

MY POTA Activation

Savi W1SAV

California Citrus State Historical Park

K-3412 activated on September 4th, 2023

ACTIVATION

17

CONTACTS

11

P2Ps

2

PREVIOUS ACTIVATIONS

None

MODE

SSB

RADIO

Yaesu FT-891

TUNER

LDG Electronics Z-100
Plus Autotuner

ANTENNA

Chameleon MPAS 2.0
in the vertical configuration staked to the ground using.

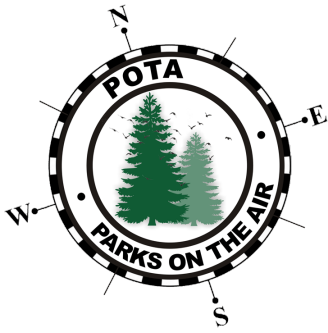
POWER

50W using a 30Ah
Bioenno battery with
solar panels.



It took an hour to get to the park through California traffic, even on Memorial Day. I checked out the park online the day before, so I knew what to expect. What I did not, however, was how beautiful the park is in person. California Citrus State Historical Park is so well maintained, clean, and pristine looking that it has an Asian Zen to it. The architecture is southwestern and blends neatly into the orange groves that surround the park. My first impression once I parked was of Arkansas during one of my training deployments, but without the humidity. I was surrounded by verdant greens in several shades and thought that this can't be California.





California Citrus State Historical Park K-3412 activated on September 4th, 2023

About K-3412

This park interprets the industry's role in the history and development of California through the stories of the diverse groups of people who made it all possible. The park recaptures the complexities of the time when "Citrus was King," exploring the significance of the citrus industry in Southern California. In 1873, the U.S. Department of Agriculture forever changed the history of Southern California when it sent two small navel orange trees to Riverside resident Eliza Tibbets. Those trees, growing in ideal soil and weather conditions, produced an especially sweet and flavorful winter harvest fruit. Word of this far

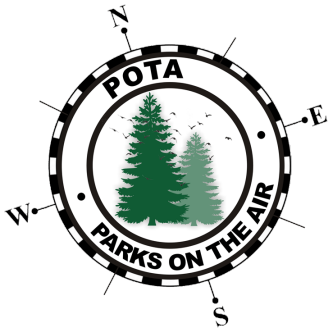
At the end of the parking area was a pavilion that provided the perfect spot for my activation. I did, however, check with the rangers and got permission to set up my station inside the orange groves. Imagine me surrounded by orange trees a few feet away in all directions. At the time I checked out the orange trees and they were being watered so I opted for the pavilion. That would have been so cool though.

My setup was routine other than my senses being overwhelmed by greenery. What a delight! I set up my antenna next to a tree line. The tactical nature of the MPAS 2.0 made it blend in so well casual observers would have never seen it. Next, I checked out my SWR readings and found them all under 3:1; 30, 20, and 15 meters. Although the traces for 20 and 15 meters



averaged 1.8 and 1.6 to 1 respectively, nonetheless, I opted to use my antenna tuner.

The bright sunshine provided a good source of power for my solar panels, feeding my battery quite nicely. In contrast, the shade of the pavilion gave me a nice cool place to continue setting up. I spread out on the wooded picnic table and started connecting my power to the computer, tuner, and radio. Checking that all connections were good I turned on the radio. The radio blared out immediately with a station calling out POTA. Not having anything else ready other than paper and



California Citrus State Historical Park K-3412 activated on September 4th, 2023

superior orange quickly spread, and a great agricultural industry was born.

In the early 1900s, an effort to promote citrus ranching in the state brought hundreds of would-be citrus barons as well as thousands of migrant and immigrant agricultural workers to California for the "second Gold Rush." This resulted in the growth of cities and communities throughout Southern California, most of which were segregated along class and racial lines. On the surface, however, the lush groves of oranges, lemons and grapefruit contributed to California's legacy - its lingering image as the Golden State - the land of sunshine and oppor-



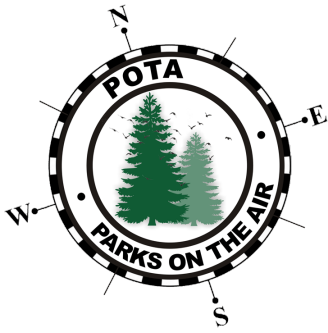
pencil, I copied all the information and responded back getting my first QSO and a park-to-park to boot! There was just one problem, I forgot to copy the guy's park number. That bone-head mistake was corrected by an email to which the operator quickly responded.

Breaking my 20-meter habit, I started calling CQ POTA on 15-meters again. The contacts were slow, but they came in. Fading was definitely a factor but managed to snag some good strong stations regardless. Half an hour after I started the 15-meter band was fading on me. Eventually I hopped down to 20-meters to pick up the contacts I needed to activate the park. This was not going to be a high-contact activation. 20-meters was not acting any better and only managed another two contacts before I went QRT.

I find that when activating my sense of

time is skewed. Time seems to speed up and a two-minute wait seems glacial. The sense of desperation is real when you come so close to getting the requisite contacts for an activation. I finally got my tenth contact and everything in the world returned to normal. Now, because my first contact was quickly written down and not electronically logged (I feared errors), I wanted another contact for





California Citrus State Historical Park K-3412 activated on September 4th, 2023

tunity.

From the California Department of Parks and Recreation webpage, https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=649.

safety. Call, wait, rinse, repeat. Remember the sense of time-lag desperation? It was back. I swear the tectonic plates moved one millimeter before I got my last contact. Boom, done, breathe, turn off radio, relax.

Well, 20-meters was in the same condition as 15-meters was earlier. It took 30



minutes for the last two contacts. In all, it took over an hour to get my 11 contacts, so why was I so wound up? Because I was so close. On previous activations where I only managed four contacts, it was not an issue as I knew I would not activate. In this activation, the fact I had nine contacts and only needed one more was where the stress came in.

In hindsight, in spite of the slow pace of contacts, I succeeded nestled in a verdant garden blanketed in the cool shade of the pavilion. The hour one-way drive both ways was not as taxing as I thought. It would have been cool, however, to actually set up amongst the orange trees.