wooden corral you are very close to the beginning of the canyon road. The road is comparatively short (some 6 miles) but very rugged and not maintained. Either a jeep or ATV or dirt bike will make it. I would not suggest any other vehicle. I took an ATV, but it was still quite a challenging road. If you make it about half way without turning around, you will make it to the end--not that it's that much easier, but no more advanced challenges than the first half. Once you reach the top, the road goes from rock to dirt, although not always smooth. No cell phone coverage until



halfway up the mountain itself.

Mt. Bangs road leads partway up but ends in a little circle right at the trailhead which cuts off any motorized vehicles. There is a sign and a sign-in registry (no permits required however). The trail extends about 2.6 miles to the summit from this point (about a 1,700 vertical feet climb total). There are a couple of turnoffs for other trails. Once the trail begins to get steep, there are frequent trail cairns to mark the way all the way up. For the last couple hundred feet, there is some hands and feet climbing and gets more so that way the closer you get to the end.



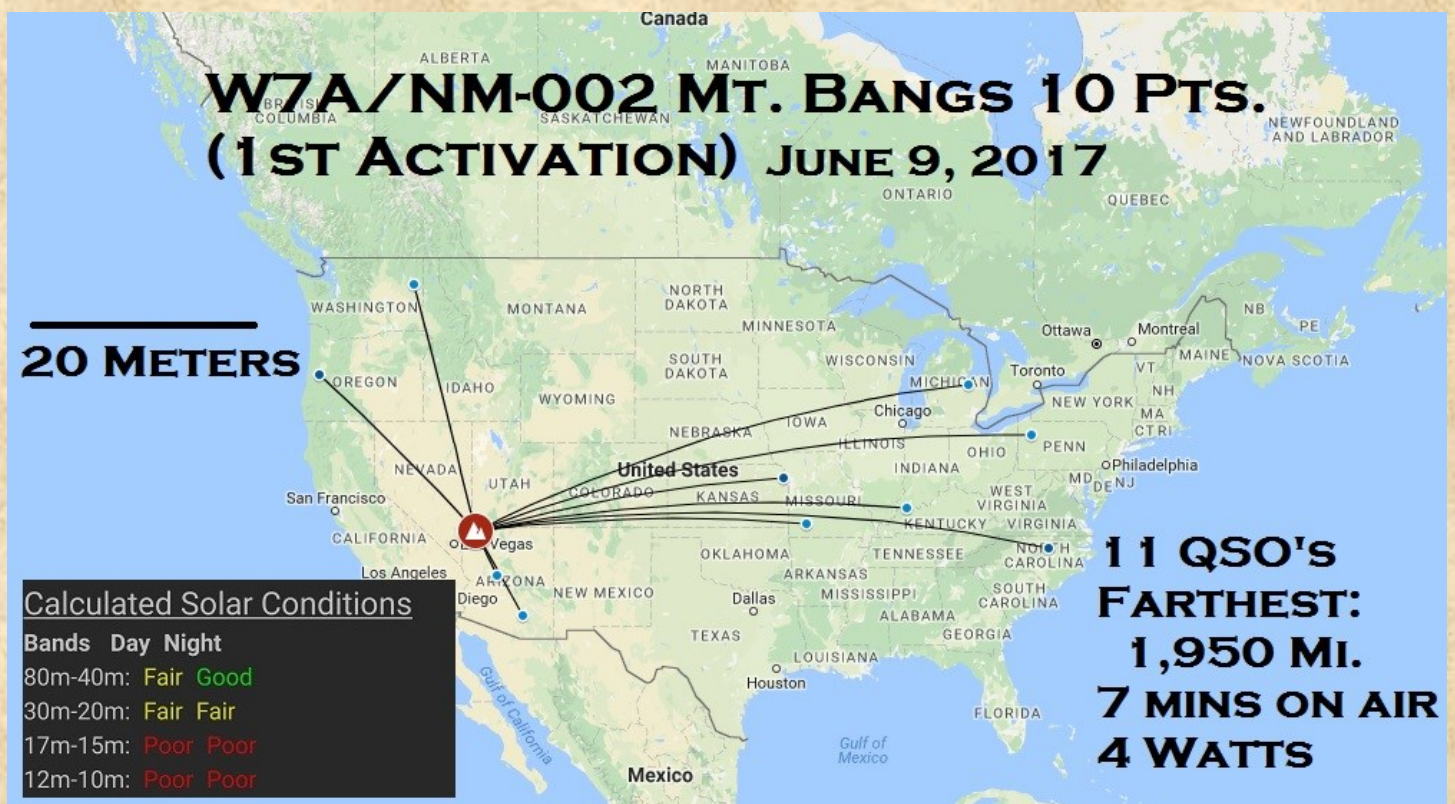
The very top is basically a pile of larger boulders. As of this writing there was a little orange flag marking the top. There is also a benchmark.

The experience: The ATV trip up took an hour and was very rugged and was challenging. It was still pretty early in the morning when I reached the trailhead, cool and windy. The first part of the hike is pleasant and not difficult. Many flowered bushes along the trail also brought in numerous bees and flies, but they were content to let me hike on by. Being in a deep valley there was no cell phone coverage. The trail goes in front of another summit (NM-006), although it is very steep, no trail, and is covered in heavy vegetation. At the end of the first part of the hike you top out at “Littlefield Reservoir” (dried-out pond) and can see north all the way to the Pine Valley Mts. (which also gives you temporary cell phone coverage).



From there the trail takes a turn to head right up the mountain. Getting into the last few hundred feet of elevation, the trail got steeper with more rock than dirt for the trail so cairns marked the rest of the way up. At this point there was a lot of scrambling on all fours. Nearing the top you can see Littlefield, AZ and Mesquite, NV. There are a couple of sharp drop offs so be careful. The summit is a pile of large boulders so you will have to make your way from one to the next, so again, there’s some climbing on all fours. At one point you’ll see the very top, which, as mentioned, is currently marked with a little orange flag. There is a benchmark as well.

The very top did not lend itself well to setting up a station especially with the strong winds, so I found a place that provided a small amount of wind break. The high winds and time it took to reach the top greatly shortened the time I was going to spend on air. I had a steady stream of calls for 7 minutes straight. Once there was a break, I shut it down and packed up (11 qso’s). I was relieved to get down off the summit a ways. Admittedly the long and arduous ATV ride back was also on my mind. I had been successful and learned a lot about the area, so called it a day. The ride back down Elbow Canyon was slower than going up with the steep sections, lots of rock and a number of switchbacks. As always, it’s a great sight to see the pickup again and I was looking forward to the air conditioning.



Haycock Mountain W7U/GA-018

Stats: 6/16/2017

Points: 8 (total=280)

Elevation: 9,047 ft

QSO's: 21

Farthest: 2,237 miles (ME)

Time on Air: 15 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 2nd (my 1st)



Trail report: Access is gained by a couple of paths, for me it was from Brian Head heading towards Cedar Breaks National Monument (Hwy. 143). This goes past Panguitch Lake. After completely passing the lake, take FR-070. You reach a sign for the area with regulations, etc. This is the place where I parked to use the ATV on FR-074. It is a multi-use mountain dirt road, but is best with an OHV of some kind. This leads to the base of the mountain (the highest part is NOT the part traditionally marked as Haycock Mt.).



From the point of leaving the road, it is a straight shot up to the summit with only a few hundred vertical feet, although it is heavily wooded with aspens and evergreens. There are a couple of game trails that can lead through this area, although downed trees still make it challenging. Near the actual summit you open up into a clearing (as shown above). The summit proper is in the brush at the top. There is a benchmark, but the brush has grown all round it so you have to hack and weave your way to it.

The experience: This was a first activation of this summit for me and it took about 2 hours from my house to arrive here (the first of three summits for the day, starting at the farthest and



working my way back). While I saw a few other people on the road, once up on the mountain I didn't see anyone else. The hike was inclined but not bad. Trees were pretty thick in parts so there was some ducking and whacking off dead branches in the way. It was nice to have a clearing just before the end to see around, take a few pictures and pinpoint the summit (and luckily find the benchmark).

Set up was out of the brush by a tree and in a little shade. I, very foolishly, thought I would have a good internet connection here because of Panguitch Lake which has many tourists, a little "town" with gas and everything, but I had trouble spotting myself for the chasers. Luckily one of the first two who answered my calls asked for the mountain reference and spotted me, so I got calls coming in more regularly.



It took longer to get to the top (because the ATV ride was slower than expected), and I had two other summits, so I only stayed on 15

minutes. That got me 11 contacts and I packed up and headed out. The conditions were really bad, but still made the farthest contact of the day all the way in Maine (almost my first one with Maine doing SOTA) so it was a good success and I anxiously got off the mountain to head to the next one.



Brian Head W7U/SU-016

Stats: 6/16/2017

Points: 10 (total=290)

Elevation: 11,307 ft

QSO's: 22

Farthest: 2,174 miles (VT)

Time on Air: 20 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 16th (my 2nd)



Trail report: Brian Head is a popular ski resort and the mountain itself is highly trafficked. There is a road that goes all the way to the top, although even at this time of year, the road was blocked about ½ mile from the top with a large snowbank. There were a number of people and vehicles parked along the road trying to reach the summit. Some hiked up anyway, others turned around. The road is dirt, but can be accessed by most vehicles. Once at the top it is a short walk to the actual summit, marked by a stone shack which has two different benchmarks on the floor inside.



The experience: This was the second of three summits for the day. It was fun to see some people playing in the snow, obviously from places where they don't get to see it much. The hike was nice with wonderful views since there really aren't many trees on this mountain. It's not very often at all that ever encounter other people on summits since most are very remote and not easily reached. People go up, take a picture of the sign, the stone shack, a few of the views and head back down. I didn't want to interfere with anyone's experience on the summit, so after taking a few pictures, I decided to set up away from the shack. (Nice view of Cedar Breaks National Monument, shown below). I got a number of "looks" with my pack and the mast, but most were doing their own thing.

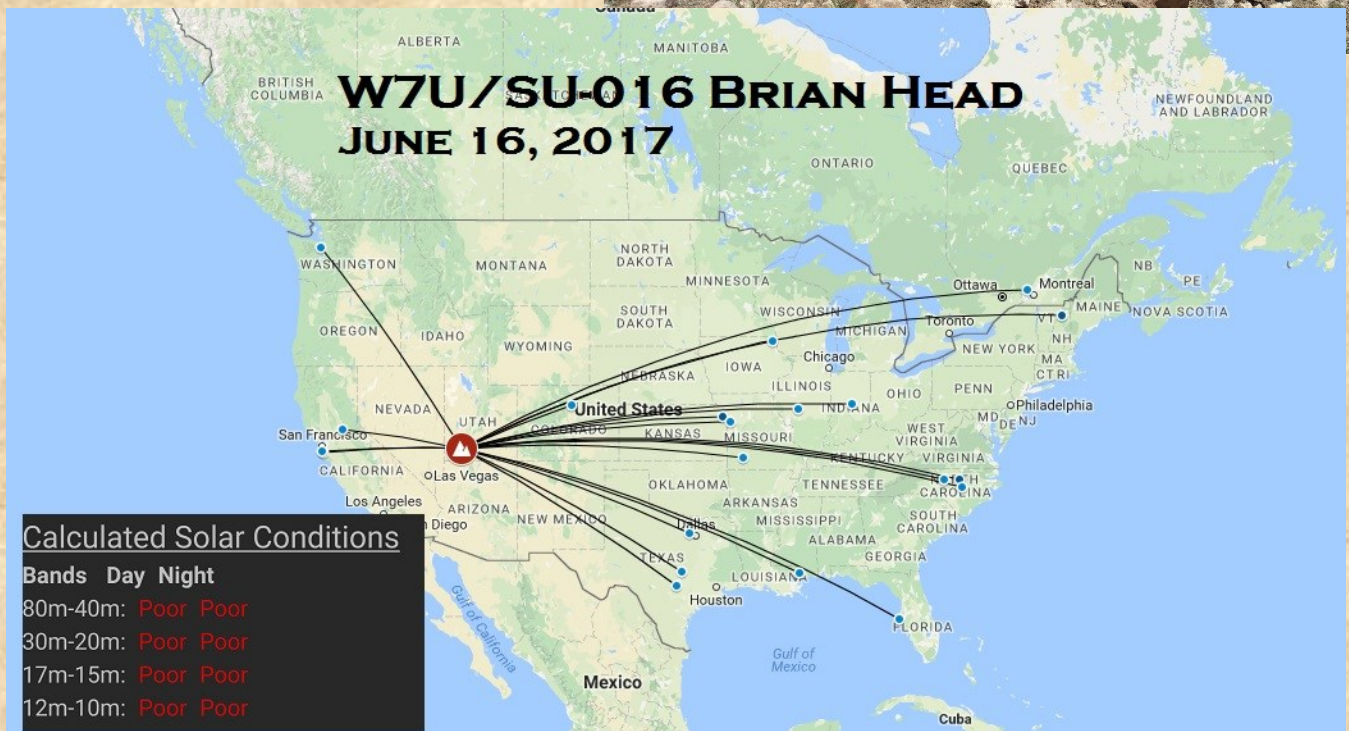
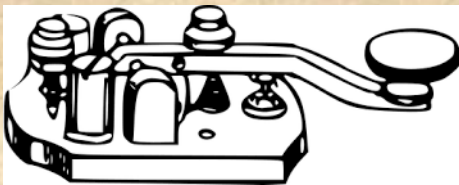


The top is fairly barren, but I found a place with enough rocks to pile up to keep the mast steady. After I was set up and ready, I noticed there were tons of flies in the area—a dog had gone kind of nearby. Geez, well, I didn't want to take it all down and find a new place, so I just dealt with some flies.

Brian Head is really high up, has zero obstructions and so the signals were very clear. I got a pileup from the very beginning (lots of calls coming at the same time). I worked 22 people from all over in about 20 minutes. It's

always fun working a pileup and getting lots of people calling—you just pick out a full callsign you can hear and go with that. After a while the pile dies down a little bit and you can hear the weaker stations, but eventually you get to all of them. You work fast and keep it short and it all works out.

I had a young family ask what it was all about, so let them know what I was doing. They were taken aback that it was a “radio station” set up temporarily, but nodded and went on. I had one last summit for day to get to, so I packed up and headed back down to the pickup.



Navajo Point W7U/IR-002

Stats: 6/16/2017

Points: 10 (total=300)

Elevation: 10,575 ft

QSO's: 15

Farthest: 1,187 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 10 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 3rd (my 2nd)

Trail report: Access in Brian Head using FR-204 which winds up the side of the mountain (used for skiing in the winter). There's an intersection (shown in picture) and you just have to turn up towards the summit.

The road is fairly well maintained and can be reached by most vehicles to this point. From here, an OHV trail gets you right at the base with only a few hundred vertical feet to go. I opted to park below and ride an ATV as far as it would take me. No trail to the top and heavily wooded. Once on top it is pleasant with shade from trees, a view of Cedar



Breaks National Monument, and protection from wind, although there are often bugs and flies to deal with. It can be a little challenging to find a place to set up with longer wires with the trees, but is still doable.

The experience: This is a very nice summit to work. It's access is fast and easy from Brian Head, green with nice views. It's also right next to Brian Head (also a 10-point summit) with easy access as well so easy to work together the same day. It's kind of steep, but since the views are nice, you just pause to take a break and look around.

Being my second time up here, I took a minute to look harder to see if there is a benchmark around. The foliage is pretty thick though and I did not see anything (usually embedded in rock very near the actual highest point). I strapped the mast to a downed tree and got on the air. Since I was kind of in a hurry being the last summit of the day (and an hour and a half drive to get back home), and with the abundance of trees, I only got on 20 meters

(shorter wire so didn't have to go as high or as wide). It only takes four contacts to earn the points for the activation, but there are so many CW operators that cutting it to only four isn't very nice to the other chasers who would really like the 10 points. So I got on the air and answered all the calls that came in until there was a pause and then shut down.

With that I contacted 15 people in 10 minutes. My phone was dying so I didn't record any of the contacts on audio.

On the way down I took a quick photo of Brian Head mountain (where I had just come from) as seen from Navajo Point (to the right). These two are ones I will do each year until I retire from SOTA. It's always interesting to see how even with 4 watts, very little power (QRP) AND really bad radio conditions, you can still make plenty of contacts and from far away.



Little Black Mt. W7A/NM-136

Stats: 6/17/2017

Points: 4 + 3 summer bonus
(total=307)

Elevation: 3,504 ft

QSO's: 21

Farthest: 2,237 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 45 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 4th (my 2nd)

Trail report: Access just off of Southern Parkway in St. George (road to airport) taking the Desert Canyons exit. From the exit there is a new neighborhood and a side road that isn't developed yet. Future access this way is questionable as it appears the neighborhood will eventually block off the entry.



There is a barbed wire fence which is the border of Utah and Arizona. You just have to find a good place to cross over. There is somewhat a trail that meanders up the northwest part of the mountain, but more experienced hikers will want to choose their own route.

Numerous cacti and lots of black rock on the way. It's not very steep and the summit has a nice view of the area. For whatever reason, there are three different benchmarks within 10 yards of each other.

The experience: This was an easy choice for me as I was taking my wife to the airport early morning, I had saved it for the summer for the bonus, and it was going to be a hot day later on.



After dropping Joan off at the airport, I went right to it. The neighborhood continues to grow and I had to park a little farther away than the first time to get to open land. Next year may be tricky if houses completely line the street. The hike was relaxing and cool enough to be enjoyable, well, not hot enough to make it uncomfortable is more like it.



Once on top I set up using some rocks to steady the mast and found a touch of shade. Once on air I started as I always do on 20 meters (farthest distance contacts) and started getting calls right away (Indiana, Quebec, Kansas, Florida, Alabama, etc.)—lots of the regular chasers. When I started getting long pauses after about 20 mins. I switched to 40 meters with my linked dipole (reaching neighboring states). With a linked dipole you have to bring it partway down and then connect the wire to make it longer then put it back up. I got a few of the regulars



again, but there was a CW contest going on with lots of interference from others (QRM). I then switched to 30 meters (obviously, in-between) because there is no contesting allowed on that band. I got a couple of contacts there (a few from Canada) and then switched by to 20 meters to end.

I took a picture or two and things were quiet and heard someone calling. I went quickly to the radio and asked who was there (QRZ?)—it was AC1Z in New Hampshire, which ended up being the farthest contact of the day. It wasn't hot, but I didn't want to linger on the summit either. After that I packed up and started back down the mountain. It didn't take long—saw a horny toad on the way back.



Yellowstone Mesa W7A/NM-062

Stats: 6/27/2017

Points: 6 + 3 summer bonus
(total=316)

Elevation: 5,651 ft

QSO's: 24

Farthest: 2,229 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 40 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 1st

Trail report: Access is gained from Highway 59 in Utah, which becomes Highway 389 in Arizona. The turn off is a few miles south of Colorado City, AZ onto county road 239 which heads due south for about 11 miles. This county road is a nice dirt road the entire way and can be taken by pretty much any vehicle. The road ends at an old gravel pit which is a mere 150 yards to the high point. There are two benchmarks at the top. Flat and rocky with a few short trees and a nice view from the edge.



The experience: This was



a very easy and fast activation. It took about an hour and a half from my house to be on the summit. The road literally gets within a few hundred feet of the top (hard to really call it a summit). This is the kind of place you really see the difference between UT and AZ summits—in Utah this exact summit would be worth 2 points, here in AZ, it's 6 points plus 3 bonus.

It was a nice area, no one around, some cool rock formations and LOTS of jack rabbits. Set up was easy with some rocks and a few trees to tie off onto. Contacts were a little slower than normal, of course, I was there early

to not have to be in the heat (started making contacts just after 8 am), which always affects the number of contacts. Still not bad. Had some troubles with my key skipping signals, hopefully it won't be an issue in the future!



Starvation Point W7A/NM-134

Stats: 6/29/2017

Points: 4 + 3 summer bonus
(total=323)

Elevation: 3,581 ft

QSO's: 11

Farthest: 2,132 miles (NJ)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 5th (my 2nd)

Trail report: Access is gained off of I-15, with the Black Rock Rd. exit which is the first exit in Arizona as you head south from Utah. The start of the dirt road trail is right off the exit. The road is more of a 4x4 road. It turns into a jeep trail after the first couple of miles. It can be done by mountain bike or OHV.



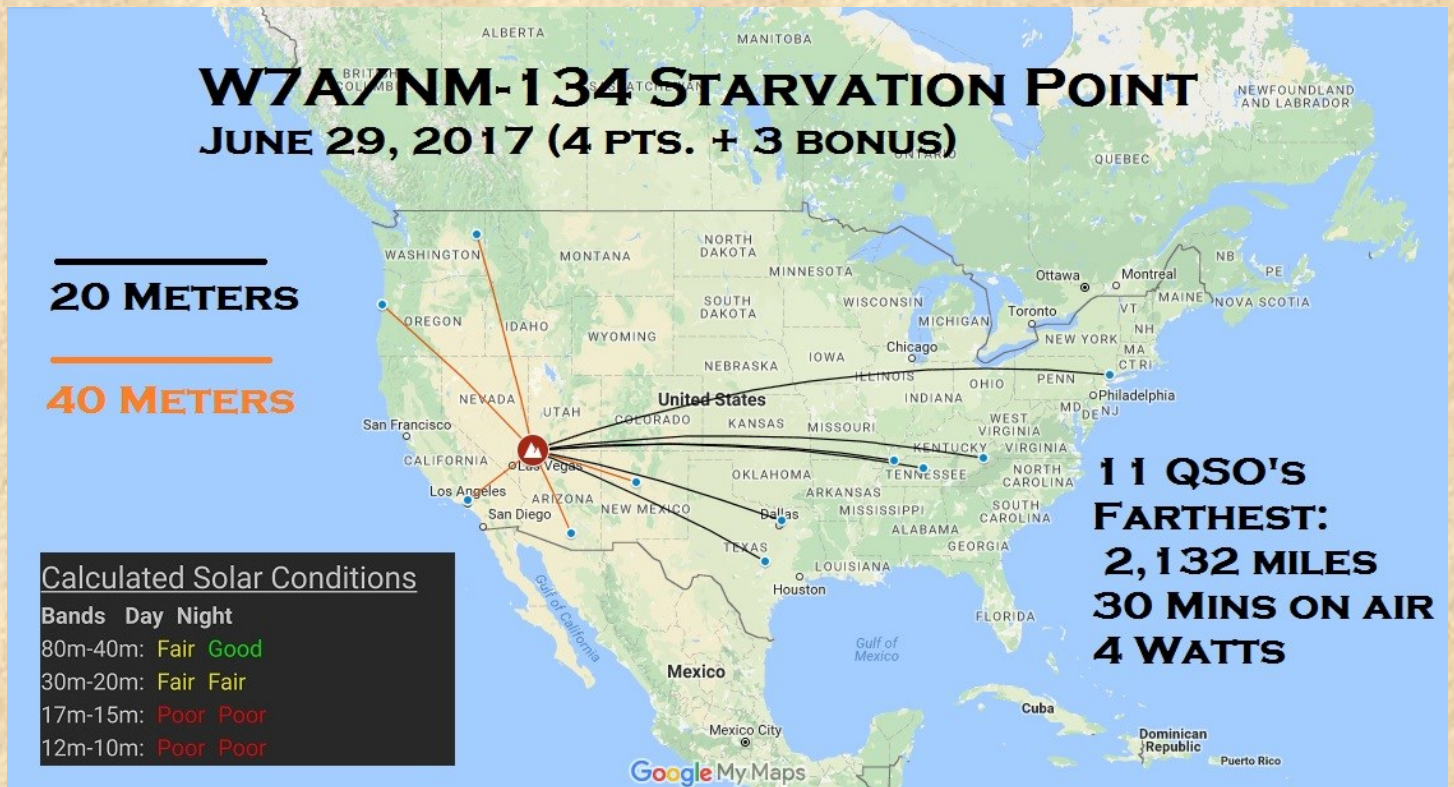
The experience: This was my second trip out here. The first was by mountain bike, this



time was ATV. I went really early so that I could be done before the heat of the day settled in. I was on the air before 8am. The ride was nice and a bit challenging in parts. It was pretty straightforward. The only downside is that the pictures don't show everything the eye can see at that time. The shadows are so dark you can't see what's there.

I set up by strapping the mast to a bush. It wasn't windy so no problem with the antenna. It seems so early on a weekday does not lend itself well to lots

of calls. I normally activate in the afternoon, but with the heat of summer, I've been doing more mornings. So only ended up with 11 contacts. Instead of calling and calling to get a few more, I packed up and headed for home.



Little Wolf Peak W7A/NM-051

Stats: 7/10/2017

Points: 6 + 3 summer bonus
(total=332)

Elevation: 5,910 ft

QSO's: 19

Farthest: 2,244 miles (VT)

Time on Air: 25 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 1st

Trail report: Access is gained off of the from I-15 to the Southern Parkway (leading to St. George Airport) and then heading due south at the Arizona-Utah border on the Mt. Trumbull Loop in the Arizona strip area.

From there you take the BLM 1004 which goes right along side the mountain. This is a good dirt road all the way. While a map review would suggest an approach from the west of the mountain is the easier ascent, the road goes right over the saddle that is at a much higher elevation and a hike from there, although steeper, is well worth it—marked by a fence and a cattle guard.



The area has some heavy brush and trees. The highest point is on the flat at the top and has both rocks and trees to use for an antenna set up. No cell service.

The experience: This was my first trip out to this area, and the first of two activations for the day. There were a few other summits, but they would require more and longer hiking, so I did the easier access ones. I saw two great, beautiful velvet bucks on the way out there. Nice sized. I drove around the mountain where the road would take me to find the best approach. The one I considered beforehand wasn't the best approach so I parked up on the saddle (as seen in the photo above) and went in a straight shot to the highest part.

It was steep, and there was a lot of brush, and numerous trees, but not bad since it was a short hike. I had audio trouble so didn't record any of the contacts. It took a little while to get spotted by someone, but had a good run

of 19 contacts. It was a little cloudy and breezy so very nice for this time of year. I knew I was headed to the next one so packed up and headed out while it was still fairly early (8:30am MDT) before it started getting hot.



"Tomas Tower" W7A/NM-009

Stats: 7/10/2017

Points: 8 + 3 summer bonus
(total=343)

Elevation: 7,300 ft

QSO's: 13

Farthest: 866 miles (WA)

Time on Air: 30 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 1st

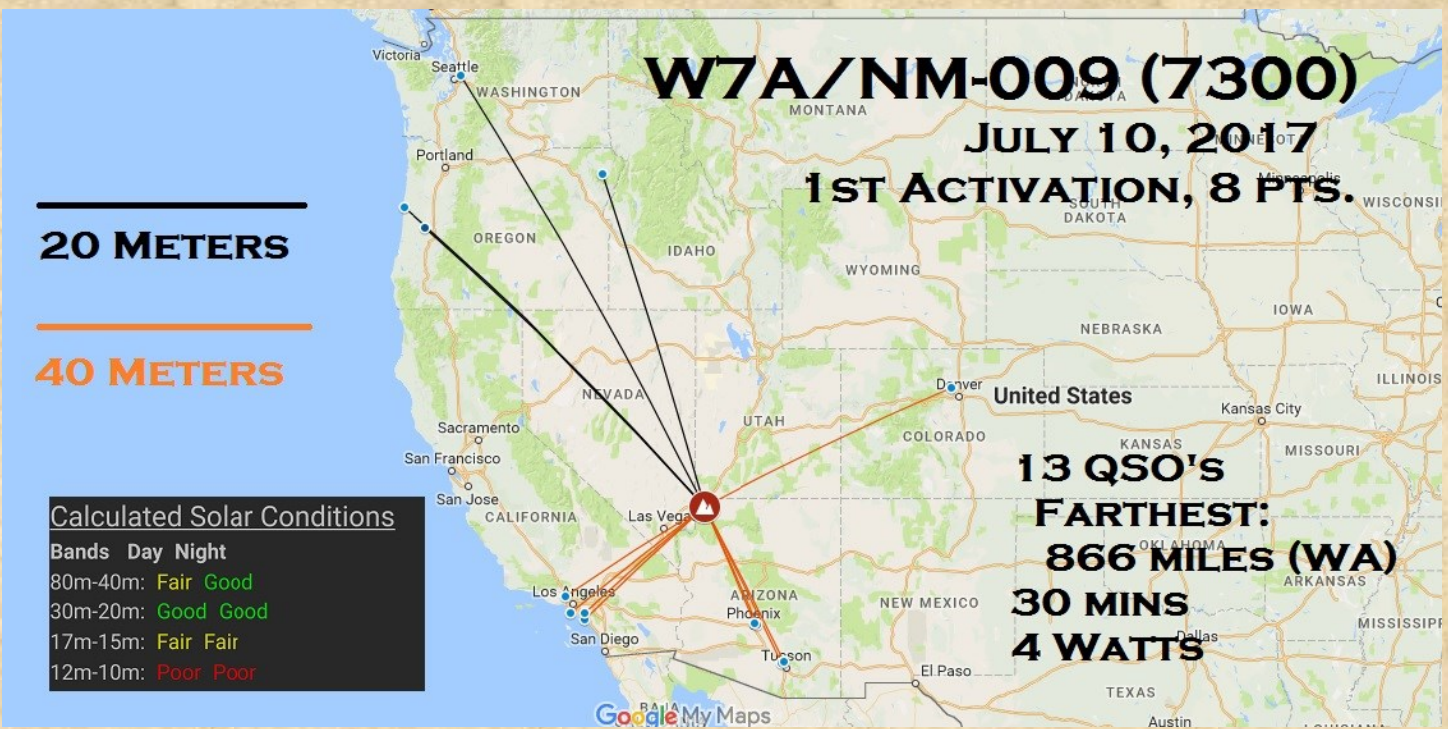
Trail report: Access is gained one of two main ways: off of the from I-15 to the Southern Parkway (leading to St. George Airport) and then heading due south at the Arizona-Utah border on the Mt. Trumbull Loop in the Arizona strip area. From there you take the BLM 1004 which goes right up the mountain. This is a good dirt road all the way. The other way is also off of I-15 but getting off at Scenic, AZ and heading up Elbow Canyon approaching from the west and taking a long route from the other side of BLM 1004. I've been on both, and unless you plan on one of the other summits nearby, I would avoid Elbow Canyon altogether—it's really for those who enjoy a challenging route with a dirt bike, ATV or other OHV, although it is shorter. Perhaps a good Jeep driver would be successful as well. If you're going specifically for this summit,



just go the longer yet much easier route from Utah. Although there is a nice road to the summit, there is a BLM gate that stays locked at the turnoff from BLM 1004 and the rest has to be hiked. The hike is easy and not steep with the road going all the way. The top has a BLM fire lookout tower which is manned constantly during fire season. The antennas on top do cause interference. There are nearby rocks and brush a little away from the tower to setup. Spotty cell service. Nice views. (Mt. Bangs to the left)

The experience: This was the second summit for the day and I was glad to get to it being it was high points plus the summer bonus offered for the area. The hike was nice, only like a mile, and not strenuous (the reason I saved it for second as the day got later). As I got to the top I noticed a BLM fire pickup was parked up there (and this is really out in the middle of no-where) and the guy in the tower came out and said “hi.” He had a long, scraggly beard and was friendly. I asked him if he had to come out all day, every day to man the tower. He said he did, but he had a trailer down the way and he would go down for lunch and to sleep—a good job for someone who doesn’t want to see people all day!

I made sure setting up wouldn’t bother him and then went out a little ways and got on the air. 20 meters, which is used for much farther contacts, was extremely noisy (most likely from all the antennas on the mountain) and I could only make a few, closer contacts and couldn’t hear much at all (I got four though, which at least counts for getting the points). When I switched to 40 meters (neighboring states), it cleared up and I got nine more. I was ready to head back to the air-conditioned pickup and ice water after that and head for home. 20 points total for the day! (Named it after Tomas of course!)



Black Rock Mountain W7A/NM-008

Stats: 7/18/2017

**Points: 8 + 3 summer bonus
(total=354)**

Elevation: 7,368 ft

QSO's: 20

Farthest: 1,600 miles (FL)

Time on Air: 25 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)



Activation: 1st

Trail report: As with the other summits in the area, access is gained one of two main ways: off of the from I-15 to the Southern Parkway (leading to St. George Airport) and then heading due south at the Arizona-Utah border on the Mt.

Trumbull Loop in the Arizona strip area. From there you take the BLM 1004 which goes right up the mountain. This is a good dirt road most of the way, the last three miles are pretty rough. The other way is also off of I-15 but getting off at Scenic, AZ and heading up Elbow Canyon approaching from the west and taking a long route from the other side of BLM 1004. I've been on both, and unless you plan on one of the other summits nearby, I would avoid Elbow Canyon altogether—it's really for those who enjoy a challenging route with a dirt bike, ATV or other OHV, although it is



shorter. Perhaps a good Jeep driver would be successful as well. If you're going specifically for this summit, just go the longer yet much easier route from Utah, but there are numerous summits in the area. The hike starts off the road. The whole mountain has heavy vegetation and there will be some bush whacking no matter which route you take, but certainly the easier approach is from the west. Any other route will result in really thick trees and brush, very difficult. The summit has a few rock formations which make setting up an antenna easier. There is a fence line near the top you will have to cross to reach the highest point. (Mt. Bangs in background of picture above).

The experience: This was my second attempt at this mountain so it was nice to get it done. The first time, not long ago, I got within 10 miles, which is quite close, but “got spooked” away from it. A number of things seemed foreboding—a radio report of a hiker found dead that morning near Cedar City after 2 days missing, people killed in a flash flood, and I was feeling nervous about it. At one point, I just turned around and went home—it wasn’t a spiritual warning, which usually makes me feel instantly better when I do it—I was regretting letting myself get psyched out.



Anyway, this time was a success. The hike was rough just because of the heavy brush, not that steep or far. Had a good number of contacts. I used the skimmers, which look over the radio bands for callsigns and if you set up an alert on the internet beforehand, they post your callsign and summit on the internet, which causes people looking at it to come and call for you.

I’m quite sure I ran over a little snake that was lined out on the road with the ATV. I stopped and turned to look, but he was out of there after getting run over—wasn’t one of the poisonous ones of the area. I also saw some 15 deer, very nice ones—two huge bucks, a couple of smaller ones, all velvet, and the rest does—though some of those were really nice too, too fast for pictures. I passed what looked to be a Jeep club on the way back down, about 10 of them all going together. Good activation and the first time ever on the air for SOTA.



W7A/NM-008 Black Rock Mountain

JULY 18, 2017 (8 PTS + 3 SUMMER BONUS)

1ST ACTIVATION

20 QSO's

FARTHEST:

1,600 MILES (FL)

25 MINS ON AIR

4 WATTS

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

20 METERS

40 METERS

Google My Maps

Wilson Peak W7U/SU-036

Stats: 8/2/2017

Points: 8 (total=362)

Elevation: 9,034 ft

QSO's: 19

Farthest: 2,051 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 20 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

**Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)**

Activation: 4th (my 1st)



Trail report: This summit is easily accessed taking Highway 89 towards Bryce Canyon National Park and then route 12 a few miles short of the park. Once off route 12 the dirt road is pretty decent and leads right to the base of the road that

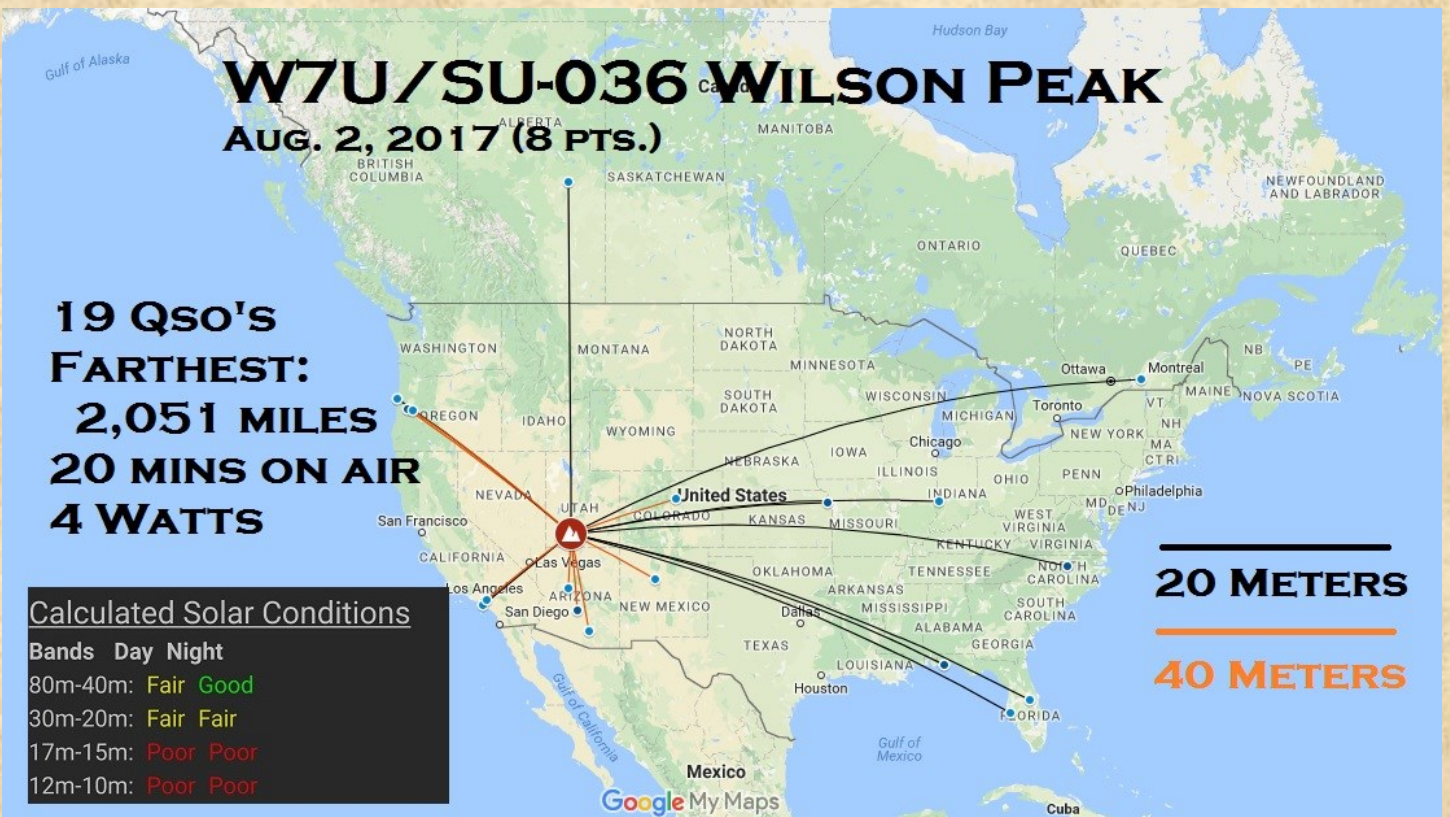
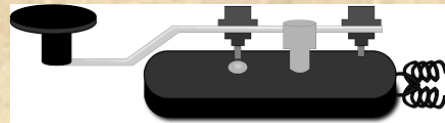
goes all the way up to the top. This road is a little rougher with some ups and downs. The summit has a number of antennas and on the highest point is an FAA air traffic control station. It is flat enough on top to find an area to setup in the activation zone without getting too close to the different antennas.



The experience: This was the first of four 8-point summits in one day. I started from home at 5:30 in the morning. It was a simple activation with parking at the base of the mountain and riding the ATV to the top. From there I looked around some to find a good set up area. I didn't go far from the road as going much anywhere else would get me close to the many antennas. It was nice and grassy and the Reverse Beacon Network spotted me quickly—19 contacts in 20 minutes.



I didn't stay long since it was going to be a long day, but that also meant I didn't spend as much time appreciating the scenery and almost forgot to take any pictures.



Black Butte W7A/SU-063

Stats: 8/2/2017

Points: 8 (total=370)

Elevation: 9,580 ft

QSO's: 19

Farthest: 2,051 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 20 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st



Trail report: Access is gained near Bryce Canyon National Park by taking Route 12 (which leads to the park) and leaving it on East Fork Rd (FR-87) some 12 miles, passing Tropic Reservoir. From there you take FR-211 until it forks off from FR-106 then you take 106 going up the mountain. Not long on 106 the road becomes much more an OHV route. FR-106 will get you within several hundred vertical feet of the summit. There are a few other seldom used ATV trails that can get you a little closer if desired.

There are two benchmarks on the summit, however, they are not at the highest point, which is covered with heavy vegetation. The benchmarks can be found within 20 feet of each other on the far western end of the top where it's a little more open with white rock—I only came upon them because of the route I hiked up.



The experience: This was the second of four 8-pointers of the day. The hike isn't bad and not too steep with enough spaces in between trees and brush to not have to bushwhack. I was surprised by the benchmarks since they are almost always within a few feet of the very top, these were not. It was pleasantly open at the top which makes setting up an antenna easier. However, with the trees there was not much of a view. I passed a few deer and saw a group of three turkeys as well. Following is a picture of the ATV route and the actual top, covered with trees.





W7U/SU-063 BLACK BUTTE

AUG. 2, 2017 (8 PTS.)

19 QSO'S
FARTHEST:
2,051 MILES
20 MINS
4 WATTS



Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor

20 METERS

40 METERS

"Baby Bryce Point" W7U/KA-003

Stats: 8/2/2017

Points: 8 (total=378)

Elevation: 9,301 ft

QSO's: 12

Farthest: 2,051 miles (QC)

Time on Air: 20 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

Linked dipole (homebrew)

AME porta-paddle

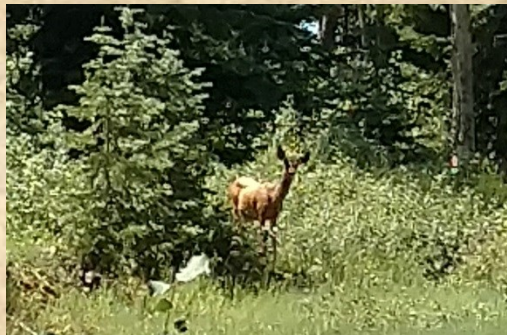
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 1st

Trail report: Access is gained near Bryce Canyon National Park by taking Route 12 (which leads to the park) and leaving it on East Fork Rd (FR-87) some 23 miles, passing Tropic Reservoir. From there you take FR-208 up the canyon.

The route splits to where you can take another road to the south or stay on 208 to the north. Not much room to pull off to the side at all. I stayed on the northern route. From the road the hike is through very heavy woods and many downed trees. Quite a few deer in the area. It clears up at the top. There are some great views from this summit that are most certainly rarely seen.

The experience: This was the third of four 8-point summits for the day. There were forest rangers clearing the route in and were right where I planned on starting to hike, so no problem. The hike was rough only from having to step over so many down trees which couldn't be avoided.



On the way back down, I misjudged how far I walked on the flat on top and as I



I had trouble on the top getting the antenna up. I used a downed tree in the shade, but it kept getting knocked down by the breeze, so I went to a stronger spot, but it was in the sun. This was now afternoon and even though it's way high up, it still was hot. I made sure the radio was in the shade because it was hot to the touch at this point.

The views were really impressive, although quite high up of course, which is why it's a qualifying summit!



started down I noticed it was way steeper than coming up. I had to back track some since I was actually heading down the wrong face. Once back on track I hiked right back to the ATV which couldn't be seen until right on it with the thickness of the woods.



Rainbow Point W7U/KA-005

Stats: 8/2/2017

Points: 8 (total=386)

Elevation: 9,115 ft

QSO's: 11

Farthest: 1,866 miles (NC)

Time on Air: 8 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

**Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)**

Activation: 8th (my 1st)

Trail report: Access is gained through Bryce Canyon National Park by taking Route 12 off of highway 89. Once you enter the park, Rainbow Point is the farthest view point in the park and is some 17 miles from the entrance. Naturally, this is a summit that can be reached by driving right to it. The main issue is finding a good spot to set up that doesn't interfere with any of the guests of the park. I chose a picnic area and used the fence to hold my mast and operated from the table.

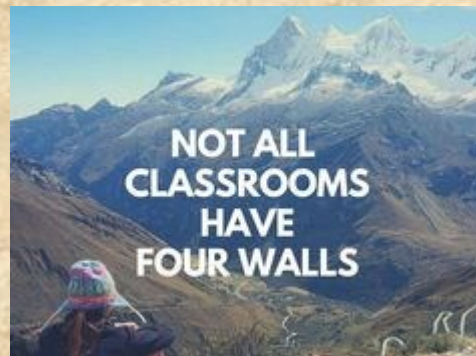


The experience: This was the last of the four 8-pointers of the day. I saved it just in case I needed to stay the night in the park and because it was a drive-up area. There are two other 8-pointers in the area, but I was tired and didn't want to end up spending the night. With the heavy traffic of summer, and the small area, I was afraid I wouldn't find a parking spot, but being close to dinner time, it wasn't bad at all and there were a number of spaces.

I took a few pictures and



scouted around to find a place to set up. I didn't want to draw a lot of attention and it looked like the areas off the trails weren't really marked for people to be on. I finally opted for the picnic area where maybe only two out of ten tables were being used. I picked one away from others, but there was really no way to stabilize the mast quickly. I moved one table over and used the fence nearby to strap on my mast. To not spread out too much with lots of wire, I only used 20 meters (shortest). I really enjoyed sitting at a regular table to operate. I stayed on for a very short time—I was tired, hungry and ready to head for home.



W7A/IR-005 Eagle Peak

Stats: 8/17/2017

Points: 8 (total=394)

Elevation: 9,930 ft

QSO's: 25

Farthest: 2,076 miles (NJ)

Time on Air: 35 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)/Pixie (1 Watt)
Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)**

Activation: 1st



Trail report: This summit is reached off of Hwy. 143 which is the route to Brian Head and Cedar Breaks National Monument. From there you take FR-204 which goes up Navajo Point. It is followed to the end as it T's into FR-265, taking the southern route.

You continue past Sugarloaf Mt. While there are many turnoffs along the way, you stay on the main road the whole way. When the road turns straight north, you are at the base of the mountain. If you look at maps, you will see a route that gets you quite a bit closer (going past First Lake), however, it is a private road and is chained off with a "no trespassing" sign. I parked at the base and followed the open areas and used the tree line as a guide to the top. From there it is about 900 vertical feet and only about a mile hike.

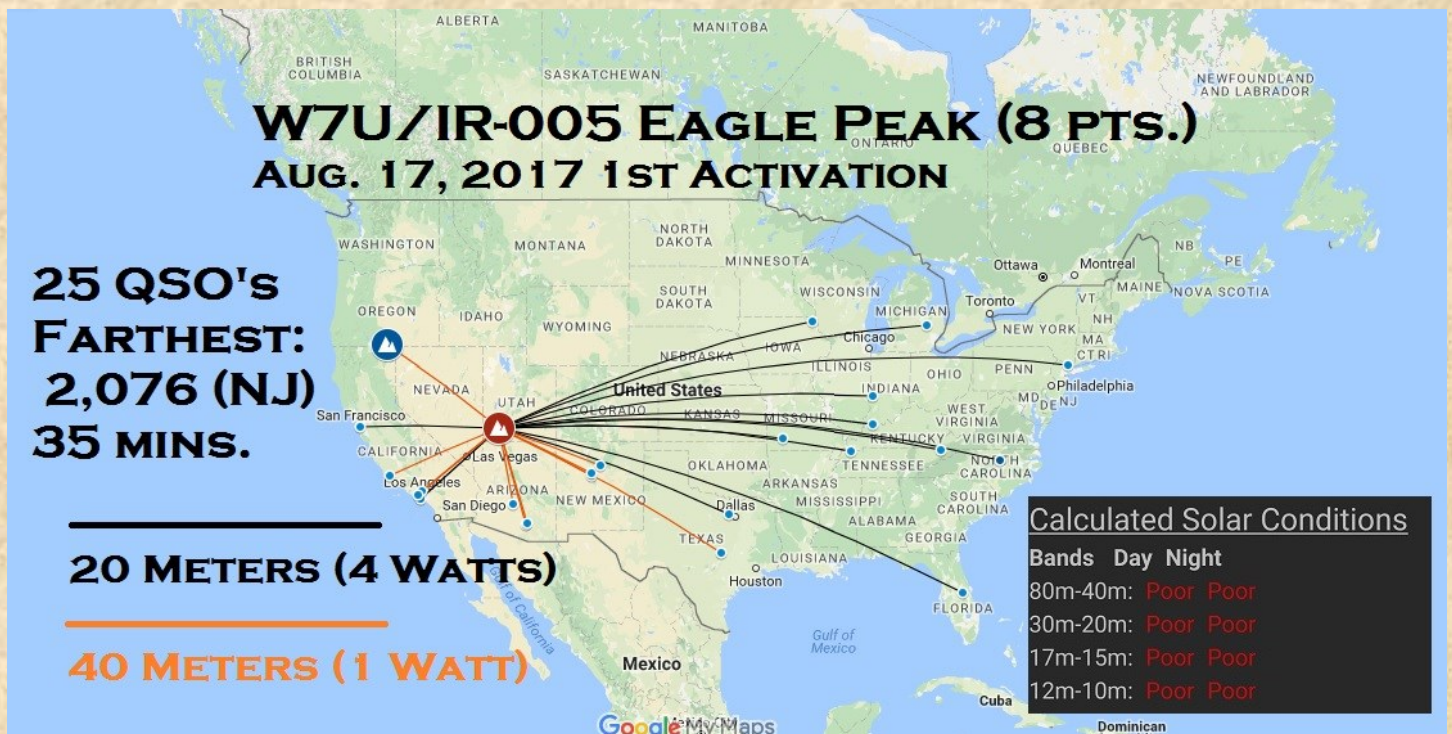


The experience: This was a great start of the day (1st of two summits). The hike was pleasant although I was hoping to get much closer, but the road I was going to take was private and chained, so had to hike and away from the private land. I saw a doe with her fawn on the way up.

I did two new things this trip. The first was using my radio with a GPS system to track my route on the internet (thus Joan could see where I am) as



well as using it to spot myself (called APRS). Worked great and started getting lots of calls. The second new thing I did was use a tiny radio I made from a kit (called a Pixie) that is about 3 inches by 3 inches, cost \$10, and puts out only 1.2 watts—considered a toy by many. I made 12 contacts with it in 10 minutes, including one on another summit. Great day! If you see the conditions below, you'll also see all bands were poor, yet very successful activation.



W7U/GA-017 Cooper Knoll

Stats: 8/17/2017

Points: 8 (total=402)

Elevation: 9,065 ft

QSO's: 11

Farthest: 2,186 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 10 mins.

Equipment:

**YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)**

**Linked dipole (homebrew)
AME porta-paddle
LiPo battery (2200 mAh)**

Activation: 3rd (my 1st)



Trail report: This summit overlooks Panguitch Lake, located right off of Hwy. 143, right in between the town of Panguitch and Cedar Breaks National Monument. FR-44 is the road that goes right at the base. There is a very rough ATV trail that leads to the top. It was rough enough that I stopped part-way up and hiked the rest.

The experience: This was the 2nd summit of the day and I almost didn't go—it was later than I wanted, I saw some storm clouds and I was tired from the first summit, but knew I would regret it later if I just went home. I'm glad I went. It was tiring and I spent a short time on the air, but I had never done this one and it was worth 8 points. It's far enough away I wouldn't do it all by itself most likely, and with fall coming up, I would have probably never done it this year. The view of the Brian Head fire was impressive. Turkeys



crossing the road. I set up in the shade, got comfortable and made a quick 11 contacts and headed for home.



Shinob Kibe W7U/WS-124

Stats: 8/26/2017

Points: 1 (total=403)

Elevation: 3,306 ft

QSO's: 24

Farthest: 2,247 miles (NH)

Time on Air: 45 mins.

Equipment:

YouKits HB-1B qrp cw
(4 WATTS)

Linked dipole

AME porta-paddle

LiPo battery (2200 mAh)

Activation: 4th (my 2nd)



Trail report: Shinob Kibe has a pretty decent trail at the north end. You do have to go through a residential neighborhood to gain access to the BLM area and trail. The trail is not readily seen from the base, but if you start up the

"ATV road" just after passing into the area, you'll see it. The summit has an aerial navigational arrow in concrete at the top (where there is also a logbook). There is a marker, but not USGS, rather Washington City and it's about 200 yards to the west of the summit along the top ridge.

The experience: This was my 1-year anniversary in SOTA summit, so I went back to my first successful summit. It's



really close, only 1 point, and the hike isn't too bad. My goal was 23 QSO's and I stayed until I got 24. I was going to try something cool: find some trail garbage and use it to make a cw key for the activation, but I didn't find any garbage at all the whole time. Really a good thing of course, but I didn't get to try the idea. I'll do it next time.



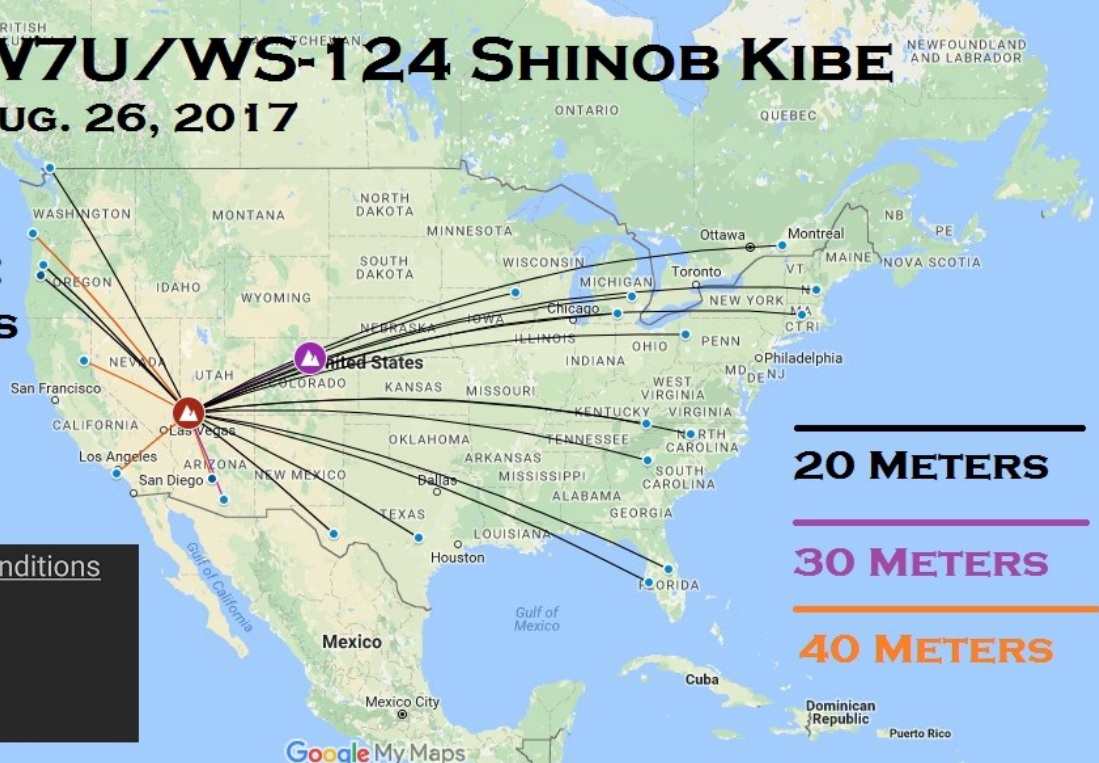
W7U/WS-124 SHINOB KIBE

AUG. 26, 2017

24 QSO's
FARTHEST:
2,247 MILES
45 MINS
1 S2S
4 WATTS

Calculated Solar Conditions

Bands	Day	Night
80m-40m:	Fair	Good
30m-20m:	Fair	Fair
17m-15m:	Poor	Poor
12m-10m:	Poor	Poor



First Year Stats:

69 Summits (29 1st Activations for SOTA)

1301 QSO's (all CW QRP ≤ 4 watts)

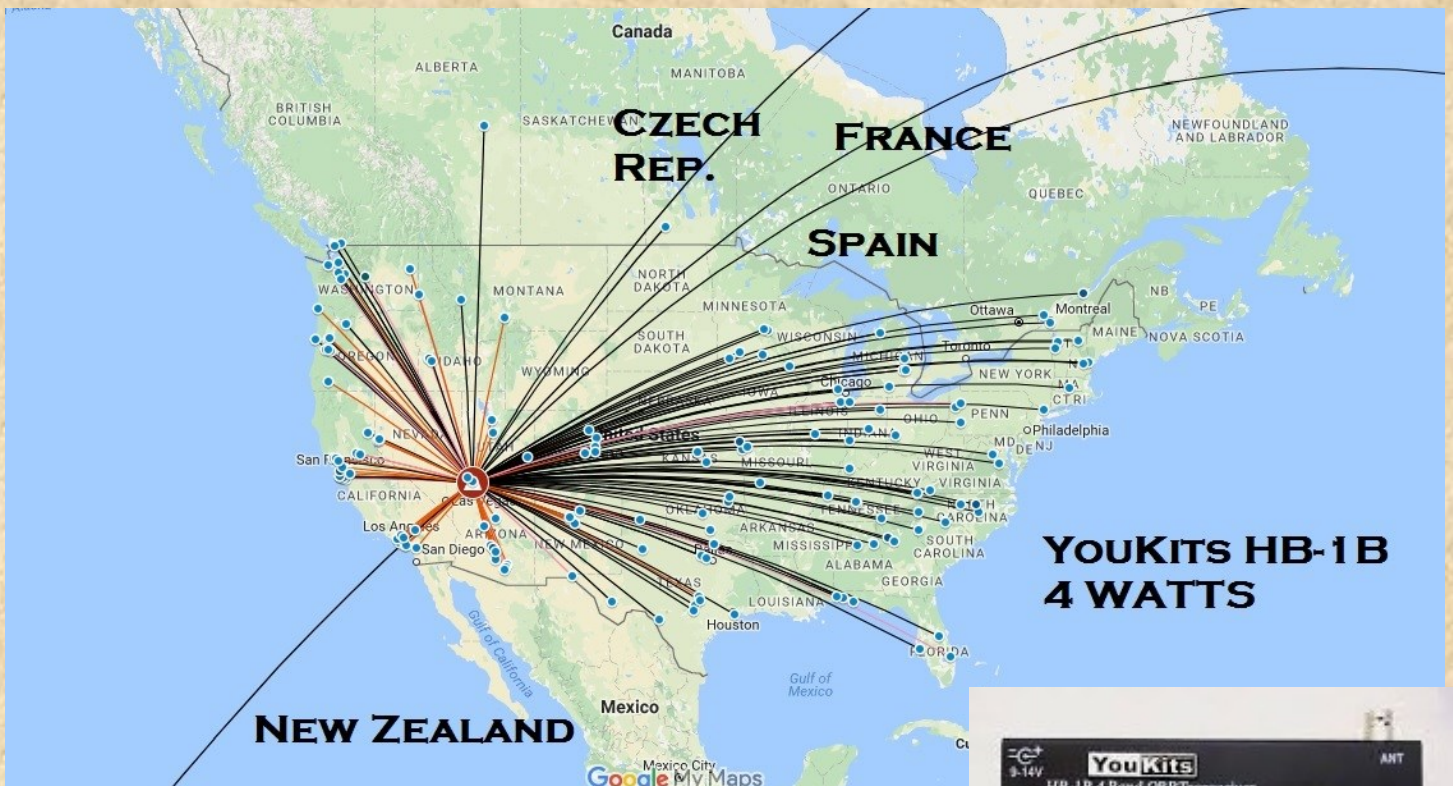
403 Total points (69 were seasonal bonus)

Ave. 28 minutes on air

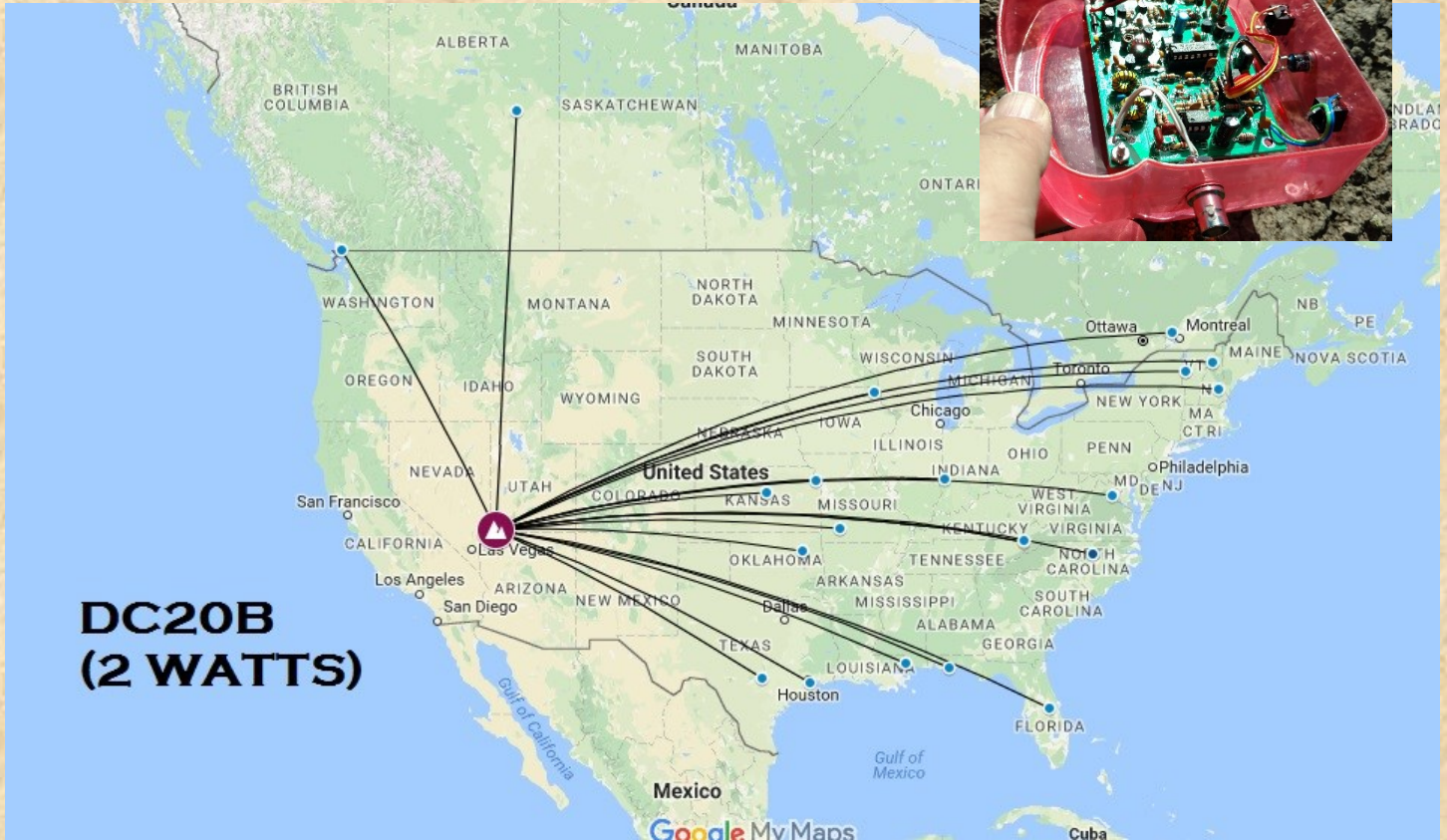
Ave. 19 QSO's per activation

Ave. farthest QSO 2,270 miles

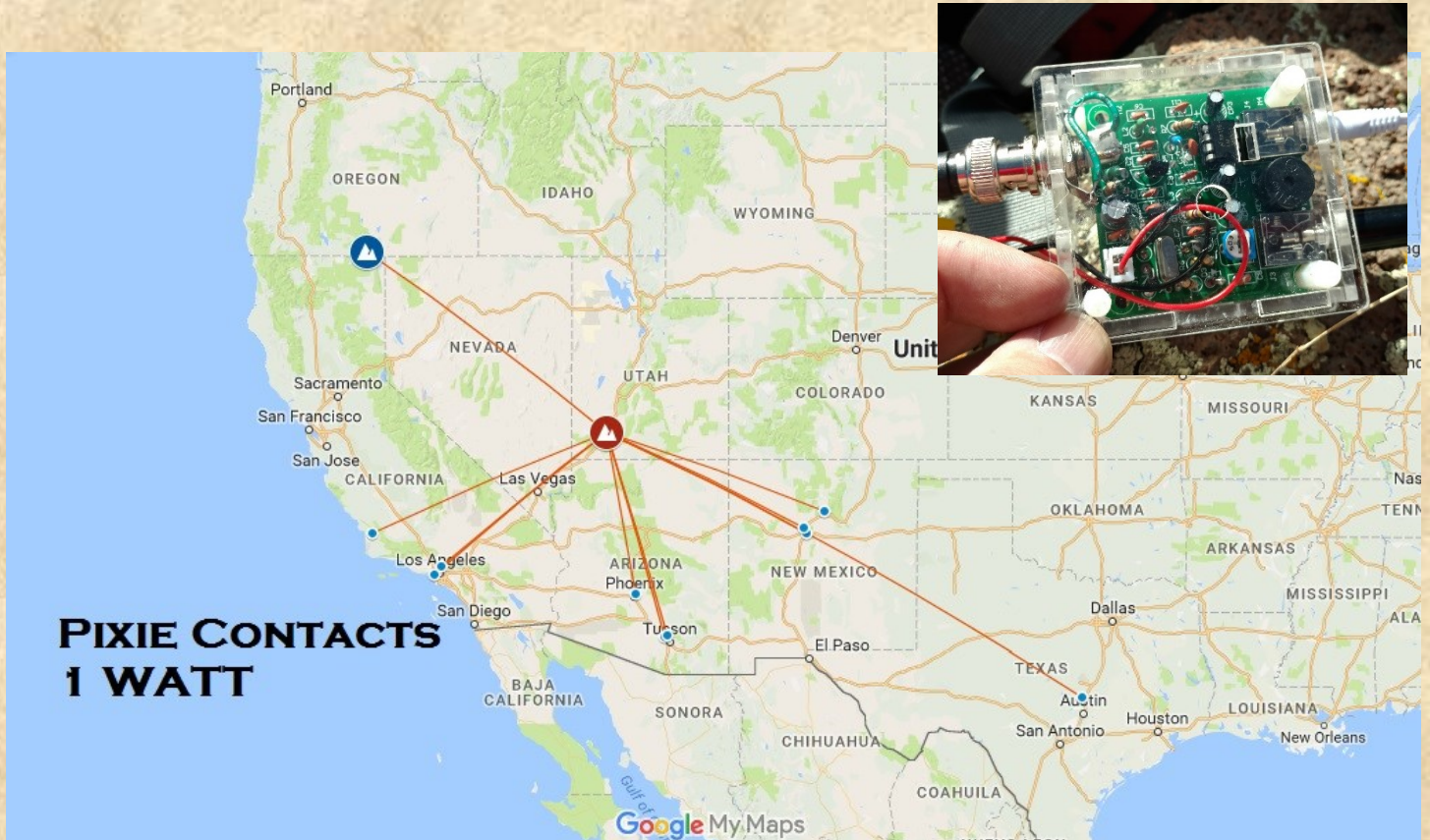
Map of most contacts using YouKits HB-1B



Map of DC20B contacts



Map of Pixie 40 meter contacts



A very special thanks to ALL the chasers who make this activity possible and a lot of fun. Here are the top 25 of those who have helped me out—I have come to hear their callsigns as I would a friend's name and look for many of them when I am on the air:

My top activation chasers

Position	Chaser Callsign	Count
1	W0MNA GARY	50
2	N4EX RICH	49
3	W0ERI MARTHA	49
4	W7RV TOMMY	49
5	N57P PHIL	42
6	WB0KIU BILL	35
7	KX0R GEORGE	26
8	W9MRH MIKE	26
9	W4HBK BILL	25
10	K6EL ELLIOT	24
11	K0LAF CHARLIE	22
12	K4MF GARY	22
13	NG6R JERRY	22
14	NE4TN WALT	21
15	VE2JCW JEAN	20
16	WA7SB RICK	20
17	WA2USA DENNIS	19
18	AC1Z BOB	17
19	K6HPX KEN	16
20	N4DA MILTON	16
21	W7CNL JACK	15
22	NQ7R TOM	14
23	AC7P DON	13
24	K8LJG JOHN	13
25	W5BOS LANNY	13