

## Julie R. Schmidt — BRI Undergraduate Researcher

My name is Julie Schmidt and I am a proud native San Antonian. Although I am from the big city, my love for the great outdoors began at a very early age. I knew that my future would lead me to a career in the wildlife field at 7 years old. Growing up, my family had access to Falling Waters Ranch about 30 miles northwest of Uvalde, Texas. It was there that my passion for wildlife began. I spent my younger years hunting, hiking, fishing, and going spotlighting around the 5,000 acre ranch. For several years my sister, father and I, along with a few families from our church participated in what we called “Daddy and Daughters Trips” where we traveled the state to visit State Parks. Those trips started my goal of visiting every State Park in the state of Texas.



At the start of my junior year at Winston Churchill High School, my mother suggested Sul Ross State University as an option for higher education. At first I was not interested in a town so small, but after we visited the school in early October I fell in love with the surrounding area and the great city of Alpine. I am blessed to be a Lobo and I know that I wouldn't be as happy anywhere else as I am here.



### **Influence of Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs on the Abundance of Small Mammals in the Marathon Basin**

*16 January — 31 August 2017*

I have been able to work with the Nature Conservancy and BRI to study the influence that prairie dogs have on the small mammal population in the Marathon Basin Grassland Preserve. My study site is located 16 miles outside of Marathon, Texas. To sample the small mammal population, 108 live Sherman traps were divided evenly and set on both the prairie dog colony and on the grassland away from the colony over 4 nights.

This project has already begun to help me in furthering my education and giving me hands-on experience. The program has given me a glimpse into the life of a wildlife researcher, gaining hands-on experience conducting scientific research and in advanced scientific writing. I am excited to finish my research and have the opportunity to present my work.



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