



College of Business
and Public Policy
UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

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The CBPP Economics Department
invite you to attend the following

Faculty & Student Seminar
Friday, September 8, 2017
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., RH303



Brock Smith

Assistant Professor
Dept. of Agricultural Economics
Montana State University

Left in the Dark? Oil and Rural Poverty

Abstract: Do oil booms reduce rural poverty and inequality? To study this we measure rural poverty by counting people that live in darkness at night: combining high-resolution global satellite data on night-time lights and population from 2000-2013. We accurately identify up to 83% of households as above or below the extreme poverty line when compared to over 600,000 household surveys. We find that both high oil prices and new discoveries increase illumination and GDP nationally. However, they also promote regional inequality because the increases are limited to towns and cities with no evidence that they benefit the rural poor.