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The Chase County area is fortunate to have a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities that one can partake in.

Hunting, fishing, fur harvesting, boating, camping and hiking are just a few of the activities that come to mind. Unlike most structured sports, these can be accomplished by oneself or in a group. While some like fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing can be done year round, others such as hunting, boating, trapping, etc., tend to be more seasonal.

Hunting and fur harvesting for a variety of both game and nongame species are available. This year the deer season went well with many hunters getting animals. Since the age limit was reduced to 10 this year, a few more young people were able to hunt and were successful in getting a deer.

Upland and waterfowl hunters have also experienced good opportunities and success. If the habitat's there, the wildlife will likely be there, as well.

On the water front, some negative changes have been occurring over the years. As the aquifer/watertable has dropped, the impact on springs and base streamflows has diminished and/or ceased.

This has resulted in some segments of creeks and impoundments drying up. Consequently, some areas which used to provide fishing, boating and waterfowl hunting no longer do.

Water-based recreation is currently focused on Enders Reservoir. A significant number of users have enjoyed boating, fishing, camping, hunting, etc. at Enders.

During 2008, 1.6 million walleye fry and 149 (13 inch) muskies were stocked in Enders with plans for 1.5 million walleye fry for 2009. An ongoing study of white bass and walleye will forego the stocking of any wipers, for the time being.

Fishing success varies at times, but in 2008, ice and open water anglers caught walleye, wipers, white bass, catfish, smallmouth/largemouth/rock bass, crappie, bluegill, yellow perch and northern pike.

Enders recreation areas received several new vaulted toilets, compliments of the US Bureau of Reclamation. Plans are also to stabilize the shoreline on the sides of the south boat ramp with rock.

Campers can enjoy primitive to structured camping options (electrical hook ups, showers, etc.) depending on their style of camping. A sewage dump station, picnic tables, fire rings, fish cleaning station and trash dumpsters are available for lake users only. A valid park permit is required to enter the recreation areas and a camping fee help fund most of the maintenance and facilities.

People, both young and not so young, are looking for new and exciting things to do. The outdoors offers many challenges and opportunities for recreation, exercise and fun.

Those who already know this and those wishing to accept the challenge can look forward to 2009.