



Environment & Community

Sustainable Catchment Management Programme

Environmental regeneration is a key priority for us. From 2005 to 2010, United Utilities and the RSPB are working together to deliver the Sustainable Catchment Management Programme (SCaMP), a ground-breaking project that will benefit water and wildlife.

The 58,000 hectares of land we own is the gathering grounds for the reservoirs which help supply more than 7 million people with their daily water needs. It is also home to some of the UK's most amazing wildlife, including the hen harrier, the curlew and the stonechat. The primary reason we hold the land is to protect raw water quality. Most of our water comes from upland surface sources, so innovative land management can help us protect and improve the quality of raw water and biodiversity.

This £10m programme is a good example of an effective partnership approach. It has involved both private (UU) and public money, through grant support which has helped both tenant farmers and United Utilities to make catchment conditions much better.

How does it work?

Much of our land is home to nationally significant habitats for animals and plants, with around 30% designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

SCaMP aims to apply an integrated approach to catchment management in two key areas of United Utilities land, Bowland and the Peak District area. We're working with farmers and land managers, regulators, local authorities and decision makers, with Government and other conservation organisations to influence how water catchment areas are managed and properly funded. The work is extremely varied, but cumulatively there's a significant carbon offset in addition to the primary benefits to raw water quality.

Here's what we've been doing:

- Restoring blanket bogs by blocking drainage ditches - rewetting to help vegetation and water quality
- Reinstating areas of eroded and exposed peat - reducing peat loss and establishing vegetation
- Restoring hay meadows and heather moorland, and establishing clough woodland - all valuable habitats that will improve raw water quality
- Providing new farm buildings for indoor wintering of livestock and for lambing (removes high risk activities), and building fences to keep livestock away from areas such as rivers and streams and from special habitats. All this reduces the risk to raw water quality.

Who's behind it?



Martin McGrath is our Sustainable Catchment programme manager, but this project is really about collaboration and partnership between UU Estate teams in Bowland and the Peak District, RSPB, our regulators and our tenant farmers.

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