Case Study

Rural Communities and Landscape Change: A Case Study of Wild Ennerdale

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Abstract

Ennerdale Valley is located in the Lake District National Park of northwest England. The valley has been managed as coniferous plantation forest since the 1920s by the Forestry Commission (FC). Since 2002, however, the FC has been a partner (along with the National Trust and United Utilities) in the Wild Ennerdale (WE) rewilding initiative, which alongside a more a naturally evolving landscape, also aims to provide socio-economic benefits for the local community. This paper considers the relationship between WE and the cultural landscape of Ennerdale Valley and has identified disparities between the WE view of engagement and participation and corresponding feelings of alienation, dispossession, and dislocation expressed by some members of the local community. The paper presents an argument for stronger links between WE and the Ennerdale community. In particular, there needs to be much greater appreciation of the role the rural community has played, and continue to play, in shaping the landscape of Ennerdale. Recognition of this role is important in terms of delivering a sustainable future both for the valley and for WE.

1.0 Introduction

The concept of cultural landscape within the context of the northern UK uplands has been outlined by Convery and Dutson (2006) and Dutson and Convery (2006), who emphasise the complex dynamic that exists between people and place and explore how elements in the cultural landscape of upland northern England might contribute to community sustainability. As Kirby (2003) and Backshall, Manley, and Rebane (2001) note, the countryside of England is very much a cultural landscape, a product of human management of one form or another. Thus whilst upland areas in England contain most of the

remaining seminatural habitats in the country, which often contain vegetation communities that are similar to natural communities in structure and function (Backshall et al., 2001) their distribution is the product of thousands of years of human activity (Carver and Samson, 2004; Fielding and Haworth, 1999). Yet despite the almost total lack of wilderness in England, there has been an increase in interest in the concept of "wild land" and "rewilding" over recent years (Fenton, 1996; Fisher, 2003; Green, 1995). The concept of wild land or wilderness has been used to good effect, both nationally and internationally, for conservation management (Habron, 1998) and for tourism (Hall and Page, 2002). The development of wild areas do however present significant challenges for policy makers and practitioners alike (Höchtl, Lehringer, and Konold, 2005; Jerram, 2004; Waitt, Lane, and Head, 2003).

This paper focuses on the Wild Ennerdale (WE) partnership, a "wilding" initiative in a relatively remote valley in the Western Lake District, Cumbria, Northwest England (Figure 1). Ennerdale Valley is 9 miles long and 3.5 miles wide (at its widest) and extends to an area of 11,640 acres (4711 ha). The valley narrows from west to east and is surrounded by some of the Lake District's highest summits: Green Gable, Great Gable, Pillar, Kirk Fell, and Steeple. The valley is important for conservation, with over 40% of the WE area designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation, and also contains a number of Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species.

Ennerdale Ward is sparsely populated (the ward population of 1,003 equates to a population density of 0.1 persons per hectare based on 2001 UK census data) and is served by relatively poor road and rail links. Further west of Ennerdale, along the lower-lying coastal strip, are urban communities built on a tradition of manufacturing industries (coal mining and ship building), which include the towns of Cleator Moor, Egremont, and Whitehaven. Accordingly, manufacturing is the dominant employment sector in the ward (accounting for the employment of 100 people, most of whom work outside the ward), followed by health and social work (76 people). Agriculture and forestry employs 50 people (Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan, 2006).

The valley has been managed as coniferous plantation forest since the 1920s by the Forestry Commission. In the early 20th century, UK timber stocks were so depleted by the demands of the First World War that the Forestry Commission (which was established in 1919) was given a good deal of freedom to acquire and plant land. During the 1920s, the Forestry Commission acquired part of Ennerdale Valley as part of this emerging national strategy. Planting of mainly high-yielding exotic species, such as sitka spruce, began in Ennerdale in 1925 and continued through the century (Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan, 2006). Figures 2 and 3 show aspects of this forest plantation history. Figure 2 indicates remaining areas of plantation forestry, areas of clear fell, and improved pasture. Figure 3 also shows areas of plantation forestry, along with areas that have been cleared of spruce and some evidence of spruce regeneration.

The WE partnership was established in 2002 between the three main landowners in the valley: The Forestry Commission, National Trust, and United Utilities. This was in part a response to the post Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) rural recovery agenda (Cumbria was the most affected county in the United Kingdom, with over 95% of cases), ongoing agricultural reform, changing trends in UK forestry, and a growing interest generally regarding the concept of "wild land" in Britain (Convery, Bailey, Mort, and Baxter, 2005). The partnership developed a vision "to allow the evolution of Ennerdale as a

wild valley for the benefit of people, relying more on natural processes to shape its landscape and ecology." The vision is qualified with an assertion that "the valley will sustain the livelihoods of local people" in keeping and enhancing "the valley's special qualities" and that "a broader section of local people will have a greater sense of involvement in its future" (Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan, 2006).

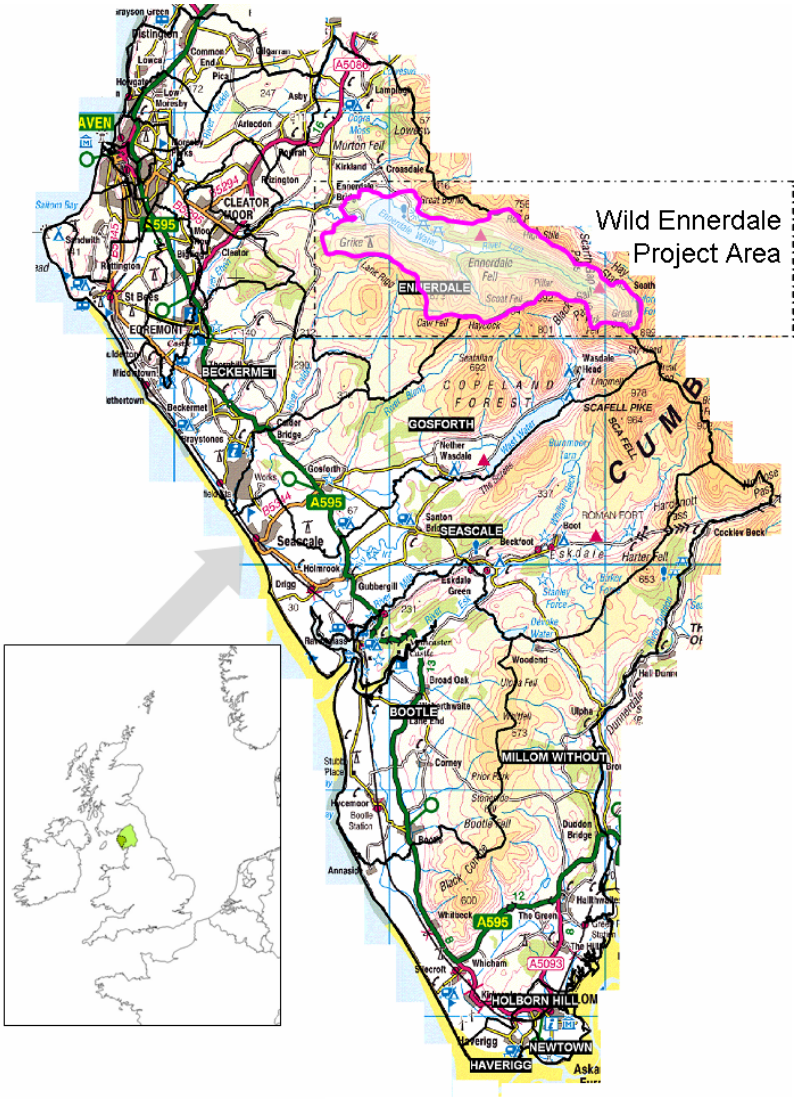

Figure 1. Location of Wild Ennerdale. Inset map indicates location of Cumbria (lighter shading) and West Cumbria (darker shading) within the United Kingdom (adapted from Cumbria County Council, 2006).

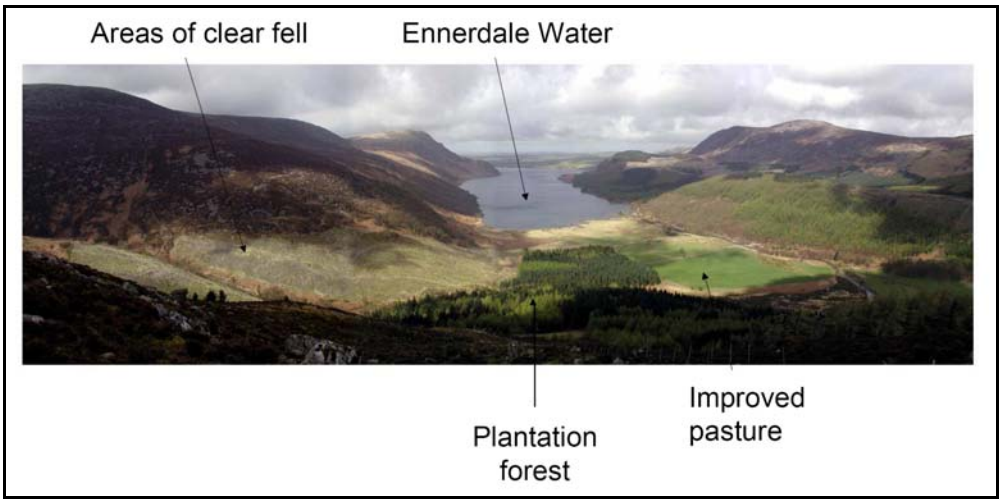

Figure 2. Plantation forestry in Ennerdale Valley (adapted from Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan, 2006).

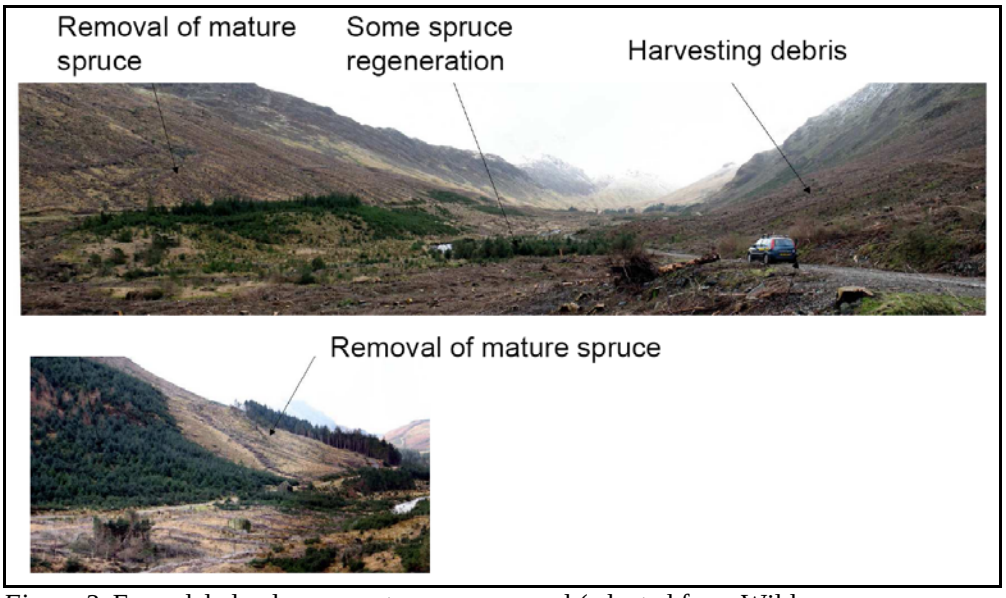

Figure 3. Ennerdale landscape post-spruce removal (adapted from Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan, 2006).

The paper begins with a discussion of the farming landscape of Cumbria post FMD and then examines the relationship between the farming community and WE. Finally, it discusses WE within the broader cultural landscape of Ennerdale Valley and the future role of the farming community. This paper is based in part on a study undertaken by the National School of Forestry, University of Central Lancashire, which received funding from Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency.[1]

[1] The views expressed in the study are those of the authors and not necessarily those of Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency.

2.0 Methods

Following an initial orientation visit, a desk-based review was completed. Respondents from the relatively small farming population of Ennerdale were purposefully recruited. Seven semi-structured interviews (six with farmers and one with a tourism provider) and one group meeting (a focus group including various sectors[2] of the Ennerdale community) were completed. Interviews and group meetings were taped and transcribed and data were analysed using the grounded theory–constant comparison method, where each item is compared with the rest of the data to establish and refine analytical categories (Pope, Ziebland, and Mays, 2000).

3.0 Findings

3.1 Agricultural Change Post Foot-and-Mouth Disease

The 2001 FMD disaster is a watershed period in recent UK farming history. As Convery et al. (2005) indicate, FMD created deep fissures in the lifescapes of Cumbria, so that much of the taken-for-granted world, identity, and sense of meaning within the farming community changed. Prior to FMD, the last decade had been very difficult for UK agriculture in general and hill farming in particular (Franks *et al*. 2003; Lowe, Edwards, and Ward, 2001; Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, 1999; Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, 2002; The Royal Society, 2002), to the extent that by the mid-1990s, "much of the profitability [had] drained from the industry" (The Royal Society, 2002, p. 9).

By the time of the FMD epidemic, farm incomes were "on the floor" (Report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, 2002, p. 13). More broadly UK and European Union agriculture over the last 30 years has been characterised by a move from a production-oriented countryside to a consumption-oriented countryside (Marsden, 1999) and an increasing emphasis on the provision of public goods by farmers.[3] Recent debates around stocking levels (and the introduction of programmes like the English Nature Sheep and Wildlife Enhancement Scheme), the new (2007–13) Rural Development Plan for England, changes in the structure of the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) agri-environment schemes, and the introduction of the Single Farm Payment have created further uncertainty.[4]

Respondents[5] were asked their opinion regarding the future of farming. Their responses revealed a range of emotions, from bitterness and cynicism through to guarded optimism. Farmers frequently saw their future role related much more closely to environmental management. "Really we're just paid to be park

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[2] This included representatives of the Parish council, local business owners and tourism providers, local residents, and incomers to the valley.

[3] We use the term *public goods* to refer broadly to resources from which all may benefit, regardless of whether they have helped provide the good. Public goods are also distinguished by the fact that they are nonrival in that one person's use of the good does not diminish its availability to another person (Kollock, 1998, p.188).

[4] The recent decision by DEFRA to roll the existing Hill Farm Allowance over for a further three years is, however, being viewed as a positive move by the National Farmers Union. National Farmers Union uplands spokesman Will Cockbain (2006) states, "The fact that in 2010 we will move to an uplands entry-level scheme is also important as it means all farmers in the uplands will be eligible and can be rewarded for the hugely important role they play in the delivery of public goods."

[5] Real names have been replaced by pseudonyms for the purpose of this paper

keepers, aren't we. Keep the place looking nice … we're just paid to have it look nice for the tourists, but the thing is they've made us take all the sheep off the fell" (P. Jones, personal communication, November 13, 2006).

There was a corresponding sense of being unwanted and undervalued, particularly in relation to WE: "I think the farming activity in the valley is now considered to be fairly peripheral to the general sort of aim of Wild Ennerdale … we all get the impression that they would quite like us to go away" (J. Milburn, personal communication, November 14, 2006). But there was also evidence of resilience and a determination to continue: "It looks as though we've got one more generation that's going to keep it going and I feel quite strongly about it really." There was also a view that if farmers were to be involved in public goods provision, they would need to be paid appropriately: "And if they want to look at this landscape they'll have to pay for it … and pay well. I know my generation; a lot of them, they're sick to the back teeth of what's going on" (K. Kirk, Personal Communication, November 21, 2006).

The interviews also revealed the complexity of farming households in the valley, indicating changing gender roles and the importance of off-farm employment:

"My husband actually works away from the farm so I may be in a situation where I choose to do that more. I'm a trained X so I do have other things that I can do, so it's balancing up the time involved. You get less situations now where you've got your farmer's wife at home. In the past the farmer, the man, would be out working and the woman, the wife, was in the house, so there was always somebody there for eventualities such as bed-and-breakfast or people popping in or whatever. But more and more … people have part-time jobs or the other partner has a full-time job even in many cases. Purely because of the financial uncertainty of farming, not many people go into farming now if they haven't got some sort of back-up" (R. Biggs, personal communication, November 18, 2006).

3.2 Farming Perceptions of WE

The Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan (2006) states, "Wild Ennerdale is not about abandoning land, excluding people or trying to create a past landscape. On the contrary, human activity is a crucial part of the process, along with the need to provide quantifiable economic, social and environmental benefits which are sustainable." The strategic plan outlines the long history of human influence in Ennerdale Valley, stating, "Ennerdale has provided for people's needs for many centuries. The range of monuments and features within the valley demonstrates how the landscape has been influenced and altered by man for over 3500 years" (Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan, 2006). During the Bronze Age humans introduced low-intensity pastoral farming to the fells. For some respondents, agricultural links to the valley span several generations.

Respondents were asked how they viewed WE and its vision for the future of the valley. They were also invited to discuss the implications of WE for their farm management. The views expressed indicate both scope for collaboration and compromise with WE integration and concerns over practical difficulties related to merging forest with pasture. Some farmers who use forest tracks for access to pasture expressed concern over proposals to "allow sections of the forest track network to revert to vegetated tracks" (Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan, 2006). One farmer said, "I would prefer from my point of view that they didn't start blocking off the access roads" (J. Page, personal communication, November 10, 2006). However, the main focus of farmers'

concern was linked to a proposal to "remove redundant boundary fencing to move towards extensive grazing regimes within existing forest boundaries" (Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan, 2006). There was widespread anxiety of serious implications for shepherding if the boundary fences between forest and open fell were allowed to deteriorate:

> "The bit that potentially affects us in a major way would be the taking down of boundary fences. … They haven't been terribly sympathetic to our concerns about the breakdown of our heafing and shepherding systems. If we haven't got some physical barrier to keep them [sheep] out of the woods … you can only shepherd them if you can find them" (J. Milburn, personal communication, November 14, 2006).

> "If they take them fences down, all the stock will go out of that valley, it'll go tomorrow, because you can't shepherd it. A lot of stock would harm their selves walking through [the woods]. … It's all the branches and holes underneath … you couldn't possibly gather sheep through it, it would be so difficult and the knock-on effect of that is if you don't gather you start getting parasites and you can't get in to treat your animals. It isn't just a case of they're there and they look nice, they've got to be looked after. But you can't get that through to them. Well, once they take them fences down they'll push the farmers out" (K. Kirk, personal communication, November 21, 2006).

However, there was also a sense that Wild Ennerdale and farming could co-exist. One farmer offers a pragmatic view as to striking a balance, which again focused on the importance of maintaining boundary fences:

> "I think that the two things [sheep farming and wilding] can run side by side, but they're going to have to make certain concessions to farming activity.… [From] our point of view as long as the boundary fence remains fairly sound it shouldn't necessarily affect us to a great extent in the near future" (J. Milburn, personal communication, November 14, 2006).

Another farmer suggests that if the boundary fences come down, there is still the possibility of reconciling the interests of farming and wilding if Wild Ennerdale pursues a more active policy towards removing the Sitka spruce, retaining (and actively planting) seminatural oak woodland and opened-up glades within the woodland:

> "Inside the forest … there's one or two real old oak woods up there, hundreds of years old. Now they're nice … that's natural, they want kept. And if they go back to that … get that spruce cleaned out, but don't let a lot grow in the woods, make it so's it's green underneath and then you can eat it with stock and it'd be like a parkland sort of … now that'll blend in with the valley" (J. Page, personal communication, November 10, 2006).

A debate with clear relevance for WE is whether wild areas should be left untrammelled or be manipulated toward a more "natural" state (Cole, 2001). There are difficulties associated with defining the concept of wilding (Alexander, 1996) and more specifically rewilding, which as Fenton (2004) indicates, risks falling into a "value trap." The WE use of "wild" denotes "a philosophical approach to managing the valley" (Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan, 2006, p. 12) encompassing two key areas: (1) the degree to which natural processes influence the environment (physical attributes), which might be broadly interpreted as leaving it to see what happens, and (2) the sense of

wildness that people experience/perceive (emotive reactions), or the social representation of wilderness. The wilding approach adopted by WE was perceived by several respondents as being unclear, with one farmer stating, "the planners are just taking a step back and saying we'll see which way it's going, 'cause they don't know exactly what's going to happen" (J. Page, personal communication, November 10, 2006). Others were suspicious about the motivations behind the establishment of WE. One study participant, for example, said, "I just hope that it isn't a way that people can step back from it and not live up to their responsibilities" (J. Page, personal communication, November 10, 2006). Another said, "I'm not sure how the Wild Ennerdale would attract people because I'm not sure anybody's visiting Ennerdale because it's got this new category… the valley hasn't actually changed" (R. Biggs, Personal Communication, November 18, 2006). Yet another said:

> "I would say that quite a lot of the driving force behind Wild Ennerdale is the fact that none of the timber up there is commercially viable and to me it seems like an awfully good way of not doing anything else, you know, not spending more money on it really. … It's quite a nice way of getting rid of a bit of a liability to be honest, just badge it as something else and walk away and leave it … they've just created this Wild Ennerdale, gone barging right into it" (J. Milburn, personal communication, November 14, 2006)

Farming respondents were particularly concerned about the perceived "mess" of the WE area, and how this might look in the future. The potential for conflict over landscape preferences, particularly between a wild/managed landscape, has been highlighted by Van den Berg and Koole (2006), who note that there are broadly two subpopulations with relatively extreme landscape preferences: environmentalists and farmers. Environmentalists have been found to display relatively strong preferences for wilderness settings as compared to more managed natural settings. By contrast, farmers have been found to display relatively strong aesthetic preferences for managed settings. Interviews with farming respondents in Ennerdale supported this position, as the following extracts indicate:

> "If you go up that valley now and you look at the topside of the fences on both sides that we have and we have sheep on, that's the nice bit that everybody looks at, down in the scrow [mess] that the forestry have, that's the bit that needs tidies up to encourage people to come if that's what they want to do. Like our bit's all right, they want to get up off their backsides, tidy the mess up" (K. Kirk, personal communication, November 21, 2006)

> "Tidy up the scrow that they've left behind now, which again is a complete contradiction, we were always told ourselves not to make any mess and the Forestry Commission just sort of left a nuclear landscape behind them when they'd finished" (J. Milburn, personal communication, November 14, 2006).

> "I think we should tidy up our mess of the last few years before we think about going forward. So yeah, I was slightly sceptical, I agree with the end aim but I think that maybe in the meantime there's other ideas before we get there" (J. Page, personal communication, November 10, 2006).

Respondents were asked about their current level of engagement with WE. Many of the respondents did not think there had been adequate communication. For example, one respondent stated, "They've kept us up to date with what they've decided but I don't feel they've necessarily open about

what they were planning to do at the start. … I didn't feel necessarily included in decisions" (R. Biggs, personal communication, November 18, 2006). In the focus group meeting, a tourism provider noted, "I'm amazed as a newcomer to the area—I've only been here since March—I seem to know a lot more about it than people who've been here all their lives!" Another farmer highlighted the need for deeper, farm-level engagement with the project, saying, "If they've got any ideas of what they're wanting to do they need to put the actual proposals in their entirety to each farmer and how it might link in their business, rather than just decide what they're doing, get one volunteer to do it." However, she also noted that WE had benefited the farming community: "It must be positive if at least one farming business has benefited considerably [through working with WE on a cattle-grazing initiative]. If it's increased the profitability of at least one farm in the valley that gives a better chance of that farm surviving in the future, so anything that does that has got to be positive really." Another respondent said there had been relatively good communication and said,

> "All the farmers in the valley were invited to an initial consultation where the idea was put forward. And from then it was taken forward, and as far as I'm aware, everyone was included or had the opportunity to be included; so we can't all say that we didn't know that it was happening" (J. Page, personal communication, November 10, 2006).

Although the Wild Ennerdale Stewardship Plan (2006) conceives of "a wild valley for the benefit of people" that "will sustain the livelihoods of local people," this vision is undermined by a sense of exclusion felt by some farmers who saw themselves as important stakeholders in the valley. One farmer, for example, noted bluntly, "It's between the Forestry Commission, National Park, United Utilities, and the National Trust, isn't it, and they're not involving [farmers]" (A. Whitefield, personal communication, November 08, 2006). There was consensus among respondents that WE should include what might be broadly termed the "farming cultural landscape" in their vision for the future of the valley. For example, one respondent stated, "I think that it would be really good if this Wild Ennerdale partnership actually included within the partnership the farming activities as well as just the wilderness activity, because it's all part of the whole picture, isn't it?" (J. Milburn, personal communication, November 14, 2006). But he also thought that WE presented opportunities for community development:

> "I think if I was going to see it developed for the benefit of the community it would be good if any sort of development involved the locals, … because too many of these things are actually developed by people from outside the area."

Höchtl et al. (2005) assert that decision makers should be aware of the positive and negative aspects of (re)wilding and that all stakeholders, especially those affecting local communities, should be included in any process that concerns the establishment of protected areas left to develop without human control. As a member of the Parish Council noted in the focus group meeting, "Any project in this valley has got to be hot-wired into what's going on in the valley, into the community. It has to celebrate it and sustain it, not cut across it."

3.3 The Cultural Landscape of Ennerdale

While livestock–farming relations may be socially constructed and dynamic, thus engendering particular sets of farming practices at particular times and places, they nevertheless form lifescapes of social, cultural, and economic

interactions between humans, livestock, and landscapes (what Gray [1998, p. 345] refers to as "consubstantiality"). The farmers interviewed for this project spoke of a deep sense of connection to the physical environment of the valley and a sense of being part of the evolving cultural landscape. Höchtl et al. (2005) highlight how the main impacts on inhabitants of change from rural landscape to wilderness are psychological and economic in nature. They describe how the wilding process can lead to a perceived loss of historical experience, cultural knowledge, and local identity. One Ennerdale farmer echoed these sentiments when he said he would be disappointed if the traditional farming activities came to an end:

> "You know I'll be disappointed, I'll be bloody annoyed actually if something [ended] the farming activities that in my case [has gone on for] for five generations, pretty much the same. I now wear Polartec and they used to wear woollen long-johns or summat, but you know the activities are just the same [and] the heritage side [of farming] is important to me" (J. Milburn, personal communication, November 14, 2006).

This link to heritage and cultural landscape was also emphasised by another study respondent, who noted,

> "Agriculture's been here for hundreds and hundreds of years; it's what makes it. I mean, we've been here in this valley about 128 years. How many years has agriculture been in the fells now? Before the National Park and the Wild Ennerdale initiative, that's for sure" (A. Whitefield, personal communication, November 08, 2006).

Another farmer noted simply, "I feel like they [WE] own it, but it's our heritage" (P. Jones, personal communication, November 13, 2006).

The role of farmers as interpreters of landscape has been highlighted by a number of projects in Cumbria (Burton, Mansfield, Schwarz, Brown, and Convery, 2005). Most recently, the Flora of the Fells project (Flora of the Fells, 2006) has involved farmer-led walks to "explore the biodiversity" of the Lake District National Park (indeed, one of the interview respondents had participated in this scheme). The Fells & Dales local action group of the European Union rural development project LEADER+ is also keen to explore the potential for this role in the future. A farmer interpretation role could therefore potentially offer opportunities for collaboration between the farming community and WE, and farmers were asked whether they would be interested in participating in such projects. One farmer noted that he already spent time informally discussing his job with the public: "They'll lean over wall and [say] 'good morning' and 'what are you doing?' and they're interested in what you're doing. You don't mind spending 10 minutes with people to do that if they're interested in what you're doing" (J. Page, personal communication, November 10, 2006). Another respondent agreed, saying, "I think they're, most of them, always interested when you're gathering sheep out of the fell; they'll want to talk to you" (R. Biggs, personal communication, November 18, 2006). Another remarked, "They want to come and see how we live. They want to see our way of life. They want to come and look and they ask you. … Sometimes you get nothing done for telling them!" (A. Bell, personal communication, November 21, 2006).

Convery and Dutson (2006) indicate how such conversations and insights were an enriching part of a visitors' experience of an area, but that the informal nature of such interactions was often important. The transition to a more formalised arrangement presents a number of obstacles, and while there was a

clear willingness expressed during most interviews for farmers to engage with visitors in this way, there were also concerns expressed regarding time demands and perceived health and safety problems:

> "I think some farmers would need some help with the regulations and the health and safety [related to farm visits as a small commercial enterprise]…I know that people are being driven out in minibuses round various parts of the Lake District for a day trip and … if there was something set up to specifically to come and visit Ennerdale they could pop into a farm and have a look round on their way, but … you'd have to tie that in with what you were doing. … It would depend what money was involved as to whether it was worth your while taking people round. And the other thing is I think you've got to be careful not to [bring] too many people in or you detract from what you're doing" (J. Milburn, personal communication, November 14, 2006).

> "[With] the new higher-level stewardship schemes [European Union Agri-environment Scheme] you get points for having visitors on the farm…if you have groups visit your farm within a year it enhances your plan. [Farm visits could be useful] if you needed to have an extra input for your higher-level scheme" (J. Page, personal communication, November 10, 2006).

> "One thing that comes through again and again is that farmers' time isn't valued. Partly because I don't think farmers value the time enough themselves because they work such long hours, but I think if farmers charged the rate that other people charge for their time people would get a shock. … It would be easier if the farmer had a contract with somebody to say, right, we will visit your farm so many days a year for this length of time and you will do this and we will pay you this for it … [but] I think farmers want people to be more involved about what they do, then you get more empathy for what your situation is and what you're trying to do. The more you can inform people the better" (R. Biggs, personal communication, November 18, 2006).

The attitude of the farming respondents toward a future interpretation role is neatly summed up by one farmer, who said that although when he was farming, his goal was farming, it would still be possible to get involved in tourist activities (J. Page, personal communication, November 10, 2006). He suggested:

> "You could certainly do a walk a month, something like that, or a couple of walks a month. And it's surprising how many people that came in March would probably come again in summer or the back end to see what's changing. To see the seasons change, because it is a beautiful valley with all the different colours of the different trees and everything."

Finally, he noted there may be more tourism-related activity on his farm in the future, stating, "You'll have to watch this space, but there could be some biggish changes in the next 5 to 10 years."

4.0 Discussion

The evidence from this case study suggests that the social consequences of a policy to create wild land require careful consideration. In a worst-case scenario, MacDonald et al. (2000) argue that such policies risk creating a continuing cycle of increasing rural depopulation, deprivation, further land

abandonment, and loss of traditional land management skills. To counter such problems, Höchtl et al. (2005) and Kirby (2003) recommend a wide-ranging consultation process among stakeholders regarding the establishment of wild areas. Matouch et al. (2006) write:

> A participatory approach is of particular significance in upland areas in Europe where there tends to be an intimate association between communities and the areas in which they live … [and which support] their livelihoods—either directly through agriculture and forestry or indirectly through upland tourism. Any project initiative which does not fully consider the aspirations, welfare and economic activity of upland communities has little chance of success. (p. 5)

There is evidence from this study that WE has not fully considered the sensibilities and complex livelihoods of the farming community, and as a consequence, a group of significant stakeholders feels alienated from the project.

5.0 Conclusions

While many aspects of the natural economy of Ennerdale have been subject to research and investigation, there is a need to deepen understanding of the nature of enterprises linked with this valley and in particular to consider how best to develop a model of management that is in harmony with the special qualities of the valley and the aspirations of those who live in and depend upon it. The farming lifescape of Ennerdale represents complex interrelationships among people, place, and production. The research detailed in this paper reveals a wide and interrelated set of themes and issues that include cultural landscape, social capital, and farming and landscape lineages. Ennerdale Valley has a long history of management; some members of the farming community have ties to the land spanning several generations. In contrast, the extensive conifer plantations are relatively recent yet form the starting point for the WE initiative. WE has developed to such a stage that the partnership must fully consider its future role and impacts. In particular, the partnership should embrace wider participation of the various communities of Ennerdale and a much greater appreciation of the role farmers have played, and continue to play, in shaping the cultural landscape of the valley. The role of farmers as interpreters of landscape could provide a vehicle for future collaboration between the farming community and WE.

6.0 References

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