

PENNSYLVANIA IMPORTANT MAMMAL AREA #23
East Berlin Shrew Site

COUNTY(IES) York

APPROX. SIZE 356 acres

OWNERSHIP Private

REASON FOR SELECTION

- Sustains a confirmed viable local population of a Species of Greatest Conservation Need and the species or subspecies regularly occurs at the site during one or more seasons

DESCRIPTION

The site is a rolling field bordered by roads. Although primarily planted in hay and soy beans, the crop strips are rotated on an annual basis and do not occupy the same part of the site indefinitely. Several other grassland-type fields surround the site but it is unknown at this time whether the least shrew occupies these fields.

MAMMAL NOTES

This population of least shrews is one of only five populations now known to occur in Pennsylvania. Because population densities of this species remain low during much of the year, sampling at inappropriate times may result in failure to document its presence. However, due to loss of grassland-type habitats, it is probable that this species has disappeared throughout much of Pennsylvania. Co-occurring species include the prairie deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus bairdii*), another grassland inhabitant that seems to have disappeared from much of the state.

CONSERVATION NOTES

At present there are no conservation plans for this site. The owner has developed some of the surrounding habitat and future development remains a risk. However, there is currently no plan that would disturb the actual site of least shrew occurrence because the nitrogen content of the soil remains fairly high due to agricultural practices. There is a pressing need to develop a conservation plan that would alleviate threats to this critical habitat.