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Our Ref. MA/NE/01/12

Long Standing Unique Norfolk Area of Natural Beauty at Risk

Dear Sir

I would like to bring to your attention the fact that the Winterton Valley an established Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) for the last century and Natural England Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as part of the Winterton – Horsey Dunes is now at risk of total loss to future generations due to the recent significant erosion of its last remaining marram grass sand dune sea defence from Hemsby to Winterton Ness.

The high Spring tides and storm winds during October this year have twice caused significant losses to this remaining sand dune sea defence, dune top falls and also significant loss of beach sand between the Hemsby (beach access) gap and Winterton.

The NE storm on 26/27-10-2012 was the worst with up to four meters of marram grass and sand mass loss along the seaward side of the dune protecting the Winterton valley, its only defence; this was in addition to the sand dune erosion losses earlier this month in this location. – see picture. During these recent storms the Winterton valley dune was the most eroded local location. Consequently there is now a very real risk that the Winterton valley, an SSSI and AONB will be lost to the sea this winter.

MARINET are campaigning to save this local ANOB which gives recreational enjoyment to many and would like to put the suggestion to Natural England that they should fund sea defences for this unique SSSI area, particularly as we note that your official stated aim is: “Put simply, our aim is to create a better natural environment that covers all of our urban, country and coastal landscapes, along with all of the animals, plants and other organisms that live with us.” And you could not get a more long standing and unique area of natural flora & fauna than the Winterton valley.

We feel that this would be a very worth while project for Natural England to undertake which could not be more completely in line with your aims and objectives.

Yours sincerely - For and on behalf of MARINET

Mike King

