

Colorado Hams Invited to “Activate the State” During the 2026 Colorado QSO Party — September 12

Statewide on-air event offers plaques, certificates, and a friendly, mentor-rich environment for hams of all experience levels

Colorado Springs, CO — Radio amateurs across Colorado are gearing up for the 2026 Colorado QSO Party (COQP), a fun, statewide on-air event hosted by the Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado. All hams — from first-time operators to seasoned contesters — are encouraged to get on the air and help “activate” Colorado's 64 counties.

When

Date: Saturday, September 12, 2026

Operating Hours: 8:00 AM to 9:59 PM MDT. A full day of operating fun! (That’s 14:00 UTC Saturday through 03:59 UTC Sunday.)

Why Participate

Whether you work one station or chase all 64 counties, the goal is simply to get on the air and have fun. The COQP is an excellent training ground for sharpening operating skills, testing your station, and — for newer hams — getting that all-important first contact under your belt. Rules allow **unlimited operators** at a single station, making COQP a perfect "Elmering" opportunity for clubs to mentor new operators in a low-pressure environment.

POTA and SOTA activators can double-dip: schedule your activation during the COQP and enjoy increased band activity while logging contacts for both events.

Help Activate All Colorado’s Counties

A key part of the COQP's success is having stations on the air from as many of Colorado's 64 counties as possible — especially the rare ones! Hams planning to activate a county (mobile, portable, or POTA/SOTA) are encouraged to **sign up in advance** so other operators know where to listen and chase. Don’t wait. If your plans change, you may easily modify the listing on the website.

👉 **VIEW** the full list of planned activations here: <https://coloradoqsoparty.org/activations/>

👉 **SIGN UP** to activate a county here: <https://coloradoqsoparty.org/announce-activation/>

Modes and Categories

Operators may participate using **CW and Phone (SSB, AM, FM)** on 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6, and 2 meters. (Digital modes are not permitted.)

Entry categories include:

- **In-State Fixed Stations:** CW, Phone, or Mixed (QRP, Low Power, or High Power)
- **In-State Mobile Stations:** CW, Phone, or Mixed (Low Power)
- **In-State Portable Stations:** CW, Phone, or Mixed (QRP or Low Power)
- **Out-of-State Stations:** QRP, Low Power, or High Power (fixed, mobile, or portable)

Mobile and Portable operations activating Colorado counties can also earn a **500-point bonus per county activated** (minimum 15 QSOs required).

Awards

The top finisher in each category will be recognized with a plaque. There are special achievement plaques to be awarded as well. Full award details are posted on the official rules page. All submitting log receive a **certificate**. <https://coloradoqsoparty.org/getting-started/rules/>

Get Involved

Full rules, county abbreviations, suggested frequencies, logging software recommendations, and log submission instructions are available at: <https://coloradoqsoparty.org/getting-started/>

2026 marks **America's 250th anniversary and Colorado's 150th anniversary** — a great year to get on the air and be part of Colorado amateur radio history!

The Colorado QSO Party is hosted by the **Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado (GMCC)**. For more information, visit coloradoqsoparty.org or email info@coloradoqsoparty.org