# Alec D. Ritzell — BRI Undergraduate Researcher

My name is Alec Ritzell, and I am from Katy, Texas. I attended public school for most of my pre-college education, but I was home-schooled throughout my high school years. During this time, I enjoyed volunteering with multiple organizations including the Houston Bulldog Rescue and Katy Prairie Conservancy. I also spent a great deal of my time growing vegetables and researching about wildlife for leisure. After high school, I spent one year taking classes at various junior colleges in Dallas, Texas. In the fall of 2014, I transferred to Sul Ross State University to pursue a degree in wildlife management. I am currently a senior expecting to graduate in May 2017. My interest in this career path is rooted in my passion for the outdoors. I have enjoyed many hunting and fishing experiences since an early age. I look forward to developing my career that involves wildlife conservation and ecological restoration. This goal is much closer to being realized since I have been able to volunteer in wildlife related fieldwork including spotlight surveys, quail trapping, wildlife guzzler projects, vegetation surveys, deer captures, pronghorn captures, and grassland bird captures. Since 2014, I have been a part of the Borderlands Research Institute's (BRI) Undergraduate Research and Mentorship Program. I presented my previous research for the BRI at their first two Undergraduate Research Symposiums; respectively in August 2015 and September 2016.
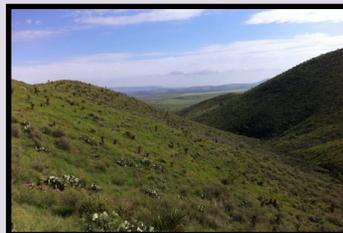
Evaluation of Mule Deer Movements in Relation to Habitat Characteristics

16 December 2016 — 15 May 2017

After completing my second research project with BRI graduate student JD Eddy, I started working for BRI research associate Thomas Janke as a technician for his research on known-age mule deer bucks. My position requires me to process trail camera photos, assist with trail camera maintenance, and evaluate GPS collar data in ArcGIS. The remote cameras are being used to record tagged mule deer bucks to observe age-related differences in their antler characteristics and body size over multiple years. In addition to sorting photos, I am currently working on a study that will be presented at a future wildlife conference. This research entails using ArcGIS to plot GPS collar data and determine potential relationships between mule deer movements and habitat features. The presence of favorable habitat characteristics, watering sites, and feeding stations near GPS collar points will be assessed to determine why mule deer are frequenting particular areas.