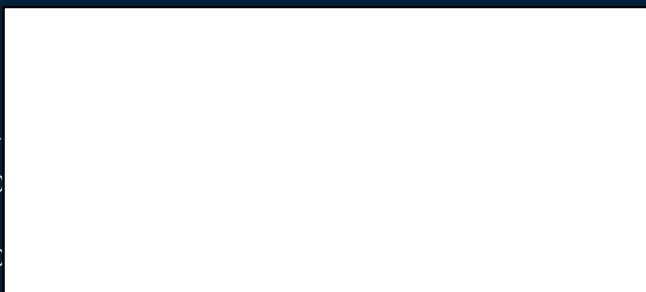


Author
Brand

Contact



Over the past few decades, scholars, practitioners, and activists have expanded the concept of security beyond strict nation-state and military definitions. Concurrent to these conceptual developments, the Arctic has become a distinct region of study, with its own environmental, cultural, political, and economic identity. In this paper, we apply a holistic interpretation of security to Alaska's evolving Arctic space. Theoretical concepts of securitization and human security inform a novel matrix of various levels and types of security. Levels range from the local and communal to the international, while types include physical, military, economic, environmental, and cultural security. The matrix serves as a tool to differentiate and synthesize security in a variety of contexts, notably in Alaska's Arctic. To illustrate the

The present security context of diverse Arctic communities has been challenged in recent years by a range of interrelated environmental, cultural, political, and economic changes. The consumption of fossil fuels, emission of greenhouse gases, resultant warming temperatures, and natural resource development confront the Arctic as a region. Shifting seasonality and other



What does a holistic security environment in Arctic Alaska look like across scales and types? We address this question in three ways. First, we briefly summarize the existing literature on human security and securitization and differentiate these concepts from traditional understandings of security that focus on the nation-state and military. Additionally, we describe how these conceptual changes might inform debates related to the Alaska security environment. Second, we develop and present a novel security matrix that offers a snapshot of the multi-scaled and diverse security challenges presently confronting northern Alaska as a region. Finally, we present a case study of the deepwater port project planned for Nome in western Alaska to anchor the discussion of multiple security dimensions in Arctic Alaska. Although Nome is not above the Arctic Circle, the expanded port would serve as a stopping point to and from the Arctic. Given that the Arctic has multiple definitions, Alaska's northwestern coasts and the Bering Strait still fall within the Arctic region (see Figure 2).³



Figure 2. This map illustrates how the Bering Strait, and its communities, are within the Arctic social-environmental system. Arctic boundaries have been defined in alternative ways. For example, the Arctic Council's Emergency Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (EPPR) Working Group includes the Bering Sea and most of coastal Alaska, including Nome, whose expanded port infrastructure would be a key asset serving all of the Arctic region. Source: www.arcticportal.org.

For more than a decade, various local, state, and national actors have been interested in developing coastal infrastructure around Alaska's Arctic to facilitate the resupply of coastal communities, improve homeland and national security, and support Arctic shipping and cruise ship tourism. After a long process, in June 2020, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approved a \$618 million plan to expand Nome's port; the project now awaits Congressional funding. Our aim in analyzing this case is to unpack the potential implications for the different dimensions and scales of security (local, regional, national, and international) described in the matrix and the relationships among them. We also explore various security challenges mitigated by the development of the port, while considering new security threats that the expansion project might create.

This section summarizes the main contributions of the securitization and human security literature for the purposes of framing our discussions of both the security matrix and the Nome port case study. Below, we (a) provide a brief timeline of the evolution of the human security agenda and describe how human security departs from traditional conceptualizations of security in international relations, (b) illustrate some of the tensions inherent in the shift to human security, between different dimensions of human security, and between analytic and pragmatic applications of the concept, and (c) discuss the idea of securitization as an analytic tool to understand why some political issues become security concerns and others do not, and what the implications of securitization processes are.

Since the 1980s, a coalition of advocacy groups, practitioners, and researchers have advanced the idea of "human security" to widen and challenge established state-centric definitions of security that focused primarily on military threats to the state. This changing understanding of security was first codified by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report in 1994. The report criticized earlier narrow definitions of security and proposed a broadening of existing definitions to include chronic economic, environmental, and health threats to individuals and the significance of potential short-term disruptions to daily life from these issues.⁴ The report includes a number of broader

groups resisting power in different ways and in different contexts as part of a global emancipatory movement.⁶ In this sense, the movement away from traditional understandings of security towards human security demands a “‘democratization’ of security ... and attention to be paid to what communities themselves value in contexts under examination.”⁷ However, from a policy perspective, where national actors have access to a finite amount of resources, working from a definition of security without clear bounds inhibits effective policy development that addresses security threats.⁸

To narrow the scope of the definition of human security, Paris suggests that all efforts to move the security agenda to include more than state-centric security concerns broaden and deepen the original concept. “Broadening” refers to an expansion of issues considered to be security threats that could relate to economic security (e.g., employment and access to livelihoods, sectoral development, state spending), environmental security (e.g., climate change, coastal erosion, environmental degradation, collective action problems related to common pool resources and natural disasters), and cultural security (e.g., preservation of Indigenous languages, migration and community integration), among others.⁹ The challenge for policy makers is that these multiple dimensions of human security are often at odds with each other, as competing political actors in the same contextual environment often emphasize some dimensions of security over others, usually for political or personal purposes. Nicol and Heininen illustrate these tensions stemming from rising geopolitical competition in the Arctic and show how “there is little public discussion of how (resulting) military initiatives affect funding and programmes in other areas of the Arctic which might have social, health and educational impacts.”¹⁰ We highlight similar sorts of tensions between different dimensions of security through the case of the Nome port below. Any infrastructure or other project in the Arctic must be attuned not only to nation- and military-centric types of security but also to the entire security environment to avoid undermining communities and peoples it is meant to serve.

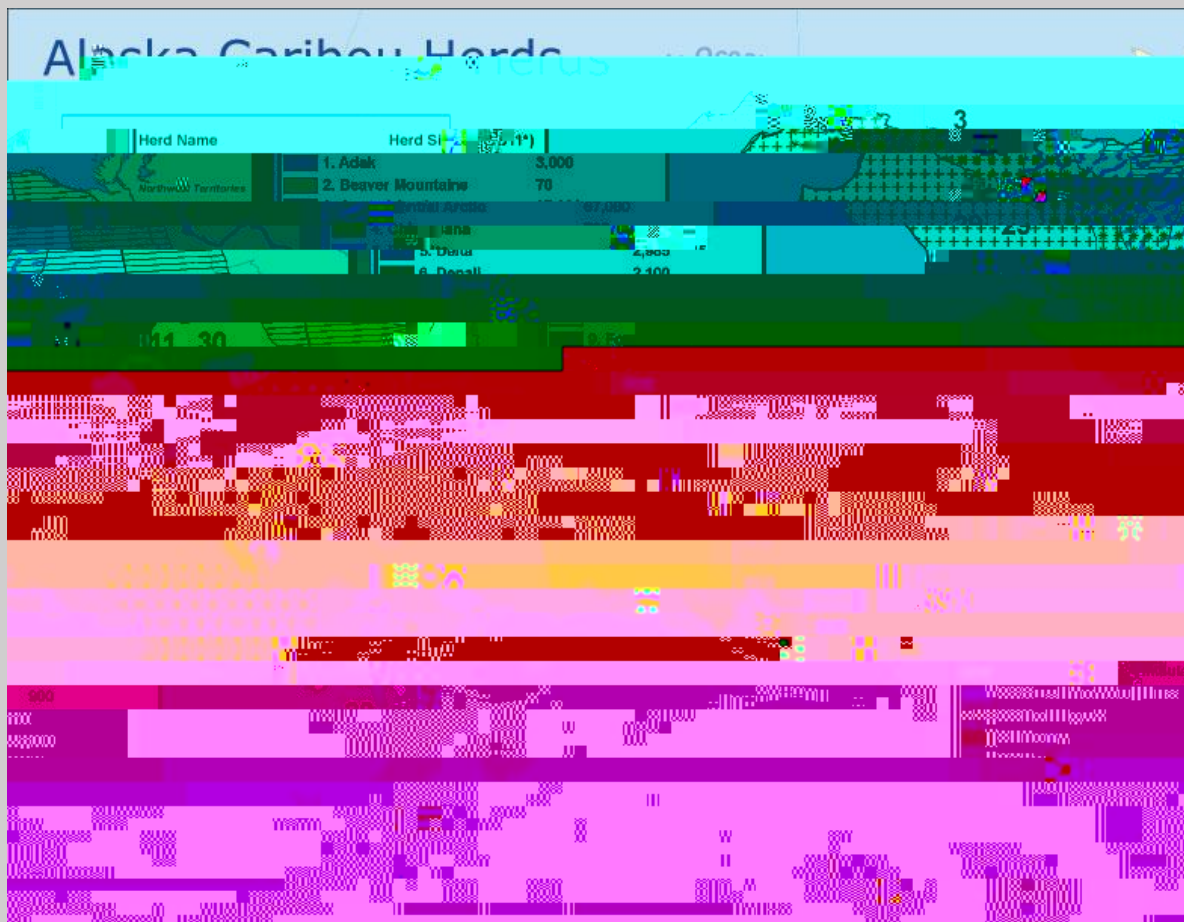


Figure 3. This Alaska Department of Fish and Game map illustrates the ranges of the 32 herds of caribou in Alaska and shows the transboundary nature of the four easternmost herds, most notably, the Porcupine herd (number 21), Alaska's second largest caribou herd. Source: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=caribou.main>

In combination, broadening and deepening security as a concept is to examine issues beyond military security or security from political violence and examine them from the perspective of analytical scales beyond the nation-state.¹³ In considering security threats beyond exclusively the threat of violence, human security perspectives refocus analytical attention towards positive rather than negative dimensions of security. Positive aspects of security highlight how individual and community security stem from day-to-day access to a variety of material, social, and cultural resources, while negative aspects of security emphasize freedom from threats, typically violence (see Table 1).¹⁴

	Access "to"	Freedom "from"
	Material resources (e.g., food, shelter) Social resources (e.g., education, healthcare) Cultural resources (e.g., language, subsistence practices, religious practices)	Threats (e.g., bodily harm, illness, environmental hazards, discrimination)

While the human security agenda has sought to break International Relations scholarship out of its "Westphalian straightjacket"¹⁵ - that is, the privileged analytical attention

have significant security implications for the migrant populations who are the target of them. Because securitization often militarizes solutions to policy problems, it implies that the state should function as the institution that responds to security threats. As Greaves writes, "the national security discourse centred on a credible military threat limits the conceptual and policy space available for alternative, non-state conceptions of in(security)."¹⁹ In some cases, the human security of migrants can be undermined by the militarized security responses at the border. Securitization can thus lead to heightened security for one group (e.g., national security for the United States) but decreased security for another group (e.g., human security for migrants).

Whether or not specific policy issues become securitized depends not only on the choices made by political actors to employ a security discourse but also on the extent to which security "speech acts" (orations meant to move an issue from the non-security to security realm to justify security, often military, responses) are accepted and legitimized by others. Greaves has shown how different Indigenous communities in the Arctic have varied in using a security discourse as part of a strategy for addressing potential threats.²⁰ While the Inuit in

Physical ailments;

In this section, we illustrate the multiple dimensions (scales and types) of security from the above matrix in the context of a developing infrastructure project in Alaska's Arctic: the proposed expansion of Nome's port. This anchors the various dimensions of security in a real-world case and explore various security challenges potentially mitigated by the development of the port and new security threats that the expansion project might create.

Intra-regional, destination, and trans-Arctic (especially Northern Sea Route and Northwest Passage) shipping is on the rise.²⁴ Increasing traffic is impacting the Bering Strait.

conference.³⁴ Another conference followed in Anchorage in May 2011, the aim of which was to

Interested actors remained undeterred. The Alaska Congressional delegation pushed to add language to the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act and the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) (both 2016) that spotlights the importance of the



Figure 7. Draft of port expansion. Source: US Army Corps of Engineers, <https://www.poa.usace.army.mil/Portals/34/docs/civilworks/publicreview/portofnome/FinalNomeIFREA29May2020signed.pdf?ver=2020-06-02-192545-533>.

However, more vessel traffic and larger ships in the region (see Figure 8)⁴² could affect food security and maritime subsistence activities, like fishing and whaling, in a number of ways. First, more vessels and larger ships might change the behavior and migratory patterns of marine animals in the region. Nome and other communities may or may not be able to adapt to these changing patterns. Second, more and larger vessels might increase the number of strikes on subsistence maritime animals, thus jeopardizing the continuance of their presence in the area.

Thus, while the expanded port might remedy challenges at the individual / communal level in some ways (e.g., larger and more frequent resupply efforts), it could also jeopardize subsistence activities in the community. At the local scale it also raises questions of "substitute goods." Relying on store-bought food may seem like a caloric substitute for subsistence foods, but in fact this food is not interchangeable both in terms of nutrition and of enculturation and traditional Alaska Native stewardship. A bridge between physical and economic security is that development of the region, in particular if it is large-scale and extractive or military, poses threats to women in particular. "Man

security system with more and larger vessels docking at the port. Additionally, if homeland security actors arrive in Nome, they would likely need to partner with local community members to ensure that traditional, cultural, and daily practices are not jeopardized.

International Level and Environmental Security

An expanded port, and the traffic that it would attract, would have implications for international environmental security, without clear designations on which actors would be responsible for the environment and ecosystems of the Bering Strait and beyond. More traffic in the Bering Strait will cause an increase in the emissions of climate-warming carbon dioxide and black soot.⁴⁹ Additionally, increasing traffic and inadequate regulations are leading to elevated levels of trash, sewage, grey water, and oily discharges into the ecosystem.⁵⁰ Between these types of pollution, concerns are mounting over traffic-related accidents and fuel spills. These accidents, coupled with the formidable environment in which these potential spills might occur, challenge clean-up and search-and-rescue (SAR) operations. As a result, transnational communities in the region, the Seward Peninsula and western Alaska, and eastern Siberia would be impacted.

Although the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has adopted the United States and Russia's joint proposal for a sequence of vessel routes that are free of hazardous sea conditions as well as precautionary areas in the Bering Sea and Strait,⁵¹ other global and regional environmental efforts are currently limited. The Paris Agreement is young, and

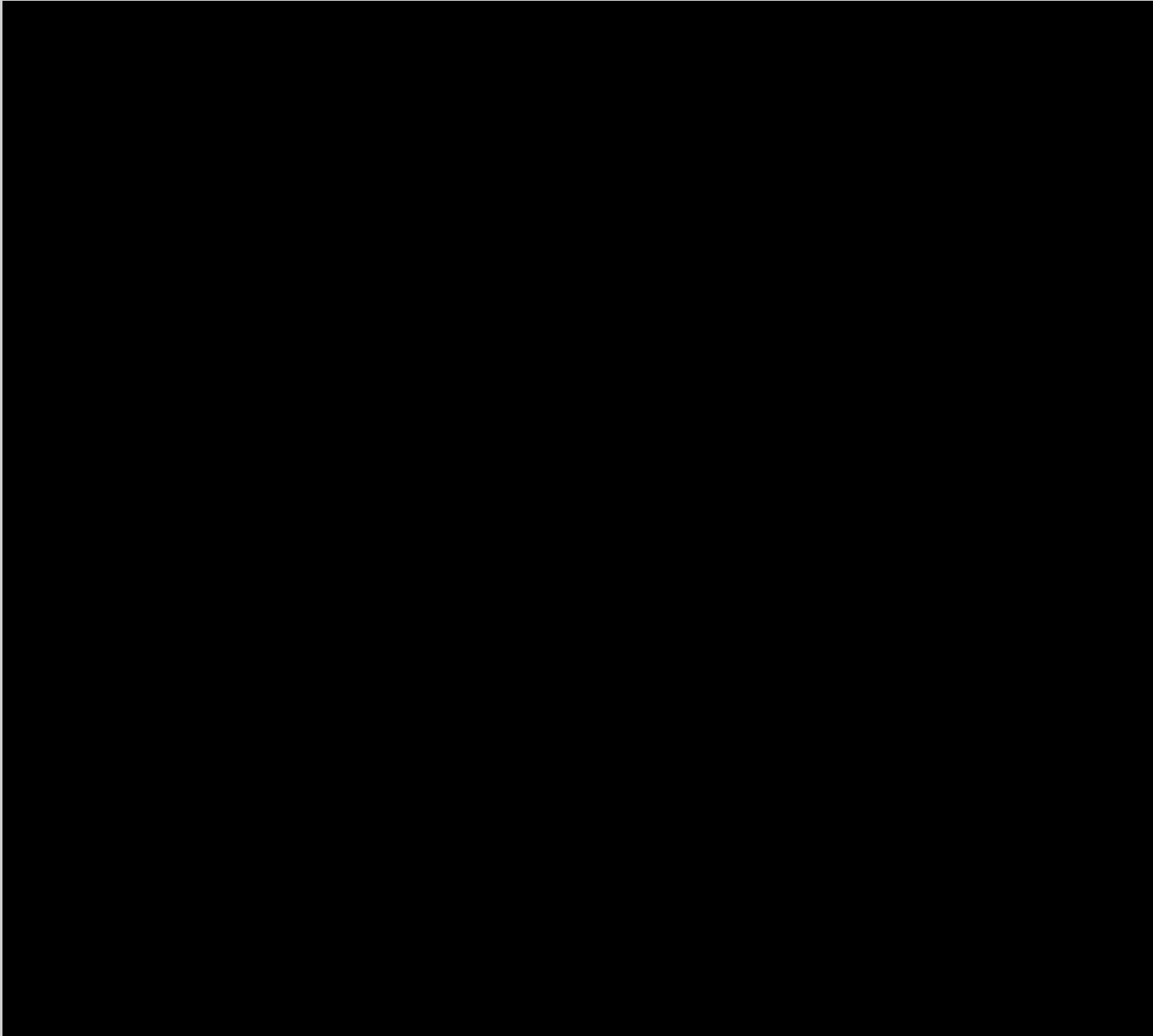


Figure 9. Nome's Expanded Port Project: Examples of Scales and Types of Security

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