

W7O – SOTA Oregon Newsletter

March-April 2015

Share this W7O Summits on the Air Newsletter with others who might be interested – suggest ideas for the newsletter to climb2ski at gmail.

Gear Idea for Activators – Roger-ND7PA wanted to share a recent addition to his kit. During winter activations he often has a bad case of numb hands trying to attach his SOTA pole using short pieces of nylon cord to whatever tree was on hand.



His solution is easy to secure and undo even with thick gloves and holds much better than cord – a hook and loop cinch strap. He found ones 1.5 inches wide and 24 inches long with a metal buckle at one end to help tighten the strap.

He found the straps here: www.securecableties.com/24-inch-heavy-duty-cinch-straps. He still carries nylon cords, but the straps are now his favorite attachment method.

Some Reminders for Activating – For those that might only activate on occasion, or those just starting out, let's remind ourselves about some of the rules for SOTA activations: final access of the summit needs to be under human power, operation in or in the vicinity of an automobile is not permitted, power is to be provided by solar or battery only, the activation needs to be within 80 vertical feet of the actual summit, and access needs to be public or with permission and any required permits. In the Northwest, it's recommended that the final approach be a minimum of 100 vertical feet for the able-bodied. Find details for your Association here: www.sota.org.uk. So "move away from the vehicle" and enjoy some SOTA-style radio ops!

“Accidental” Summit-to-Summit Contacts – There’s been some news on the NASOTA reflector about local Summit-to-Summit (S2S) contacts that “just happened” on 2m FM. Your editor has had that kind of experience a number of times – it’s great fun when you don’t know in advance that another peak in the area is being activated and suddenly, you hear “CQ SOTA” on the 2m FM simplex calling frequency of 146.52. So don’t leave that 2m HT at home – take it with you, leave it on, and when you have a chance, make a short call on ‘52. You might find another activator or just engage the locals for a few minutes about our great radiosport.

What Radio to Use for SOTA – For Summits on the Air, I generally recommend that the radio you use be “Whatever you are willing to carry.” While that might be sensible advice, it doesn’t really provide enough information. Here are two resources that provide a nice range of data to help make a decision about a SOTA rig: http://hamtennas.com/docs/Portable_rigs.pdf and for those that like to build things: <http://fofio.blogspot.com/2013/02/radio-kit-guide.html>.

Contribute to the Success of Activators that Follow – When checking out a summit that I’ve never activated before, I have sometimes spent hours looking for a trailhead or bushwacking when there was actually a road, or following GPS directions that turned out bogus. Good information from others with turn-by-turn directions, trailhead signage, trail length and elevation gain, activation zone descriptions – all these things can turn an activation from frustration to success.

So how about this: that each of you my readers, in March and April, would please write one (or two!) trip reports for activations that are not otherwise described? www.pnwsota.org is a great place to post your report as it is automatically linked to worldwide summit information on SOTAWatch.org. Less than a quarter of activated summits have trip reports – we can fix that!

This newsletter is brought to you by the SOTA W7O Association Manager Etienne-K7ATN. To subscribe or unsubscribe, please email climb2ski at Gmail. See back issues here: www.pnwsota.org/search/node/newsletter.