

Plan would set aside Calif wild shrew habitat

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BAKERSFIELD, Calif.—A tiny mole with a snout that looks like an anteater's would have some of its habitat protected under a new federal proposal that resulted from a legal settlement.

The Buena Vista Lake Shrew thrived in the Tulare Lake Basin in the San Joaquin Valley before it was drained early last century to make way for agriculture. The shrew has lost 95 percent of its historical habitat.

Under the proposal announced Tuesday, the furry animal would have 4,649 acres of critical habitat set aside.

An earlier proposal challenged by the Center for Biological Diversity set aside 84 acres.

A 60-day comment period is currently under way with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.