

turnout,” Ireland said. “We plan on doing that, but in honoring [long-time member] John Ehlers with that also every year from now on.”

The public tournament, held in August 2020, acted as a fundraiser for the group as participants hit the Platte River for catfish.

“The Platte River is just so full of different catfish,” Ireland said. “You have the opportunity to catch quite a few big fish in that river, with blues, flatheads and channels out in that river.”

With Dead Timber’s proximity to the Elkhorn River, Ireland also recommended the location as a good fishing spot for catfish.

Dead Timber, which has experienced changes throughout the years due to flooding, is undergoing a redevelopment project by the Nebraska Game and Parks and Vireo, an Omaha-based landscape architect firm.

In late March, a virtual meeting took place to share the design concepts with the public, go over the different options available and take feedback on what visitors would like to see.

While Hormel Park near Fremont used to provide boat access to the Platte River, Ireland said the ramp was closed after the spring 2019 flooding.

“So finding a place to put your boat in the water, usually you have to join an organization or have a friend that has a ramp you can put it in and out of,” he said. “That was a big loss for airboaters here in our region, when Hormel Park was taken out.”

Like Bauer, Ireland recommended people to access the current year’s fishing and boating guide if they’re interested in starting fishing, as well as YouTube tutorials.

“Especially if you’re trying to get your kids into it, they have a kids’ day at Lake 3 every year,” he said. “They stock that with fish for them to catch, and they give away fishing poles, and tackle boxes.”

Ireland also said to take caution with ice fishing. As he fishes during the winter every year, he said he won’t go out on ice unless it’s at least 4 inches thick.

When arriving at a lake to ice fish, Ireland said he’ll often ask other anglers on the lake if a corner is safe to walk on.

“Most likely the guys that are fishing those lakes will tell you,



COLLIN SPILINEK, FREMONT TRIBUNE

The Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area is stocked with fish twice a year. After fish are released in the fall, fishers can ice fish on top of the frozen lakes.



COURTESY

Fremont Airboat Club Tournament fish fry.

“Don’t go over there, there’s a spring there,” he said. “The ice might be 6 inches where you’re standing now, but over there it might only be 2 inches.”

With Hooper Old Lake, City Clerk Roxanne Meyer said the popular fishing spot recently saw a \$42,000 renovation in 2008 with the help of several grants and the Nebraska Game and Parks.

“They made it deeper and really dredged it out, cleaned it out and set some natural habitat down in the middle, like some trees,” she said. “They just set that down in there for the fish habitat.”

The Hooper Parks and Recre-

ation Department provides guidance for stocking the lake and placed a sign nearby on limits for fishing.

“We have three little jetties that they can go out on and fish off of, or just any of the shoreline,” Meyer said. “No swimming is allowed because there’s some jagged edges and stuff like that.”

Although swimming is prohibited, Meyer said non-motorized boats are also allowed on the lake, which includes a small picnic shelter.

Located right next to Hooper Park, Elkhorn Valley Golf Club and Hooper Swimming Pool, Hooper

Old Lake has become a popular spot for children and families.

“We see little kids down there all the time, and it’s really nice to see a small group, and they’ve all got their fishing poles and their little tackle boxes and they’re on their bikes,” Meyer said. “And you’ll see parents with real little ones. It’s a great family gathering, and it’s right here in town.”

Having watched her granddaughter skipping home after a fishing session with her son, Meyer said the lake is a great learning experience for children.

“Little kids don’t last very long at one thing, so it’s just kind of nice to be able to go down there maybe for a half an hour,” she said. “Because you know they’re going to be off and wanting to do something else, so it’s just perfect.”

As many beginning fishers can get confused and overwhelmed with tackle and gear, Bauer said the most important part is to just have fun.

“Just because you’re sitting on a bank with a bobber and a worm or even a cane pole doesn’t make you any less of an angler than the guy with the \$50,000 boat and all the gear,” he said. “It’s all fishing, it’s all good, so find what you like to do and do it and get out there.”