

Outdoor Classroom Field Trip Planning Guide



YMCA Camp Greenville

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**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
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Dear Trip Planner:

You are about to make possible a great experience for the students and parents of your school or group. A field trip to YMCA Camp Greenville's Outdoor Classroom Program gives both students and adult's knowledge about the world around them, insight into themselves and each other, and creates memories that will last a lifetime!

This packet has been created to help you work with us to assemble that experience. In addition to using this guide, other keys to a successful outing are preplanning, goal setting, and an open communication line with Camp Greenville staff. We want to assist you in any way we can throughout the entire preparation phase of your trip.

Our goal is to provide you with a way to enrich your students' educational experiences while instilling a greater appreciation of nature and each other. We greatly look forward to expanding their learning in the outdoors. Thank you for your interest and effort in making a trip to YMCA Camp Greenville a reality for your students.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Patton
Director of Groups and Education
YMCA Camp Greenville

Trip Planner Checklist

12 to 6 months prior to the Trip

- Request a date for your group's trip to Camp Greenville.
- Send in the Program Agreement and deposit – this will officially reserve the dates, special programming, and spaces for the number of participants attending the trip.
- Identify opportunities where classroom projects and activities compliment experiences desired during the field trip.
- Consider initiating fundraiser options and/or payment plans for participants.

4 months prior to the Trip

- Arrange for transportation to Camp Greenville.
- Communicate with the Group Services Manager to discuss goals of the trip.
- Contact chaperones and orient them to the trip.
- Identify an adult in your group to be the medical point of contact.

8 weeks prior to the Trip

- Make arrangements for a vehicle to remain at camp in case of emergencies during the outing.
- Fill out the Group Information and Activity Selection Sheets and send them to the Group Services Manager.
- Make sure Medical History / Consent forms and letters to parents have been sent home.

4 weeks prior to the Trip

- Communicate with Groups Services Manager to discuss considerations for classes, tables, and cabin assignments. Review the tentative schedule of classes and activities for your visit.
- Communicate final numbers with Group Services Manager r– the numbers at this point will be the final numbers unless there are additions to your group.
- Confirm you have received a Final Invoice stating the balance due for the trip.
- Ensure the Medical History / Consent forms are being returned. Any medical, dietary, or other special needs have been addressed.
- Consider hosting a parent information / question event.

Two weeks prior to the Trip

- Inform the Group Services Manager of any last minute changes or updates.
- Final payment is due.
- Prepare class, table, and cabin rosters for chaperones, teachers, and Group Services Manager

The day of the Trip

- Call the Director at (864) 836-3291 Ext 0511 if you are going to be late.
Upon arrival, give the Group Services Manager a copy of the roster lists; medical consent forms for all students, teachers and chaperones. We suggest you keep a copy of the medical forms for yourself during the trip. If you have not we will return them.
- Enjoy the fruits of your labor!

How to Plan a Trip to YMCA Camp Greenville

Read and use this Planning Guide – it has been assembled as a result of our experience working with teachers and helping to plan successful learning programs since 1986.

Please familiarize yourself with our camp policies on pages 12-13. To help participants and leaders understand expectations, ANYTHING IN THIS GUIDE CAN BE REPRODUCED AND DISTRIBUTED WITH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO CAMP GREENVILLE. The lead chaperone will assume the responsibility of familiarizing all participants with Camp Greenville's policies and expectations before arriving at camp.

Step 1: Connecting with Camp Greenville

The first step is to take time to identify the purpose of your trip. This is essential to having a successful experience. An overnight field trip to Camp Greenville can be used to expand the students' understanding of concepts learned in science, history, and English classes. With the large variety of education classes available, the trip could also be focused towards helping the students understand themselves better and learn how to more successfully interact with their peers. The purpose of the trip could be simply for the students to be exposed to the beauty of the outdoors in a setting they are not accustomed to. It is quite possible to create a trip that seeks to accomplish all of these goals. Whichever it might be, sharing those goals with the Group Services Manager is critical to planning a successful educational experience.

As soon as you have decided that Camp Greenville will be a great place to accomplish your goals, a date for a visit should be arranged on our calendars. The sooner you can schedule a trip the better – up to a year in advance is customary, especially if you require a specific time slot. Use any of the contact information listed on the front of this packet to reach the Groups and Education Director.

At the time a trip date is requested, a PROGRAM AGREEMENT will be sent to you listing the dates, expected attendance numbers, special programming, and contact information for your group. This agreement serves as a contract between your group and Camp Greenville. Filling out the Program Agreement and returning it with a deposit will officially reserve your requested dates. Camp Greenville reserves the right to give your requested dates to another group until the agreement and deposit have been sent in.

Step 2: Preparing your Group

Chaperones

Positive parent support in the form of chaperones is a great asset. You should choose volunteers who are willing to:

- ✓ Be supportive of the children while they grow through their educational experience – they should encourage the students but not solve the problems for them.
- ✓ Uphold and role model the guidelines of camp (pages 12-13) and the YMCA's four character values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.
- ✓ Walk 2 – 4 miles per day in the regular course of the classes, and undertake the more strenuous hikes if they are chosen.
- ✓ Enjoy education in the outdoors!

Other general responsibilities of a chaperone include:

- ✓ Staying with the students in their cabins at night.
- ✓ Being the primary provider of supervision and discipline any time not engaged in an activity provided by Camp Greenville staff.
- ✓ Supervising and / or facilitating any desired free-time activities.
- ✓ Ensuring students arrive to arranged class meeting locations on time.
- ✓ Providing for the overall physical and emotional safety of the students.
- ✓ Having Fun!

The minimum requirement for number of adults is one per class group. This can include any teachers who will be present on the outing. To maintain a productive learning environment for the students, we ask that no more than two parent chaperones per class group attend the trip. If you would like to bring more, please consult the Group Services Manager first.

Another consideration for chaperones is to make sure you have a gender balance that reflects the student body (i.e. enough male chaperones to properly supervise male students in cabins and vice versa). Some cabins are better suited for smaller numbers of chaperones than others (cabin floor plans page 14). If you are unsure whether or not you will have enough chaperones of each gender, please consult the Group Services Manager.

Explaining the trip to your Group

At some point prior to coming to Camp Greenville you will want to describe the experience to the students, parents, and other teachers who will be coming on the trip. A few options are using a letter home to the parents / guardians of participants (sample provided upon request) or perhaps hosting an event at which they can ask questions about the trip. It may be possible to arrange with the Groups and Education Director for a Camp Greenville staff member to attend these events or assemblies to further illustrate the program. In addition, we recommend you prepare them in the following ways:

- ✓ **EDUCATIONALLY** – The YMCA Camp Greenville Environmental Education program is a **SCHOOL IN THE OUTDOORS**. All of our experiences (including eating in the Dining Hall) have an educational foundation.
- ✓ **LOGISTICALLY** – *Please make sure that all participants are prepared for an outdoor classroom experience – RAINCOATS AND WARM CLOTHES ARE ESSENTIAL! (see the packing list on page 13)* Discuss what to expect with all participants and be sure to share the purpose of the trip and the activities you have selected with participants. Make sure the necessary forms have been sent home and that parents have the Camp Greenville phone number in case of emergency.
- ✓ **EMOTIONALLY** – Our 1400-acre setting in the Blue Ridge Mountains is likely to be different than what students may be used to at home. We have no TV, daily newspaper, cellphone service, internet, or candy machines. Because your experience at Camp is short yet intense, we ask you to address participant behavior expectations **BEFORE** you arrive. Some groups have found that a behavior contract, signed by parents and students, is a great idea (see Camp Guidelines on pages 12-13).
- ✓ **ENVIRONMENTALLY** – We ask that you and your group respect the Camp Greenville environment and property. Collecting rocks, plants, and animals is **NOT** permitted without prior permission. Purposeful vandalism is dealt with severely. At Camp, we try to incorporate environmental lessons into all aspects of our program.

Medical and Emergency Concerns

While at Camp Greenville, your school will be responsible for all medical emergencies that may arise, including the giving of First Aid and medications to your students. All Camp Greenville staff are trained in First Aid and CPR and can assist you in the event that medical attention is necessary. Additionally, we require that one adult is identified as the medical point of contact for your group during the outing. Although it is not required, it is recommended that this person have professional medical training.

Be aware that Camp Greenville cannot take responsibility for administering any medications. Please come prepared with any possible over the counter medications you foresee your students needing in certain circumstances... e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen, Pepto-Bismol, etc.

If an injury or emergency should require a hospital, it will be the responsibility of the group to provide transportation to the chosen medical facility. As a result, your group will need to have a vehicle at camp for the duration of your stay to handle any such emergencies. The nearest hospital is in Brevard, NC, which is about a 25 – 30 minute drive.

The Student / Chaperone Medical and Consent form will allow you to identify any medical concerns prior to the trip. It is required that every person who comes to Camp Greenville have one of these forms completely filled out, including adults. The Group Services Manager will need to retain a set of these forms after you leave for Camp Greenville records.

Transportation

Getting to Camp Greenville always takes a little longer than you think. This is largely due to the many turns and slow speeds found in the last 15 miles to camp regardless of what direction you drive. Using the map in this packet (last page) will help you and those providing your transportation in planning appropriately. Arranging transportation as early as possible is recommended followed by a confirmation, even with school district transportation resources!

If you are using a buses or motor coaches to transport your group and they will be parking at camp during your stay, we have space large enough to accommodate up to four busses. Please notify the Group Services Manager if you intend to have your buses stay so the space can be reserved. Separate lodging and meals for bus drivers can be arranged with the Group Services Manager for an additional fee.

If you plan to organize a car pool for your group's transportation, there is parking for approximately 20 cars with limited spaces available next to the cabins. Please consult the Group Services Manager to ensure that Camp Greenville can completely accommodate the cars you will bring.

Step 3: Setting up the Details

Customizing Your Experience

To assist you in purposeful goal setting and good communication with Camp Greenville, please refer to the Program Packet and Group Information Sheet posted on website.

Enclosed with this program packet is the class abstract list that provides descriptions of all the environmental education classes, adventure education classes, and evening programs we offer. When picking the classes, consider how they will compliment your classroom curriculum, what you and your students will be excited about experiencing, and what the purpose of your trip is. Your choices and reasons for choosing them are communicated on the group information sheet.

If you are having difficulty choosing from the variety of options, do not hesitate to consult the Group Services Manager. Remember, it is not always necessary to follow exactly what is stated in the class abstracts and that we enjoy tailoring the classes and experiences to meet your needs. Please let us know your thoughts!

Grouping Your Students

There are three groups your students and chaperones will be part of during the trip; the cabin, class, and table groups. The following information will help you create those groups, but please confirm them with the Group Services Manager prior to the trip.

- ➔ **Table Groups:** The tables in our dining hall seat 10 people per table (including adults). We require that a minimum of one adult be assigned per table. To determine the total number of tables your group will be using, divide the total number of adults (including all teachers) + students by 10. This number should still be confirmed with the Group Services Manager to see if any special considerations apply to your group.
- ➔ **Cabin Groups:** Camp Greenville has four types of cabins each sleeping different amounts. The floor plan diagrams will illustrate how many people can sleep in each of these and aid you in requesting cabins for your group (page 14). Cabin assignments are made by the Group Services Manager and are based on group size, time of stay, and needs of all the groups using Camp Greenville at any given time.
- ➔ **Class Groups:** All the activities and classes you choose will be done in these groups. To optimize the learning environment, we recommend that the size be 10 – 15 students (though certain circumstances arise where larger groups may be required), and have no more than 2 parent chaperones. We find that it is best if they are mixed gender, and that they are mixed academically and socially, but this is ultimately up to your discretion as the lead teacher. For matters of continuity and logistics, chaperones and students should remain with the same group throughout the trip, and all groups should roughly be the same size.

Planning with the Group Services Manager

The planning meeting with the Group Services Manager is typically done over the phone, though some choose to visit camp to see new programs in progress and discuss plans for their trip in person. The purposes of this meeting are to confirm the information you sent on the forms; review a tentative schedule for the visit; discuss cabin, table, and class group assignments; finalize the bill for the outing; and ensure Camp Greenville is creating the best visit possible for your group.

To maximize that time, having the following information will be helpful:

- The finalized number of students and adults, and the break down of each gender that will be attending,
- Your impression of the tentative schedule and any ideas you may want to share about how to further improve it,
- Any medical, dietary, or educational special needs that may have been discovered after sending in the paperwork,
- Questions or concerns you may have.

Note to returning groups – Please remember to share with us your previous experiences and what you have come to expect during your trip. Do keep in mind that we are continually upgrading and improving programs, so we encourage you to try something new.

Note to new groups – Distance permitting, we suggest either a visit from a Camp Greenville staff member or a visit to Camp Greenville (this is best done at least 2 months before your trip). You can schedule a planning day, weekend trip or even just a meal with our staff to help you get a better feel of our site, facilities, and programs. Call the Groups and Education Director for more information.

The Camp Store and Free Time

During a typical 30-minute store, students are able to select snacks and souvenirs from a variety of options. We allow students to purchase only what they will consume during store time as no food is allowed in the cabins. Souvenirs range from key chains to clothing in addition to utilitarian things like disposable cameras, soap, batteries, etc. To learn more about what snacks and souvenirs are specifically available and their prices, consult the Group Services Manager.

A “Prepaid Store” can add a set amount per student to the trip’s total cost, ensuring all children have the same amount and do not have to carry cash. This can also be done with a prepaid Camp Greenville T-shirt order (dependant upon supplies). It might be preferable to make available only snacks or only souvenirs depending what you think is best for the group. These preferences about the camp store are communicated on the GROUP INFORMATION SHEET. Please be aware

that other groups may choose to have the store made available during your visit even if you do not.

There is generally 30 minutes of free time after dinner and before the evening program. In addition to the store, other free time possibilities include playing at the two basketball courts, GaGa Pits or sand volleyball court, a hike to Pretty Place, using our large athletic field, or utilizing the fishing lake (fishing requires participants to bring their own equipment). All of these activities call for teacher and chaperone supervision. Camp Greenville is also willing to facilitate recreational activities during one of the class periods if that fits in well with your goals.

Step 4: The Finishing Touches

Before You Arrive

The following is a list of items you should be prepared to bring with you on the day of your arrival:

- A set of medical / consent forms you can leave with the Education Coordinator,
- A Copy of the cabin, class, and table group lists,
- If possible, a rough idea of dates you would like to sign up for next year's visit.

To make your arrival time at Camp Greenville go as smoothly as possible, it is best that everyone **KNOW WHAT GROUPS THEY ARE IN WHEN THEY ARRIVE**. Creating name tags with the students' groups and cabin name is a great way to lessen the confusion for everyone as they move into a new environment.

After You Arrive

For most typical schedules, moving into your cabins will be the first thing you do after getting off the buses. Soon to follow will be a welcome meeting for the entire group with some of the instructors that will be teaching your classes. During this meeting, the adults will be pulled aside to receive their own orientation meeting that will supplement the information you have already given them. This includes receiving a full explanation of the most recent schedule. (Please be aware that for logistical reasons, some aspects of the schedule might have changed from the tentative one reviewed earlier. Please refrain from printing off earlier copies of the schedule to limit confusion if there are changes.)

From there the first meal will be served with the first experiences on the schedule close behind (see the typical schedule on page 14.) Here is when you get to enjoy the fruits of your labor!

SAMPLE THREE-DAY SCHEDULE

Day One	
10:30	Arrive & Move into Cabins
11:30	Welcome Meeting
12:30	LUNCH
1:30	1 st Activity
3:15	Store & Recreation
4:15	2 nd Activity
6:00	DINNER
7:30	Evening Program
9:15	Cabin Time

Day Two	
8:00	BREAKFAST
9:00	3 rd Activity
10:45	4 th Activity
12:30	LUNCH
1:30	5 th Activity
3:15	Store & Recreation
4:15	6 th Activity
6:00	DINNER
7:30	Evening Program
9:15	Cabin Time

Day Three	
7:30	Pack & Move Out of Cabins
8:00	BREAKFAST
9:00	7 th Activity
10:30	Large Group Farwell
11:00	Depart for Home

***All schedules are customized to the needs and wishes of the group.
We can design programs from A DAY to A WEEK.***

YMCA Camp Greenville

POLICIES FOR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM GROUPS

Policies Specific to Adults

- A phone is available for adult use only.
- Parking next to cabins is limited to unloading / loading only.
- Smoking is not allowed on Camp Greenville property
- Student discipline is the primary responsibility of the school chaperones. Camp staff will assist if needed but their primary responsibility is to instruct.
- Physical and verbal punishment is not allowed at Camp Greenville.
- Alcoholic beverages are **NOT ALLOWED** on Camp Greenville property.
- Please refrain from cellphone use during class times.

Policies for ALL Participants

- An adult must supervise students at **ALL TIMES**.
- Student medications should be held and administered by the designated medical person for each group **EXCEPT** asthma inhalers and EpiPens. Students who need these items should keep these with them at all times.
- Waterfront areas are off limits unless a lifeguard is present.
- Fishing must be approved before arrival and must stay within the boundaries of our fishing lake (Lake Rotary). Equipment will **NOT** be provided by Camp Greenville.
- Collecting plants, animals and other natural materials without permission from the Group Services Manager is prohibited.
- Bringing iPods, tape recorders, or any other electronic devices including laptops or tablets is not encouraged and are the sole responsibility of the participant if lost or broken. Handheld radios (Walkie-talkies) for teacher communication between groups are fine to bring.
- Food is **NOT** permitted in the cabins due to the temptation it creates for wildlife. If there is a student/participant with special requirements food may be kept in a vehicle for the trip and the vehicle can be parked in a more convenient location.

→ Students should be aware of behavioral expectations prior to the outing. Should a situation arise, such as fighting or theft, Camp Greenville reserves the right to have the student sent home.

→ Camp Greenville operates on three basic principals called the THREE RESPECTS:

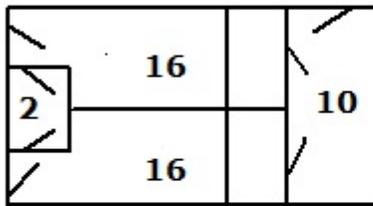
- ♥ Respect Each Other by treating one another how YOU would like to be treated.
- ♥ Respect Yourself by taking responsibility for making sure during the trip you are healthy, safe, and positive by not using the words "I Can't."
- ♥ Respect the Environment by treating the plants, animals, and the surroundings as if you are an invited guest – get to know them and their home, and let the others that come behind you do the same thing!

Please share this information

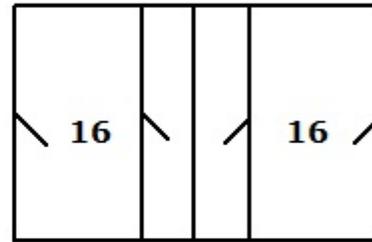
with ALL PARTICIPANTS AND CHAPERONES attending Camp Greenville.

Cabin Layouts

Lakesides



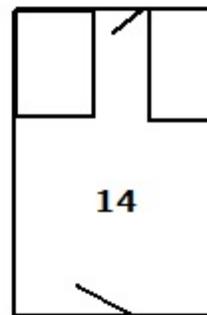
Ridgetops



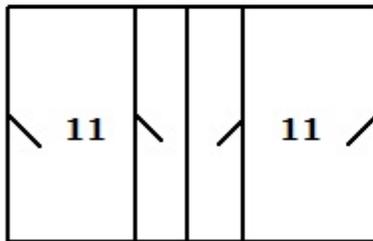
Crymes



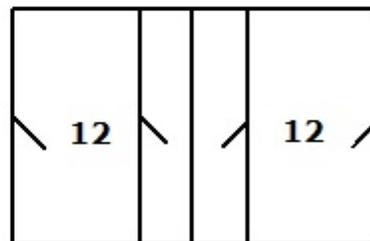
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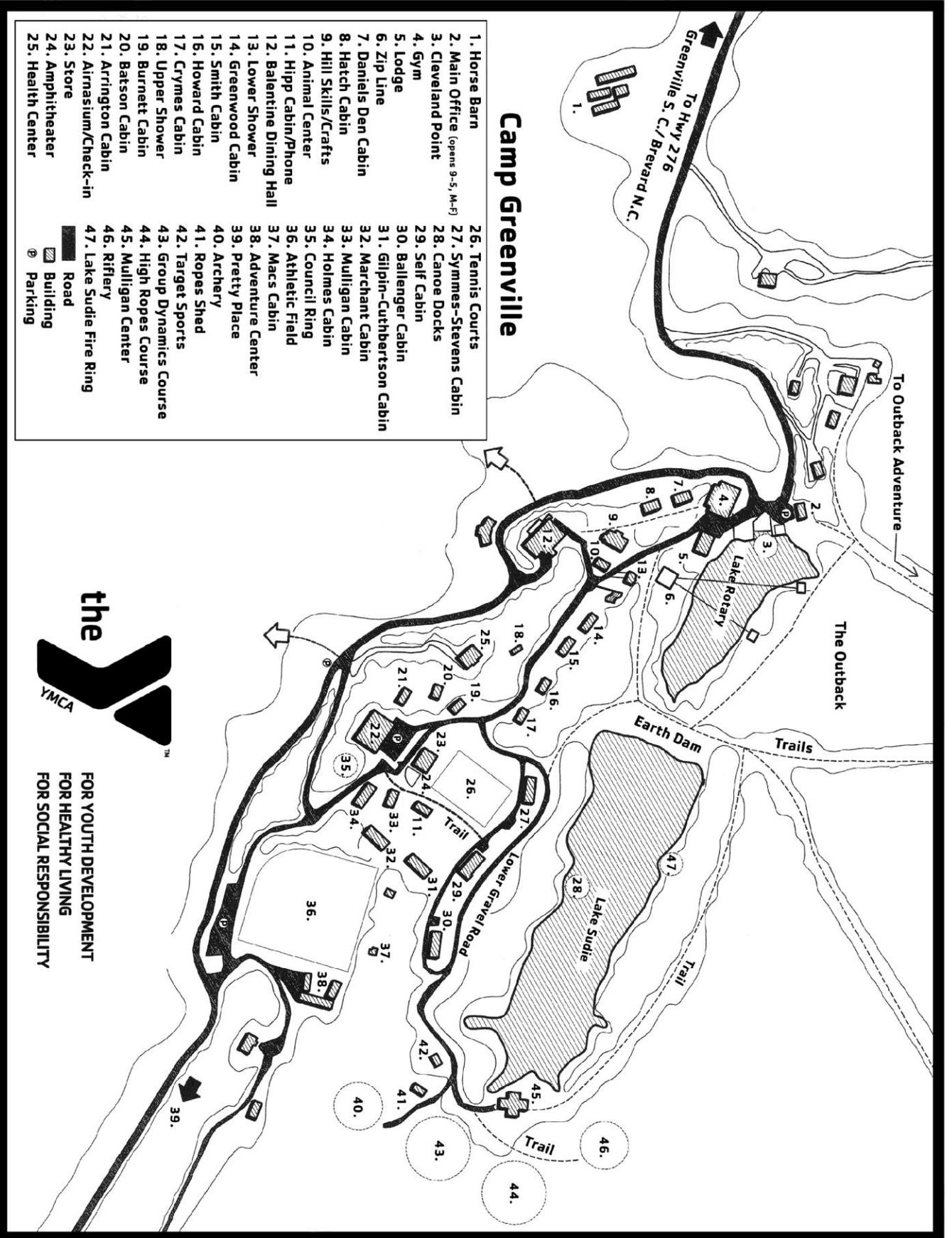


Adventure Boys



Adventure Girls





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