

Denis Perez, M.S. Thesis Candidate



I am Denis Perez and I was born and raised in Chihuahua, Chihuahua, Mexico. I am personally interested in the Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands because that is where I grew up and have lived the majority of my life. Since I was a kid, I was aware of the importance of taking care of the environment. I earned my bachelor's degree in Ecology from the Universidad Autonoma de Chihuahua and this is where I strengthened my passion for wildlife. During college, I volunteered on different projects related with wildlife such as marine turtle conservation, mule deer captures, pronghorn, borrowing owls and prairie dogs surveys. After graduating, I focused on field work relating to wildlife conservation and environmental education. I have worked as a wildlife technician on several projects related to grassland birds including survival and habitat use of Baird's and Grasshopper Sparrows in Chihuahua and North Dakota, and wintering and

breeding grassland bird surveys in Chihuahua and Colorado. I am grateful to have the opportunity to complete my master's at Sul Ross State University to prepare me to become a wildlife biologist in my country.

Thesis Project: Habitat Relationships of Grassland Birds in the Chihuahuan Desert.

The grasslands of the Chihuahuan desert have been affected during the last years by agriculture and unsustainable grazing practices. Many species of grassland birds overwinter in the Chihuahuan Desert that have been affected by habitat loss. As a result, Borderlands Research Institute and Texas Parks and Wildlife joined together to start a research project aimed at gaining a better understanding of the relationship between wintering grassland birds and their habitat in the Chihuahuan Desert. The project takes place in Marfa, Marathon, and Alpine Grasslands of Presidio and Brewster counties, and the Sierra del Hechiceros, Laguna de Sanchez, and Montoya Grasslands of Chihuahua Mexico. This study will help to inform landowners, managers, and wildlife biologists about the ecological conditions needed to support increasing grassland bird populations within the region.

