

# RSPB response to Environment Agency's position on the North Marsh

May I just take this opportunity to clarify that north marsh is completely separate from the RSPB Scrape. The north marsh area is the reedbed which lies between Dunwich National Trust car park and the bank that we refer to as north wall and EA refer to as the Coney Hill cross bank. This bank supports the path that runs from the VC to the sea and should be sufficient to protect the Scrape which lies to the south, particularly if the EA agree to strengthen it as part of the proposed works.

In terms of clarifying RSPB's position, we believe that important designated habitats for wildlife, such as north marsh, should be maintained *in situ* where it is feasible to do so. However, where this is no longer possible we believe the appropriate agencies (in this case EA) should, provide compensatory habitat for the loss or damage to any conservation features that can be anticipated by the change resulting, as required under EU and UK wildlife legislation. We are of the opinion that the protection of north marsh beyond the twenty year time scale is probably unsustainable on current climate models and therefore believe that compensatory freshwater reedbed should be provided within 20 years. We believe the protection of the remainder of the site is sustainable in the foreseeable future and therefore anticipate the EA project will continue providing protection for the rest of Minsmere, including the Scrape and the Minsmere levels.

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