

## Talla Hartfell Wild Land Area

Southern Uplands Partnership

- There are 42 Wild Land Areas in Scotland. Only two of these are in southern Scotland.
- At 9,335ha, Talla Hartfell is NatureScot's tenth smallest WLA.
- Talla-Hartfell is in good company. Other WLAs include:
  - the Cairngorms
  - Cape Wrath
  - the Cuillin Mountains on Skye
  - Schiehallion, Ben More, Ben Ledi and Ben Lui

Of all the WLAs, Talla-Hartfell is one of the most accessible from both Edinburgh and Glasgow.

### Within the WLA are:

- Talla and Megget reservoirs
- Several established higher level walking routes
- The Corbetts of Hart Fell and White Coomb
- The Donald of Lochcraig Head
- NTS Grey Mare's Tail Reserve
- All of Borders Forest Trust's Carrifran site, the major part of their Talla and Gameshope site, and the eastern half of their Corehead site
- Most of the Moffat Hills Special Area of Conservation (NatureScot)

And the WLA falls within the Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area and forms part of the Tweedmsuir Uplands Special Landscape Area.

### Key Attributes and Qualities

- Rounded moorland hills, deeply incised by steep-sided glens, ravines and corries
- Large areas of deep bog
- Challenging in parts for walkers, increasing a sense of risk
- Arresting views
- Sense of remoteness and sanctuary
- A strong sense of naturalness contrasting with the surrounding forest plantations but enhanced by native planting at Carrifran
- Rich mosaic of rough grass, heather, bracken and bog vegetation
- Exposed rock outcrops, fast flowing burns and waterfalls
- Limited evidence of contemporary land use
- Contrast between the settled glens around the perimeter and the wild land of the interior
- Few visible signs of human artefacts beyond occasional tracks, the odd agricultural building, sheep stells and dykes

Donald Greig  
Southern Uplands Partnership  
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Area of NatureScot Talla-Hartfell Wild Land Area	93km <sup>2</sup>
Total project area	472km <sup>2</sup>

Over six years to 2017, output from LFA hill sheep farming is estimated to have fallen by £1.4 million (20%) and risen by £1 million (25%) from established commercial forestry.

**Rising economic output from forestry appears to be offsetting declines from hill farming.**

Increasingly, this is likely also to include income from both small- and large-scale wind farms.

### Why does this matter to Tweedsmuir?

Changing patterns of land use alter not only the look and feel of the surrounding landscape, but everything from habitats and wildlife to the social, cultural and economic make-up of the area as a whole.

The communities surrounding the Wild Land Area, including Moffat, Tweedsmuir, Ettrick and Yarrow, share many of the same concerns and are grappling with many of the same issues, including:

- Tourism** From unmanaged camping around St Mary's Loch to the potential development of a broader tourist offering. More path creation and signposting for walkers. Route creation and improved local facilities for cyclists.
- Wildlife** From habitat management and restoration to wildlife tourism.
- Farming** Economic viability and opportunities for diversification such as a food provenance, on-farm butchery, farm accommodation.
- Rewilding** Nature regeneration: how to develop a natural capital-based economy?
- Public transport** Improved services.
- Windfarms** How to manage expansion.
- Employment** Limited opportunities, especially for young people.
- Heritage** Potential loss of social and cultural heritage, and the need to preserve it.

### QUESTION

**Could the Wild Land Area communities work together to develop a vision for the future of the area?**