



# 'Hunting for Habitat': the Private Production of EGS

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# 'Hunting for Habitat'

Open Spaces  
Alberta

RAMP

~~Hunting for  
Habitat~~

**Killed by Critics**



# 'Hunting for Habitat': the Private Production of EGS

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## ECOLOGICAL GOODS AND SERVICES

- Clean air
- Clean water
- Carbon sinks
- Recreation
- Scenery
- Wildlife      Ecological "utilitarian" species

# The Problem: Urban-Rural Interaction



Cities threaten the open  
spaces on which they depend  
for EGS



# The Problem in Southern Alberta Cattle Country





# The Problem in Cattle Country: Acreages



projected to surpass agricultural  
residences by the middle of the century

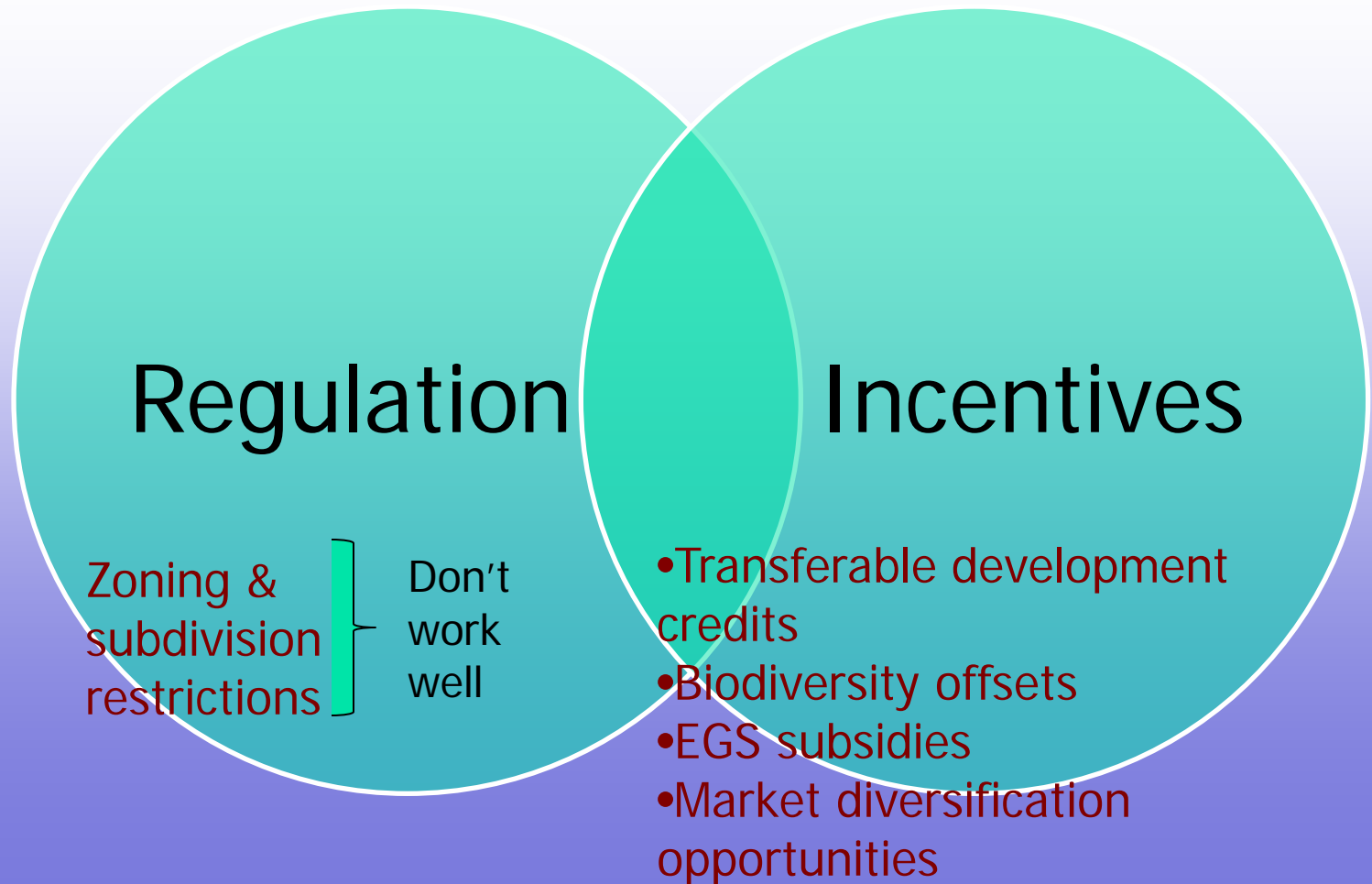


# The Problem in Southern Alberta Cattle Country

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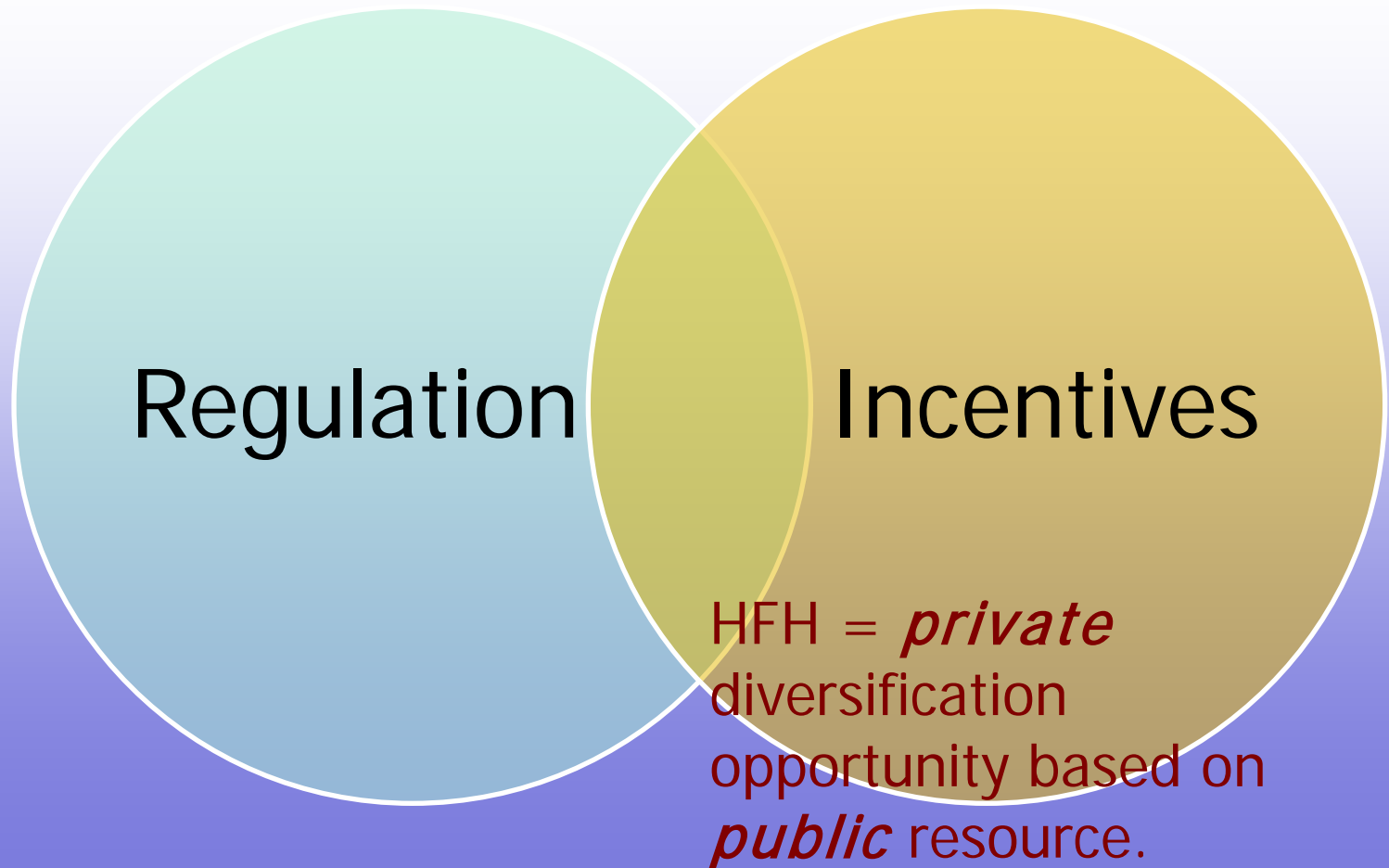
- Open spaces (EGS) traditionally sustained by cattle ranching
- But the cattle industry is stressed
  - BSE (mad cow)
  - High grain (feed) prices
  - High Canadian dollar
- Land prices skyrocketing
- Cash-poor, land-rich ranchers under pressure to “cash out.”

# Solutions: How to Protect & Maintain Open Spaces / EGS





# Hunting for Habitat: A Market Diversification Opportunity



# Diversification: Public Resources & Private Lands

## Mineral Exploration

- Access can be compelled
- Landowner is financially compensated for access

## Wildlife (hunting)

- Access cannot be compelled
- It is illegal for landowner to be compensated.

**i.e. asymmetric access & compensation rights**

RESULT: landowners “internalize” benefits of energy exploration but not the lost opportunities of the hunting economy.



# Internalizing a Perverse Incentive: per-well compensation

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- EUB: directional drilling from a single site is “good land use” and “highly encouraged.”
- Energy Company CEO: “landowners will get snarky with us if we say we want to drill directionally.”





Guns vs. Wells:

What does the rational rancher do  
in the face of asymmetrical access & compensation  
rights?





# What does the Rational Rancher Do?



WILLOW VALLEY RANCH   
**NO HUNTING**  
**NO**  
**TRESPASSING**  
VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED



# Imagine Symmetrical Compensation Rights (i.e., where landowners can be compensated for hunting)



- Two diversification streams

- Better ecological balance

- Sustainable open spaces / EGS??

**= GOAL OF 'HUNTING FOR HABITAT'**





# Hunting for Habitat: Foundational Premise

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“conservation will ultimately boil down to rewarding the private landowner who conserves the public interest”

Aldo Leopold



# Leopold's Options for Rewarding Landowners

(as summarized by Benson 2000)

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- ~~"buy them out and become the landowner"~~
- compensate them directly or indirectly for producing a wildlife crop and for the privilege of harvesting it [including access fees]
- ~~cede them title to wildlife so they will own it and can buy and sell it just as they own, buy and sell poultry"~~



# Leopold's Balance of Private Interest and Public Good

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- Leopold preferred a middle ground between completely public and completely private.
- He sought to balance private interest and public good, harnessing the former to the latter.
- So did 'Hunting for Habitat'.





# HFH: Balancing Private Interest and Public Good

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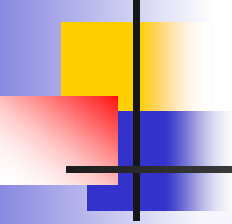
- Wildlife remains a public resource and a public trust.
- HFH units can market only a small share of the public resource (15%-25% of available hunting tags). The vast majority of tags go to “public hunters.”
- HFH units must provide comparable opportunities to free “public hunters.”



# Benefits of Similar Programs Elsewhere

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- Increased/enhanced wildlife habitat
- Increased public access and opportunity
- Significant revenue diversification for ranchers (25%-30% of ranch revenues)
- Land stabilization



# The Failure of Hunting for Habitat (in a nutshell)

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## LEOPOLD'S LANDOWNER REWARD OPTIONS

- compensate them directly or indirectly for producing a wildlife crop and for the privilege of harvesting it (including access fees)

**HFH Intention**

- cede them title to wildlife so they will own it and can buy and sell it just as they own, buy and sell poultry

**Critics' Prediction**

**Debate remarkably reminiscent of healthcare debate**