

Howland Island

(territory of the US)

Geography

Location: Oceania, island in the North Pacific Ocean, about one-half of the way from Hawaii to Australia

Area:

total area: 1.6 sq km

land area: 1.6 sq km

comparative area: about 2.7 times the size of The Mall in Washington, DC

Land boundaries: 0 km

Coastline: 6.4 km

Maritime claims:

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: equatorial; scant rainfall, constant wind, burning sun

Terrain: low-lying, nearly level, sandy, coral island surrounded by a narrow fringing reef; depressed central area

Natural resources: guano (deposits worked until late 1800s)

Land use:

arable land: 0%

permanent crops: 0%

meadows and pastures: 0%

forest and woodland: 5%

other: 95%

Irrigated land: 0 sq km

Environment:

current issues: no natural fresh water resources

natural hazards: the narrow fringing reef surrounding the island can be a maritime hazard

Note: almost totally covered with grasses, prostrate vines, and low-growing shrubs; small area of trees in the center; primarily a

nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat for seabirds, shorebirds, and marine wildlife; feral cats

People

Population: uninhabited; note - American civilians evacuated in 1942 after Japanese air and naval attacks during World War II; occupied by US military during World War II, but abandoned after the war; public entry is by special-use permit only and generally restricted to scientists and educators

Government

Names:

conventional long form: none

conventional short form: Howland Island

Type: unincorporated territory of the US administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service of the US Department of the Interior as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System

Capital: none; administered from Washington, DC

Economy

Overview: no economic activity

Transportation

Ports: none; offshore anchorage only; note - there is one boat landing area along the middle of the west coast

Airports: airstrip constructed in 1937 for scheduled refueling stop on the round-the-world flight of Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan - they

left Lae, New Guinea, for Howland Island, but were never seen again; the airstrip is no longer serviceable

Defence Forces

Note: defence is the responsibility of the US; visited annually by the US Coast Guard