

Daniel Tidwell, M.S. Thesis Candidate



My name is Daniel Tidwell and I was raised in Sachse, Texas, which is a suburb of Dallas. My father instilled in me the benefits of hard work and perseverance. My mother made sure I was raised in the House of God. Looking back now I realize why my parents pushed me as hard as they did. They were laying the foundation for my future. I received an Associate of Applied Science in Wildlife Management at Southwest Texas Junior College in May of 2011, and will obtain my Bachelor's in Natural Resource Management from Sul Ross State University in May 2014. Throughout my college career I have worked on numerous ranches. The majority of my effort has been towards the pronghorn restoration effort in the Trans-Pecos region of Texas where I have worked as a technician for two graduate students. I also completed two undergraduate research projects through the McNair Scholars program. I evaluated the artificial water

utilization of translocated pronghorn and used vaginal implant transmitters to evaluate pronghorn fawn survival. I am continuing my education by working towards a Master's Degree in Natural Resource Management at Sul Ross State University under the advisement of Dr. Louis Harveson.

Thesis Project: Post-Release Survival and Movements of Captive-Reared White-Tailed Deer Following Liberation

Many private landowners in the state of Texas rely on the economic value of hunting captive-reared deer. Through Texas Parks & Wildlife programs these landowners are allowed to release captive-reared deer into expansive land tracks on their property. Little to no research has been conducted on the survival and movements of captive-reared white-tailed deer following liberation. It is essential to measure survival and movements of these individuals in order to obtain valuable data that could directly inform the landowner's management schemes when considering a release. During this study captive-reared deer will be released into a 6500 acre "clean" (no native white-tail) pasture seasonally (spring and fall) for two years. The second year we will release captive-reared bucks into a 2500 acre pasture inhabited by native whitetail and evaluate the breeding competition between the captive-reared and native deer. Neonates will be captured directly after parturition in both pastures to measure neonate survival and to obtain DNA samples to identify sires. Knowledge derived from this study could potentially change Texas Parks & Wildlife's protocol when releasing captive-reared white-tailed deer.

