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4-24-2013

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University Relations, "Studio Art Students Collaborate with Wetlands District" (2013). *Campus News Archive*. 266.

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Studio Art Students Collaborate with Wetlands District

Summary: Students will produce a series of paintings for the local wetland management district as their final project of the semester.

(April 24, 2013)-Studio art students from the University of Minnesota, Morris are bringing the prairie inside this spring. Students in Associate Professor of Studio Art Michael Eble's painting class have worked with Styron Bell of the Morris Wetland Management District to better understand both the Minnesota prairie and the range of diverse prairie grasses that compose it. These students will collaboratively produce a series of paintings for the Wetlands District as their final project of the semester.

These full-scale illustrations of prairie grasses and root systems will ultimately serve as an educational tool. According to Eble, the project's direction, outcome, and benefits "can be clearly seen by the community." He adds that he and his students enjoyed working on the project.

"Having these paintings on permanent display will not only help educate viewers on the range of grasses that are prevalent in this region, but also help them to understand their importance to the environment, which will allow them to better appreciate the prairie landscape."

Paintings will be displayed during an opening reception on Thursday, May 2, from 4:30 until 6:30 p.m. at the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Center (43875 230th St, Morris, MN 56267). Students will be available during the reception to speak with community members about their work.

The Morris Wetland Management District of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service works to restore and protect the native landscape of west central Minnesota. The restoration and protection allows for many different native species, including fish and waterfowl, to thrive in the area. The District also works with private landowners to ensure that wetlands are preserved and helps to restore wetlands that may have been previously drained.

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