Hirundo Wildlife Refuge is a 2400 acre nature preserve in Alton, Maine, located approximately 10 miles from the University of Maine. HWR partnered with the UMaine Construction Engineering Technology Department to develop the Trail of the Senses, a universally accessible trail system. The Trail is a compilation of three trails, totaling a little over half a mile. All three trails are ADA compliant and tailored for people of all abilities and ages. The ultimate goal of the Trail of the Senses is to maximize accessibility to nature while minimizing the negative effect on the environment, in order to provide better connections and experiences for all.

The objective this past semester was to complete Phase II of the Trail of the Senses. Phase II is the Lac D’or Trail and is approximately a quarter mile long. There were three sections of this trail to complete: a grassy berm, a forest trail, and the construction of an observation point. A major focus besides the construction was the importance of exposing graduating students to community involvement. The project allowed students to use their specialized skillset for the betterment of their community.

The plans for the third and final phase of the Trail of the Senses are currently underway. The third phase is the Riffle Trail, and is approximately 0.20 miles long. Additional improvements such as road quality, parking location, and the construction of nearby boat storage will be made this coming fall by the Construction Engineering Technology Class of 2019.