

Statement of Goal

I want to pursue a Ph.D. degree from the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management (NREM) at Oklahoma State University (OSU) because I want to contribute broadly to the field of natural resource management and become a researcher and a faculty member. The excellent research reputation of the Ph.D. program in the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management at OSU and a common research interest I share with your department bring me to apply to your university.

I was born into a family whose major occupation was farming for several generations. My parents manage to follow career paths that fit their personal interests because of the education they received. I grew up seeing the change that education brought into my family which made me believe that education is empowering and can change the lives of people. Thus, I decided to become a teacher. Over time, it became clear to me that my aim can be best achieved with the biggest impact by becoming a faculty member of a university. This is possible only after completing the Ph.D. degree.

I also witnessed the struggles and sorrows of the underpaid, ignored, and undermined hard-working farmers growing up in a family whose major occupation is farming. The struggle, sorrows and other socioeconomic problems of farmers motivated me to pursue a B. Sc. in Agriculture (Elective: Agriculture Economics) from Tribhuvan University, in Nepal and a Master of Science in Environmental Studies (MES) at Kentucky State University. I wanted to understand the problem of farmers and find a solution to the problems. These two degrees have been vital to developing a solid understanding of several aspects of agricultural, environmental, forestry and ecological problems, gain research experience, studying and developing systematic identification and understanding of problems and solutions.

The four years of undergraduate education in Agriculture Science with intensive coursework in Agriculture Economics and two years in the Master of Science in Environmental Studies program helped me broaden my knowledge in this sector. I completed interdisciplinary courses that broadly fits on environmental science, ecology, agriculture, geospatial science, biostatistics, research methodology as well as micro and macroeconomics theories, principles, and their application. These courses were vital to developing a solid theoretical perspective and practical skills in the respective disciplines.

I also conducted a research project entitled "Adoption of Sustainable Agriculture Practices among Kentucky Farmers and Their Perception about Farm Sustainability" as my MES thesis research. I found that the age, education, types of crops, income, perceptions, knowledge, and behavior of farmers are some of the key factors that play an important role in the adoption of sustainable agriculture practices among Kentucky farmers. A manuscript from my thesis work has been submitted to the Journal of Environment Management for publication and it is currently under review.

My active involvement in several types of research in addition to my own thesis research project in the areas of human-environment interactions has allowed me to apply my theoretical knowledge to improve environmental qualities, and ecological goods and services. I was honored by an academic excellence award while I was an MES student and also have won awards for oral research presentations at regional and national level research

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competitions. I believe these honors and awards represents my expertise in the theoretical, practical aspects of subject matters as well as their application in research.

I also have been a Graduate Research Assistant from January 2015 to September 2017 and a Research Assistant for Kentucky State University in multiple programs, including the Small Farm Diversification and Geospatial Program from October 2017 through the present. These positions have allowed me to conduct several types of research. I have developed strong research methods skills and have experience in statistical analysis and geospatial application tools (such as ArcMap, R, STATA, SPSS, Python, ArcMap, QGIS), and understand their application to research. I am teaching myself to use SAS using online resources. I am also helping graduate students to design their thesis research projects, perform data analysis, and develop presentations.

This academic journey and research activities have played a vital role in allowing me to diversify my knowledge base as well as develop a solid understanding of nature, the environment, ecological goods and services, and the role humans have on these resources. This motivated me to understand the natural phenomenon and the interaction between humans and the environment through a holistic approach. Thus, I believe the study of natural resource management is very important as it provides a broader perspective of this relationship and to find solutions to problems in this area. This has motivated me to pursue a Ph.D. in natural resources.

I was investigating programs that offer doctorates in Natural Resource Management. I found that Dr. Omkar Joshi has been conducting excellent research on the effect of annual variation in weather and drought on the economic value of different ecosystems. The nature of this research fits within my research interests of applying several tools based on economic theories to estimate market and non-market economic values of natural resources and ecosystem services. Therefore, I would like to express my keen interest to work as a Ph.D. student in the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management as a Research Assistant under Dr. Joshi's supervision.

I believe that I can make a significant contribution to the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Oklahoma State University because I am a self-motivated, punctual, result-oriented, diligent, and a responsible person. In addition, I am a rigorous researcher, a good team player and a loyal steward of any opportunities I receive. My academic qualifications, research activities, experience on using research tools, programming languages and personal strengths make me a strong candidate for the position. I will be able to deliver results and meet all expectations as required by the position. I assure that you will not regret giving me this opportunity. I appreciate your time to review my application packet. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
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