

Camp Ada's Turkey Trot Trail

Camp Ada was given to the Girl Scouts in September 1971 by Ada Anderson. Before this time, the land was a family farm. Ada's parents, Charles and Carrie Graham Fields, moved on the land on March 11, 1902 with Ada and her siblings. Ada was about 13 years old at the time. The Fields family moved from Hancock County, and Ada started school at the Spiceland Academy with the class of 1912.

The Trail

This trail was established as a Gold Award Project by Annette Trinkle. It was started in the spring 2000 and finished in March 2001. The trail was updated in 2012 by Kara and Kristin Moody, Troops 01031 and 00361. The trail was updated again in 2021 by Alexis Dennis, Ginny Dickason, and Meaghan Ratliff, Troop 03353 as part of their Silver Award Project. The trail was established to provide Camp Ada's visitors with something to do, to further enjoy their camping experience. Travelers will learn more about the importance of conservation and agriculture and, of course, knowledge of Ada Anderson and the land on which Camp Ada is located. The trail covers as much of the camp as was possible and can be traveled in any order if necessary.

The enclosed map will be very helpful in locating some of the trails and markers as some of these were hard to mark on site. Have fun and enjoy your outing at Camp Ada.

Significant Stops

1. This is the site that the original farmhouse sat that was built by John Mitchell in 1860. The driveway was once a country road that continued past the property, but the road was closed in 1918. Ada Fields married Harry Anderson on December 13, 1920. He was a WWI veteran, and they married after the war. Harry was a well skilled carpenter, not a farmer.

Ada had many ideas for remodeling the house, which she took from the magazine "North Meridian Ideas," and she always wanted to do more things. Harry added large picture windows on the west side of the house. He obtained the glass from a store in Spiceland that was to be torn down. Ada had also wanted to add a sun porch with a fountain and double doors on the west wall, but those plans were delayed by the onset of the depression. A barn that was used as a garage was on the west side of the house in the corner of the woods where you can still see the foundation. Ada drove, but she did not have a driver's license. She had a 1951 Chevy that she parked in the old barn that has since been torn down.

The Anderson did not have a lot of money because this was before social security. During the depression, Ada and Harry lived in the basement of the house to save money on heat. The Andersons did not have children of their own, however Marcella and Jack Downey, Ada's niece and nephew, came to live at the farm for a short while after their mother died. The children then moved to live with their grandparents, the Downeys, but Marcella come out during her summer vacations to visit Ada.

2. On September 1, 1971, Mrs. Harry Anderson presented the deed to her farm to Hoosier Capital Girl Scout Council. The picture on the next page was taken of Aunt Ada Anderson serving cake in celebration of the establishment of Camp Ada on the day she presented the deed.

Hoosier Capital Girl Scout Council President, Mrs. M.M. Neal accepted Ada's gift to the scouts on September 1, 1971. Hoosier Capital Girl Scout Council is one of the old five councils that merged in 2007 to create Girl Scouts of Central Indiana. Hoosier Capital Council scouts and Henry County scouts were all permitted to use the camp. Ada was admitted to a nursing home a few years later due to her declining health, and she died a short while afterward. Jim and Pat Copeland moved onto the farm in 1980 to maintain the land.

The new Ranger house and supply shed were built in 2003, because the old farmhouse had fallen into disrepair. As there became more Girl Scout activities at Camp Ada, they needed something to house the equipment and supplies, so the supply shed was a welcome addition.

Jim passed away in 2008, and Pat moved from the property in 2011. After Pat moved, a full-time camp ranger was transferred from another camp to care for Camp Ada.

3. This is the site of Ada's brooder houses and incubators. Ada raised chickens and turkeys on this property for 25 years. She raised turkeys for nine years and was able to make only a little money. She then switched to raising chickens because turkeys and chickens cannot be raised together. Ada took good care of these animals and liked to spend time with them. She sold eggs and the fowl to restaurants. There were chicken houses here and an incubator house closer to the white barn.

Ada quit the fowl business to take care of Harry after he became ill, but she kept some hens. Harry slept on a cot by the fireplace and told war stories. It was during the time of Harry's illness in 1958 that Jim Copeland, started farming the land and mowing the grass. Harry died in June 1959, shortly after going to the hospital, and Ada sold her remaining hens.

The team building course was brought here from Camp Windigo in 2011 when that camp was sold to private owners and would no longer be a camp. It was installed at Camp Windigo in 2010 as a Silver award Project by Troop 549 from Hancock County.

The GAGA Dodge Ball Pit was built in June 2011. It was originally supposed to be a Silver Award Project but became overwhelming and out of reach for the troop. The Council wanted one at the camp, so the new camp ranger acquired donations and put it in.



4. As you learned earlier, the Andersons had no children, but Marcella Kalp, Ada's niece who was now grown and married, had three daughters who were very active in scouting. Ada wanted to donate the land to Marcella's scouts as a primitive camp. She envisioned a nature preserve where the girls would be able to study nature and observe all sorts of animals such as raccoons, deer, rabbits, and opossum. Marcella's husband, Karl, was the superintendent of Indianapolis Public School (IPS). Cadette Troop 633 in Indianapolis made "Aunt Ada" an honorary member of their troop.
5. "Take only pictures and leave only footprints." How many of you really understand this quote? Maybe you understand it, but you may not realize how important this rule is. In this portion of the trail, you will learn why it is important and how to help at Camp Ada and other places.

Natural resources are all around you every day. They are simply things from nature such as air, water, trees, plants, animals, and sunshine. Maybe you never thought about it much, but everything you use and eat comes from natural resources. Besides needing it for survival, we use nature for entertainment and fun. You may go walk outside, go to the beach for vacation, go fishing or camping, or boating on a lake. The first settlers in any land rely upon nature for things to make clothes, tools, food, and shelter.

6. You may have noticed that there is a road down the hill straight ahead of you. It is important to preserve the trees and wildlife that stand between Camp Ada and its surrounding neighbors. Think for a moment about what the world would be like without animals, plants, forests, and lakes. Ecology is the study of how all of these things (plants, animals, and their environment) relate with one another. Natural resources, like air, sunshine, water, and minerals, also affect the ecology of an area. As you continue, try to think of all of the things that can affect camp or areas of the land. How do they affect the land? Can you come up with any good changes that might happen?
7. Hopefully, one of the things you thought of was the people who use the camp-the campers. People who use the camp also change it. This change could be bad or good. Litter is harmful to the camp, and one gum wrapper or soda can from each person who visits would make a very large mess and harm the plants and animals living in the area. Picking up trash or litter that a camper finds is a good change for the camp.
8. Here you notice how close the trail is to the nearby stream. Perhaps the stream does not have any water in it now, but it is the water that causes erosion. This trail is not a new trail, and it was not this close to the stream when it was first set up. Erosion has brought the stream and the trail together. Erosion happens when the water moves over the ground and washes some of the dirt away with it. Most likely, the erosion here happens when rainwater runs into the stream. Erosion can cause many problems outside of forests and campgrounds. What problems can you and your group think of that might be caused by erosion? How long do you think it will take for this stream to cross the trail? Water isn't bad because everyone knows that we need water to survive. In what ways is water good for us? Think of all the ways people use water to help them every day?
9. The hill before you is named "Dead Man's Hill." No one was hurt here, but it is called that because it is sometimes quite difficult to climb up or down. This hill also faces problems with erosion. Each time it rains here at Camp Ada, water runs down and carries away a little of the dirt. In a few years, "Dead Man's Hill" will be steeper than it is now, which will also make the hill harder to climb. Be glad you are visiting now to climb it. Beyond this point, there are several clearings that are used as primitive campsites. Good luck...I'll meet you at the top!

10. Welcome to the first campsite! There's not much here, is there? These sites are mostly used in the summer when various counties have their day camp here. This site and the others you will visit are all in an area called, "The Little Woods." This site is well hidden and so are most of the others that you will see.
11. You can figure out where you are now by looking at the buildings in the field. This is another campsite used during the summer. This particular area is not far from the other sites in "The Little woods," but each site has a different group of girls that camp here. As Ada wanted, the girls rely on what nature provides to create anything they may need while they are at camp. They constructed tables, places to sit, and clotheslines using the things around them here at camp.
12. This tree is often called the "lightening tree." It was struck by lightning quite a few years ago and is still partially standing. Most of the tree has died and fallen off, but it stood here for a very long time after the tree was struck by lightning. On the opposite side of the trail is Chickadee Valle, one of only few campsites that has an established name. This is one of the more popular sites, and it is probably the easiest to find if you have never been here before.
13. Coo-koo Nest is the last campsite in "The Little Woods." This site can also be overlooked if you do not know it is here. Notice that once again, you can see through the forest in almost all directions. If scouts do not work to keep the trees that we have the woods may begin to disappear and so will these campsites.

As you exit the Small Woods, cross over the meadow and follow up the hill to the right of the tree line to continue the trail.

14. Welcome to the "Big Woods!" This area is over twice as large as the "Little Woods." There are four more primitive campsites here that you will visit. There are portions along the trail that you will not travel. If you wish to see these parts, check with your group leader and be sure they are on the map. Girl Scout property may end before the trail does. These places are shown on the map, and you are not allowed to travel through someone else's backyard during this trail.
15. This is the one of the more remote campsites in the "Big Woods," but this site is used during the summer. If it has been a while since anyone was here, the clearing maybe difficult to see. It is not very large anyway, but this and the next two sites are all off to the right of the trail if you are traveling in order. This site does not have an established name. This is also one of the smallest clearings along the trail.
16. This site is easier to see than the last one you stopped by, but if it has been a while since anyone was here, it may be a little hard to see too. These sites are usually given to older groups of girls during the summer since these sites are difficult to find and a little farther away than the others were.
17. Welcome to "Camp Lost." This is appropriately named because it is so far away and hard to find. This is where the oldest scouts who come over the summer like to locate themselves. Most people would get lost finding their way here, so if you have made it this far, you are doing well. This is probably the largest camping area in the "Big" or "Little Woods."
18. This point along the trail is just a "pit stop" to keep you on track and headed in the right direction. You may have noticed some other trails heading off in different directions, but those

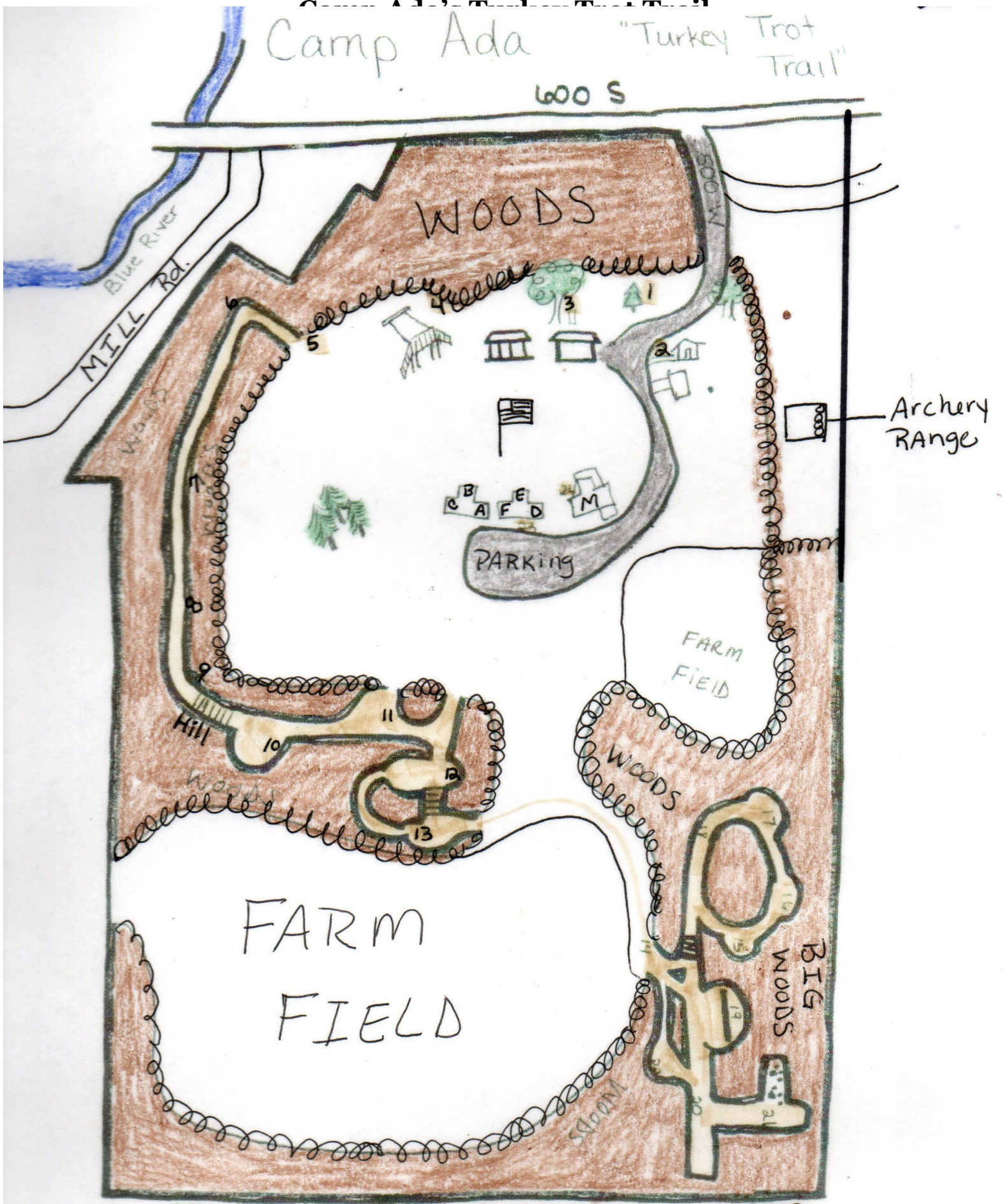
are not to be traveled. Those trails were once used when the camp was set up differently, but they will lead you into a bunch of thorns! If you are still traveling the trail in order, you want to take the trail to your left. It may take your group a while to reach the next marker, but you will find it rewarding.

19. “My Favorite Log!” This is my favorite part of the trail. Sit down and take a break for a few minutes. This is where I stopped to think and plan and rest. This is your opportunity to think...what have you learned today that you didn't know before? Why is that important? How do these things affect you? Is there anything we haven't discussed that relates you to nature?
20. This is another critical point along the trail to point your group in the right direction. You should take the trail to your left and go up the hill. You may travel the trail ahead, but it will dead end and leave you with nothing to look at once you get there. The trail up the hill will also dead end, and you will have to turn around and come back to this marker. There may be a surprise waiting for you at the end of this one though!
21. This area is often times very muddy and almost like a swamp. It is here that animals may come to get a drink or travel along the trail. Because it is muddy, it is also easy to see the tracks these animals leave behind. Look carefully because you will probably find quite a few but be careful not to step through them so that others can also see them. Remember from the beginning that observing animals was one of the reasons Ada Anderson wanted to donate her land to the Girl Scouts. She wanted girls to be able to see these kinds of things. Some of the animals that wander these woods include rabbits, deer, raccoons, opossum, and squirrels. Take a few minutes to look for tracks and see if you can figure out what kind of animal may have made them.
22. This is the last stop in the “Big Woods.” This area is often called the “Holy Ground” because of the way the light shines through the trees. It is one of the easier sites to find and stays relatively clear throughout the year. Since it is the last site, think about which of the clearings you have visited so far today that you would want to camp at and why. How much would you have to rely on nature and agriculture if you stayed outdoors here?
23. These troop camp buildings were opened in the fall of 1998. A lot of work and planning went into creating these buildings. Each building has three areas in which different troops may camp. This makes a total of six units each with twelve beds, bathrooms, and a kitchen. Before these buildings were established, troops and groups all camped in tents out in the field or in the white farm barn. Some groups still choose to camp in the field, but many troops like to stay in these troop buildings.
24. Our last stop on the trail is “Marcy Manor.” This building is named for Marcella Kalp, Ada's niece. Mrs. Kalp and her three daughters were very active in Girl Scouts. This is how the new building got its name. The ground-breaking ceremony was held on August 7, 2000. This building is the program and activity center for adults and girls here at Camp Ada, or a dining hall for large groups.

Camp Ada

"Turkey Trot Trail"

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