

INCENTIVES & Disincentives

The complex system of governmental economic incentives and disincentives applicable to western grazing lands offers untapped opportunities for encouraging protection and restoration of riparian areas.

In recent years Congress enacted anti sod- and swamp-buster laws to discourage activities that

WINDOWS of Opportunity

Windows of opportunity are created when grazing allotments on public land become vacant or permits are transferred. Opportunity to allow riparian areas and adjacent uplands to heal before resuming grazing.

“... IT is profitable, under the present system of agricultural technologies, markets, and policies, to mine the inherent productivity of the fragile cropland and rangeland sites as if they were nonrenewable resources. In doing so, long-term productivity is sacrificed for shorter-term profits.”

— **Congressional Office of
Technology Assessment, 1981.**



The dramatic contrast in riparian conditions upstream (private land) and downstream (public land) of this fence line is representative of a fundamental, pervasive problem.

reduce long-term productivity. There is precedent, opportunity, and need for similar riparian amendments to laws applicable to grazing land.

To change permitted grazing strategies. To hold restored allotments in reserve for use in times of drought, or to take the pressure off degraded riparian areas elsewhere. Elimination of any statutory or administrative barriers to these opportunities should have high priority.