

Title V PPOHA La Frontera Fall 2023 Fellows



Name: Amanda Barrera
Program/Level: M.S. in Geology
Hometown: San Antonio, Texas

Prior Education:

Sul Ross State University, B.S. Geology, Minor Geography (Graduated 2018)
San Antonio College, A.S. Science, A.A. Art (Graduated 2016)

Academic Achievements:

Sul Ross State University

-Dr. Julius Dasch Outstanding Student Award (2018)

San Antonio, College

-Adalante Tejas Researcher/Grant Participant, Geology of the Bee Bluff Structure, Uvalde, Texas (2016)

-Adalante Tejas Researcher/Grant Participant, Geology of the Cook Mountain Formation in Atascosa County, Texas (2015)

Professional Certifications & Organizations:

ALPHA Member (2022-present)

NCTA Member (2023)

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

My favorite pastime is hanging out with my dog and being with friends and family. I love camping with my best friend and going on hiking trips. In my spare time, you can find me on a walk or playing video games with my friends!

Short Bio:

I am from San Antonio, Texas, and graduated from Tom C. Clark High School in 2014. While attending San Antonio College, I took an earth science course and fell in love with the study of geology. I decided to attend Sul Ross State University for the extensive field-heavy coursework in Big Bend National Park. My experience from the geology program led me to opportunities in Sacramento, California, including working at a local geotechnical engineering firm as a staff geologist. I have moved back to Alpine, Texas, to establish a career in higher education to gain professional development and experience before pursuing my ultimate goal of working as a professional consultant.

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Name: Sharon Barrett

Program/Level: M.A. in Political Science - Thesis

Hometown: Midland, Texas

Prior Education: M.Ed, Sul Ross State University, 2015 M.A. Liberal Arts, Sul Ross State University, 2015 B.A. American Studies, with departmental honors, Hillsdale College, 2012 B.A. Music, Hillsdale College, 2012

Professional Certifications & Organizations: National College Reading and Learning Association Level I certification, 2014

Fun Facts - Hobbies/Interests (things to know about me): I'm fascinated with the lost skills of our ancestors, like preserving homegrown food and foraging for wild medicines. I love culturing raw milk kefir and fermented salsa! I'm also a women's herbalist and a spiritual director

Short Bio: I'm a storyteller. Growing up, I dreamed of writing books and plays. I sang competitively in high school and was selected for TMEA All-State Choir three years in a row. I went to Hillsdale College planning to become a choir teacher. My love for politics and history, though, led me to add a major in American studies—even though it meant staying a fifth year in brutal Michigan winter! Returning to Texas after Hillsdale, I relocated to Alpine to be near family. I couldn't resist taking one or two graduate history classes at Sul Ross. With the help of amazing faculty who invested in me, I obtained a Graduate Fellowship and went on to complete the M.A. in Liberal Arts. In the process I discovered my talent for telling stories through ethnography. My capstone project explored the interplay between history and memory in the formation of religious faith, weaving my original songs and poetry into a dialogue with ancient and modern authors as well as real-life ethnographic research participants. While in Alpine, I also discovered my calling to serve women across borders as a midwife. I worked in Midland ISD schools for a few years, then returned to Sul Ross to pursue the M.A. in political science, combining ethnographic writing with political analysis to examine how midwives fight legislative and structural barriers to midwifery. For my thesis, I plan to interview international midwives about their political advocacy, interweaving their stories with the story of women's wisdom carried by el rebozo (the ancestral garment used by Mexican parteras to assist women in childbirth). I'm excited to begin midwifery training in 2024.

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Name: Hailey Barton

Program/Level: M.S. in Range & Wildlife Management

Hometown: Emmett, Idaho

Prior Education: Bachelor of Animal Science – Equine Science & Zoology Dual Major – University of Wyoming

Professional Certifications & Organizations:

- The Wildlife Society
- Mule Deer Foundation
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me): Last year, as a last hurrah before continuing my education, I went on a 21-day float trip of the Grand Canyon and also hiked 800 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail. This year, I'm planning on attempting to run my first marathon, which will be from Alpine to my study site at Elephant Mountain WMA.

Short Bio:

Hailey was born and raised in southern Idaho, riding horses, camping, hiking, and playing in the fields and foothills around her home. She earned her undergraduate degree at the University of Wyoming, with a double major in zoology & equine science. After graduation, Hailey worked as a wildlife technician for many research and management agencies, and studied a multitude of species such as chipmunks, raccoons, mule deer, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, Brook stickleback, golden eagles, elk, mountain lions, Mexican gray wolves, moose, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn. In her off time, Hailey can be found hunting, fly fishing, backpacking, hiking with her dog, Zip, or scheming up another adventure.

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Name: Emily Blumentritt

Program/Level: M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management with a focus on Conservation Biology

Hometown: Houston, Texas

Prior Education: Associate of Arts in General Studies from Lee College-Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Biology from Texas State University

Academic Achievements:

- Lee College Hall of Fame: Most Representative Student
- Dennis Boe Paper Award from the Great Plains Honors Council
- Jean Shepherd Award for Excellence in Historical Research
- 1st Place Caldwell Memorial Award for Excellence in History-Dorothy Cooke Hayes Award for Outstanding First
- Year Honors Student-Lee College Award for Excellence in the Humanities
- Texas State University College of Science and Engineering Dean's List
- Honors Undergrad Thesis: Gulf Coast Toads and the Urban Environment
- Honors Project: Small-Scale Living Shoreline Viability in the Galveston Bay Estuary
- Academic and scientific presentations at multiple conferences across the US

Professional Certifications & Organizations:

- Associate Wildlife Biologist with the Wildlife Society-Texas Master Naturalist (2016-2020)
- Texas Ornithological Society (2019)

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me): Bird watching is one of my favorite hobbies. Since I grew up near the coast, I have a special place in my heart for wetland ecosystems and wetland birds, but I love to be out in nature exploring the beauties of every ecoregion. When I'm not out birding, I love reading, playing video games, and hanging out with family and friends.

Short Bio: I grew up in a super urban environment, but I've always had a special love for wild animals and always loved watching whatever animals I could find in the city. I initially explored career options in art, humanities, and early childhood education. However, after volunteering for a few projects focused on wetland restoration, I realized how much I absolutely love working outdoors and being involved in ecological research that makes a difference in the lives of people and animals. After getting my bachelor's I worked for several years as a lead research assistant for wetland restoration studies, gathering data on plants, fish, and benthic organisms. I also worked on a couple of different studies examining nesting behavior in passerine birds. My love for research has led me to my first semester of grad school, pursuing my passion for birds and conservation with a project looking at how migrating and wintering birds of the Trans-Pecos are utilizing livestock tanks.

Title V PPOHA La Frontera Fall 2023 Fellows



Name: Brooke Bowman

Program/Level: Range & Wildlife Management / Borderlands Research Institute / Graduate Research Assistant

Hometown: Baytown, Texas

Prior Education: B.S. in Environmental Science, University of Texas at Austin, 2019

Academic Achievements:

- Current 4.0 GPA at Sul Ross State University in my M.S. program
- Mentored an undergraduate technician through the Borderlands Undergraduate Mentorship Program with Borderlands Research Institute
- Biostatistics Teaching Assistant for Sul Ross State University
- Graduated from my B.S. degree with High Honors from UT Austin with a 3.9 GPA
- Completed an undergraduate independent research project that I was able to acquire \$7,853 for through the Texas EcoLab Research Grant, UT's Undergraduate Research Fellowship Award, and UT's Environmental Science Capstone Research Grant

Fun Facts – Hobbies/Interests (things to know about me): I love hiking, birding, camping, reading, music, cooking, and listening to true crime podcasts.

Short Bio: My name is Brooke Bowman, and I grew up on the Texas Gulf Coast in Baytown, Texas. I did not grow up in the outdoors but always had a love for animals. After visiting Yellowstone National Park with my family in middle school, my love for the natural world was sparked. My interest in conservation led me to obtain my B.S. in Environmental Science from the University of Texas at Austin. After graduation, I realized that I wanted to pursue a career in wildlife biology. This passion drove me to take seasonal wildlife positions across the country. I conducted plant community surveys across the state of Arkansas with The Nature Conservancy, taught the public about Texas wildlife through an array of outreach activities at Bamberger Ranch Preserve in Central Texas, traversed the Nevada sagebrush steppe in search of collared Greater Sage-grouse, performed vegetation surveys in southern Idaho on a separate Greater Sage-grouse project, and trapped Northern Bobwhite quail in Oklahoma. I am grateful to continue my education in Sul Ross State University's Range & Wildlife Management Master's program studying the effects of oil & gas development on Scaled Quail movement and behavior!

Title V PPOHA La Frontera Fall 2023 Fellows



Name: Andrew Dotray
Program/Level: M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management
Hometown: Lubbock, Texas

Prior Education: B.S. in Natural Resources Management with a concentration in Wildlife Biology, Texas Tech University

Academic Achievements:

- Magna Cum Laude, Texas Tech University
- Overall Outstanding Undergraduate Researcher, TTU
- 1st Place Undergraduate Research Poster, TTU NRM Research Day
- Presidential Scholarship (2018-2022), TTU

Professional Certifications & Organizations:

- The Wildlife Society
- Student Association of Fire Ecology, TTU
- Soil Science Society of America

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

I enjoy outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, and fishing. I love playing and watching sports such as football, basketball, baseball, and countless others. I also enjoy spending my free time observing and appreciating different forms of art, including paintings/drawings, music, and cinematography.

Short Bio:

I was born and raised in Lubbock, Texas. I grew up with a family always outdoors, finding my true love of nature while camping every year in Minnesota and all throughout Texas. With my parents and extended family all hailing from Minnesota, I adore the annual roadtrips to the state and gaining an appreciation of the ecological diversity of this country. Raised a Red Raider, I followed my passion to study wildlife biology and got my bachelor's degree from Texas Tech University. As an undergrad, I assisted in the research of coyote population dynamics in the Mojave Desert in southern California. Following graduation, I remained in Texas working with an endangered bird species off the gulf coast and in the panhandle with a variety of big game species. I am excited and extremely grateful to further my passion for wildlife research at Sul Ross State University and the Borderlands Research Institute.

Title V PPOHA La Frontera Fall 2023 Fellows



Name: Hugo Flores

Program/Level: Criminal Justice, Graduate Studies.

Hometown: Laredo, Texas

Prior Education:

Associates of Arts, Laredo College. Bachelors of Science in Criminal Justice, Sul Ross State University.

Academic Achievements:

Dean's list Spring 2022. I currently have a 3.7 GPA in the Master's program.

Professional Certifications & Organizations:

-Member of Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. Member of SRSU New Man Club.

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

I enjoy swimming, watching Mexican League baseball games, and playing tennis. I am currently a Door-Dash driver.

Short Bio:

My name is Hugo Flores, and I am from Laredo, Texas. I was fortunate to be able to get an Associate degree while in high school, which made it possible for me to graduate at 19 years old with a bachelor's degree. I played tennis throughout High School, and while looking for college tennis opportunities, I found Sul Ross State University and decided to come to Alpine, Texas. I have since fallen in love with the town and the professors' passion for teaching all classes. I am working to become a criminal justice professional as soon as I complete my degree requirements.

Title V PPOHA La Frontera Fall 2023 Fellows



Name: Andres Gomez
Program/Level: Masters in Biology
Hometown: San Elizario, Texas

Prior Education:

I have a Bachelors in biological sciences and an Associate of Arts.

Academic Achievements:

I graduated from UTEP with a bachelors in biological sciences, currently finishing up my masters, and will continue to med school

Short Bio/ Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

I am a first generation; my parent's education consists of middle school so I have broken a cycle. All my siblings barely finished high school, as I am the youngest I wanted to do more and I have but there's still more to do. I graduated from an early college with both my high school diploma and associate of arts. After graduating I went to UTEP to obtain my bachelors and now I am here. Not into sports, at all. My hobbies consist of reading novels and playing chess, dominoes and poker. I would love to say that I have an amazing skill for cooking, maybe a bit spicy but still delicious. I am very friendly but quiet, it makes sense because I like to talk but to myself! Currently my first semester working on my thesis and hopefully it all goes well. I am glad to be part of this fellowship because it a way to meet more people that are intelligent and that are struggling with the same problems. Mi biggest goal is to become a pediatrician, so I am not down with school.

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Name: Ty Goodwin

Program/Level: Borderlands Research Institute - Research Graduate Assistant, M.S. Range and Wildlife Management.

Hometown: Gatesville, Texas

Prior Education: Bachelors in Range and Wildlife Management, Sul Ross State University

Academic Achievements:

- Outstanding Underclassmen in Natural Resource Management 2020-2021,
 - Outstanding Upperclassmen in Natural Resource Management 2021-2022,
 - Outstanding Student in Range Management from Sul Ross at TSSRM 2022,
 - 2nd Individual at TSSRM Plant ID 2022,
 - 2nd Individual at TCTWS Plant ID 2022,
 - 1st in Poster Presentation at TCTWS 2022,
 - Sul Ross Man of the Year 2023,
 - Graduated with Summa Cum Laude from Sul Ross 2023
- Professional Certification & Organizations:**
- Member of the Sul Ross Range & Wildlife Club
 - Worship leader of the Sul Ross Baptist Student Ministry
 - Coach of the Sul Ross Plant ID Team

Interesting Facts:

I like to sing and play music when I have free time or am enjoying time with family and friends. I like to garden where I can fit pots on my small apartment porch and also enjoy learning the native vegetation of the area. In most of my free time I like to tinker on my 1967 Scout and other mechanical items.

Short Bio:

I grew up in Gatesville Texas of the hill country and decided to go to school at Sul Ross State University in Alpine after falling in love with the area on a summer motorcycle trip with my grandfather. After graduating from high school in 2020, and armed with 8 years of plant identification know-how, I decided to study natural resource management with an emphasis in range and wildlife management. I graduated with a bachelors in 2023 and decided to pursue a Masters degree at Sul Ross in the same field. I was heavily involved with the Borderlands Undergraduate Mentorship Program as an undergrad and am excited to be leading a range centered grazing project. In my free time, I enjoy the Big Bend region with friends and family.

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Name: Gray Hancock

Program/Level: MS Range and Wildlife Management - Thesis

Hometown: Nacogdoches, Tx

Prior Education:

Bachelor of Science in Natural Resource Management Agricultural Business, Sul Ross State University, 2023

Academic Achievements:

- Sul Ross Honors Graduate
- Dean's List Fall/Spring 2019-2023, Sul Ross State University
- Magna Cum Laude, Bachelor of Science, Sul Ross State University

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

I like to play baseball, fish, hike, kayak down rivers, and explore new places!

Short Bio:

My name is Gray Hancock, and I was born and raised in Nacogdoches, Tx. I grew up on a small family ranch and spent my childhood exploring the natural world. Growing up, we would travel to Big Bend National Park and the surrounding Trans-Pecos region of Texas. I fell in love with West Texas and decided to pursue a degree in Natural Resource Management at Sul Ross State University. Throughout my time at Sul Ross, I spent the weekends traveling the area and kayaking stretches of the Rio Grande. This fueled my interests in hydrology and studying how water interacts with surrounding ecosystems, spurring interest in furthering education at the graduate level. When the opportunity to pursue a graduate degree studying hydrologic interactions at Sul Ross through Borderlands Research Institute presented itself, I was eager to join and started my master's degree in June 2023! I am excited and look forward to my time here at Sul Ross!

Title V PPOHA La Frontera Fall 2023 Fellows



Name: Leanna (“Lilly”) Morin

Program/Level: Natural Resources Science/Graduate Research Assistant in Range and Wildlife Management

Hometown: Honda, Texas

Prior Education: B.S. in Agriculture, Range and Wildlife Management, Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Associates of Arts, Southwest Texas Junior College

Academic Achievements: PPOHA Graduate Student Fellow, Summer 2022/Fall 2022

- Recipient of the Women in Conservation Science Scholarship, Fall 2021
- Recipient of the Franklin and Virginia Law Scholarship, Fall 2021/Fall 2022
- Recipient of the C.R. and Rebecca Palmer Undergraduate Student Scholarship in Wildlife Management, Spring 2020
- Recipient of the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Wildlife Society Scholarship, Fall 2019

Professional Certifications & Organizations: Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society

- Range and Wildlife Club, Sul Ross State University
- Wildlife Society, Texas A&M University-Kingsville
- Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, Eta Beta Chapter

Interesting Facts: I once was a fashion merchandising major. I have attended four colleges. I lived in Oregon for three months for an internship with OSU. I love to hangout with my pets – a dachshund mix named Sophia, a pit-bull mix named Opal, a bearded dragon named Leo, and a beta fish named Mermaid Man.

I enjoy working out, especially running, and eating good food!

Short Bio: I am from the small town of Hondo, Texas where I studied nearby in Uvalde for several years at Southwest Texas Junior College. After some degree changes/searching and mentoring, I found my passion in natural resource sciences. I pursued that fascination by then attending Texas A&M University-Kingsville, graduating in 2020 with a B.S. in Range and Wildlife Management. Now, I am entering my last year of graduate school at Sul Ross State University to earn an M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management studying pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) diet and vegetation community response to different cattle grazing systems. I am a first-generation college student and graduate, and my family has been very supportive throughout my long enrolled collegiate career. I am the coolest aunt to two nieces and two nephews, so some of my favorite things to do to share my love for nature is by taking them to parks, walking nature trails, and catching bugs together.

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Name: Ycela Ortiz

Program/Level: Grad Student for Masters of English

Hometown: Uvalde, Texas

Prior Education:

- Bachelors of English, Sul Ross State University
- Associates of Arts, General Studies, Southwest Texas Junior College

Academic Achievements:

- Dean's List Fall 2022, Undergraduate
- Dean's List Spring 2022, Undergraduate

Professional Certifications & Organizations: N/A

Interesting Facts – Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

- I have one cat.
- I enjoy listening to music.
- I am a survivor of attempted suicide.
- I am an only child.
- I am the first, and only, in my family to pursue any sort of college degree.

Short Bio:

My name is Ycela Ortiz, I am 24 years old. I am a first-generation college graduate student and I have absolutely no idea what I want to do with my life. I am taking it step by step and I am enjoying it every little bit. I grew up in the mix of my grandparents and single mother, and I seem to have a tender spot in my heart for writing. I am enjoying life, one day at a time

Title V PPOHA La Frontera Fall 2023 Fellows



Name: Elle Sutherland

Program/Level: M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management

Hometown: Moscow, Idaho

Prior Education: B.S. in Wildlife Resources, University of Idaho

Academic Achievements: Suma cum laude, Bachelor of Science Xi Sigma Pi National Honors Society Member Desert Bighorn Council Memorial Research Grant recipient Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute scholarship recipient

Professional Certifications & Organizations: The Wildlife Society: University of Idaho Student Chapter The American Fisheries Society: Palouse Unit, University of Idaho Student Chapter The Wild Sheep Foundation Swiftwater Rescue Training Certification Wilderness First Aid and CPRNAUI Open Water Scuba Diver a Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Safe Capture Chemical Immobilization Training Certification (San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Academy)

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

I love hunting, fishing, trail running and just about anything outdoors. I also enjoy baking and playing with my dog.

Short Bio: I grew up in northern Idaho where my experiences hunting, fishing and backpacking in the outdoors ignited my love of natural resources and led me to pursue a degree in Wildlife Management from the University of Idaho. While an undergraduate I worked as a technician on forestry, fisheries, range and wildlife projects. Following graduation, I began seasonal work on a bighorn sheep project and was hooked by the charismatic species, leading me to spend the next two years as a bighorn research technician in Montana and Wyoming. I also spent some time working as a veterinary technician and studying nursing before I decide to continue on for my masters in wildlife. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue pursuing my passion for wildlife management as a graduate student at Sul Ross and the Borderlands Research Institute.

Title V PPOHA La Frontera Fall 2023 Fellows



Name: Audrey Taulli

Program/Level: M.S. in Range and Wildlife Management

Hometown: Lucas, Texas

Prior Education: B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences with a Minor in Forestry-Texas A&M University

Academic Achievements - Professional Certifications & Organizations:

- Professional Leadership Certification through the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets
- Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society Texas Wildlife Association
- The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators Guild of Natural Science Illustrators

Interesting Facts - Hobbies / Interests (things to know about me):

I have a huge love for being outdoors, including horseback riding and camping. I also love art, and am working on becoming a certified Scientific Illustrator. I enjoy drawing, painting, and digital illustration.

Short Bio: I grew up north of Dallas in a small town called Lucas, TX. I spent a lot of time outside as a kid, either playing sports, riding horses, or hunting/fishing and camping as a kid. A trip to Yellowstone National Park when I was in high school helped me realize I could have a job that involved being outside, and I was hooked. I spent my undergrad years at Texas A&M and with the Corps of Cadets, and after graduating worked for the AgriLife Research and Extension branch of the University. I spent four and a half years on a crew surveying military installations in eastern and south central New Mexico. I also began a Scientific Illustration certification program last year that I am slowly working through with the hopes of becoming a published illustrator in the future.

Title V PPOHA La Frontera Fall 2023 Fellows



Name: Ben Thomas

Program/Level: Biology (Botany), Masters

Hometown: Saint Lewis, Missouri

Prior Education:

BA University of Texas at Austin, Geography and Diaspora studies; Exchange program at Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey, Environmental Sciences

Academic Achievements:

A. Michael Powell Scholarship Recipient

Professional Certifications/Organizations:

Botanical Society of America, Texas Native Plant Society

Cloud Appreciation Society

National Moth Week Organizer

Wildland Firefighter Type II

Hobbies/Interesting Facts/Bio:

I've been growing corn for ten years, and I still haven't seen a corn smut. Short Bio: The grassy plains and cactiferous hills of Trans-Pecos of Texas are some of the most compelling landscapes I've ever encountered. One day, when driving through Alpine, I thought I might just stay awhile. I don't need much in this life, just a garden and some free time.