

Intellectual Merit Criterion

Overall Assessment of Intellectual Merit

Very Good

Explanation to Applicant

The applicant has demonstrated an ability to conduct research in team and independent environments. The applicant has communicated research findings through 2 presentations and 1 publication (submitted). The applicant also has excellent experience in conducting research specific to large carnivores which is the subject of the proposed research. The description of the proposed research is clearly written and well organized. Three hypotheses are identified and addressed in the application. The application could be improved by including a conceptual model, identifying potential confounding variables, justifying the sample site selection, and defining the experimental design relative to statistical analyses. The research plan also needs to be more specific in terms of how many bears will be included in the study, will the applicant have assistance in the study, and is there local logistical support given the remoteness of the study site.

Broader Impacts Criterion

Overall Assessment of Broader Impacts

Good

Explanation to Applicant

The application discusses broader impacts in a very general manner. While specific activities are described, there are few details of how the activities will be implemented in the study. The application also needs to be more specific in the description of the collaboration with local scientists, the integration of research and education, the involvement of Tibetan field assistants, and potential policy ramifications in Tibet.

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Explanation to Applicant

exceptionally strong academic preparation, including extensive focused research experience including considerable independence in assistantships and teams; applicant proposes some novel methods to address issues at wildlife - human interface in an interesting albeit wholly comparative way, with good links to concepts in ecology; development of basic science aspect could be stronger, however. good choice of graduate lab; assessment of pika density unclear.

Broader Impacts Criterion

Overall Assessment of Broader Impacts

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Explanation to Applicant

good BI activities proposed, though lacking much specificity, potential for considerable impact in both direct and indirect ways, internationally and domestically; more specific and concrete demonstrations of BI action would help.

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Explanation to Applicant

The applicant engaged in a series of research assistantships and internships as an undergrad with a focus on mammal ecology that has prepared her very well for the project proposed. She has yet no publications and has given no presentations at national scientific meetings, which are accomplishments characteristic of the top applicants in this very competitive program. Her research in Tibet on the effect of government poisoning of pikas on brown bear diet, movement, behavior, and conflict with humans is intriguing and employs some of the latest techniques.

Broader Impacts Criterion

Overall Assessment of Broader Impacts

Very Good

Explanation to Applicant

Although the applicant does not present much evidence of past involvement in scientific broader impact activity, she proposes a broad array of public engagement events for this project while working in China. All are commendable and hopefully doable. The top proposals tend to have a strong history of quite definitive and effective societal impacts.