

Source Water Assessment

A Hydrogeologic Susceptibility and
Vulnerability Assessment for
Willow Tree Inn
Drinking Water System,
Dillingham, Alaska

PWSID # 263030.001

March 2004

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT 1220
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

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The Drinking Water Protection Program (DWPP) is producing Source Water Assessments in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996. Each assessment includes a delineation of the source water area, an inventory of potential and existing contaminant sources that may impact the water, a risk ranking for each of these contaminants, and an evaluation of the potential vulnerability of these drinking water sources.

These assessments are intended to provide public water systems owners/operators, communities, and local governments with the best available information that may be used to protect the quality of their drinking water. The assessments combine information obtained from various sources, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), public water system owners/operators, and other public information sources. The results of this assessment are subject to change if additional data becomes available. It is anticipated this assessment will be updated every five years to reflect any changes in the vulnerability and/or susceptibility of public drinking water source. If you have any additional information that may affect the results of this assessment, please contact the Program Coordinator of DWPP, (907) 269-7521.

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Source Water Assessment for Willow Tree Inn Source of Public Drinking Water, Dillingham, Alaska

Drinking Water Protection Program Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Willow Tree Inn has one Public Water System (PWS) well. The well (PWSID# 263030.001) has been used as a drinking water source since it was drilled in 1994.

The well is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system located near the Nushagak River, off of Wood River Road in Dillingham, Alaska. Available records indicate that there is no secondary storage of drinking water, other than an 80-gallon pressure tank, and that the untreated drinking water source is derived directly from the wellhead. This system operates year round and serves approximately 25 non-residents through one service connection. The wellhead received a susceptibility rating of **Very High** and the aquifer received a susceptibility rating of **Very High**. Combining these two ratings produce a **Very High** rating for the natural susceptibility of the well. Identified potential and current sources of contaminants for the primary public drinking water source include: injection wells, roads, domestic wastewater collections systems, residential areas, aboveground fuel tanks, water supply wells, and an airport. These identified potential and existing sources of contamination are considered as sources of bacteria and viruses, nitrates and/or nitrites, and volatile organic chemicals. Overall, the water well received a vulnerability rating of **Very High** for the bacteria and viruses, a vulnerability rating of **Very High** for nitrates and nitrites, and a vulnerability rating of **Very High** for volatile organic chemicals contaminant categories.

WILLOW TREE INN PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SYSTEM

The Willow Tree Inn well is a Class B (transient/non-community) public water system located off of Wood River Road in Dillingham, Alaska (Sec. 21, T13S, R55W, Seward Meridian; see Map A of Appendix A). Dillingham is located at the extreme northern end of Nushagak Bay in northern Bristol Bay, at the confluence of the Wood and Nushagak Rivers. The city is located 327 miles southwest of Anchorage and

175 miles southeast of Bethel. The community has a population of 2,475 (ADCED, 2003). Average annual precipitation in Dillingham is 26 inches, including approximately 65 inches of snowfall. Temperatures range from 37 to 66°F in summer and 4 to 30°F in winter.

The community of Dillingham obtains most of their water supply from three City wells. Approximately 60% of the community uses individual wells. The core town-site is served by a piped sewage collection system and the remaining households have individual septic tanks (ADCED, 2003). Dillingham receives electrical power from Nushagak Electric. Power generating facilities are fueled by diesel. Refuse is collected by Dillingham Refuse, Inc., a private firm, and transported to the landfill (ADCED, 2003).

According to information supplied by ADEC for an adjacent proxy well, the depth of the primary water well is approximately 49 feet below the ground surface. Based on available construction details for the adjacent proxy well, it is assumed the well is in an unconfined aquifer. Unconfined aquifers are more susceptible to groundwater impacts resulting from the downward migration of surface contaminants. The well is not located within a floodplain.

Information acquired from a March 1999 sanitary survey for the public water system indicated that the land surface was not sloped away from the well. Generally, land surfaces that slope away from the wellhead promote surface water drainage, which reduces potential of contaminant migration down the well casing annulus. Based on the well construction date, it is assumed the well is grouted according to ADEC regulations. Proper grouting provides added protection against contaminants traveling along the well casing annulus and into source waters.

The entire Bristol Bay area was formerly covered by glaciers and the topography is representative of a postglacial area. Soils information is limited. Generally, the soils consist of silty sand overlying relatively clean sand. The silty soils are slightly frost-susceptible. Isolated pockets of permafrost are scattered throughout the area (DOWL, 1982).

WILLOW TREE INN DRINKING WATER PROTECTION AREA

In order to evaluate whether a drinking water source is at risk, we must first evaluate what are the most likely pathways for surface contamination to reach the groundwater. These areas are determined by looking at the characteristics of the soil, groundwater, aquifer, and well.

The most probable area for contamination to reach the drinking water well is the area that contributes water to the well, the groundwater recharge area. This area is designated as the drinking water protection area (DWPA). Because releases of contaminants within the protection area are most likely to impact the drinking water well, this area will serve as the focus for voluntary protection efforts. An analytical calculation was used to determine the size and shape of the DWPA for the Willow Tree Inn PWS. The input parameters describing the attributes of the aquifer in this calculation were adopted from Groundwater (Freeze and Cherry, 1979). Available geology and groundwater contours were also considered to take into account any uncertainties in groundwater flow and aquifer characteristics to arrive at a meaningful protection area.

The protection areas established for wells by the ADEC are usually separated into four zones, limited by the watershed. These zones correspond to differences in the time-of-travel (TOT) of the water moving through the aquifer to the well (Please refer to the Guidance Manual for Class B Public Water Systems for additional information).

The time of travel for contaminants within the water varies and is dependent on the physical and chemical characteristics of each contaminant. The following is a summary of the four protection area zones for wells and the calculated time-of-travel for each:

Table 1. Definition of Zones

Zone	Definition
A	¼ the distance for the 2-yr. time-of-travel
B	Less than the 2 year time-of-travel
C	Less Than the 5 year time-of-travel
D	Less than the 10 year time-of-travel

The DWPA for the Willow Tree Inn PWS was determined using an analytical calculation and includes Zones A, B, C and D (See Map A of Appendix A).

INVENTORY OF POTENTIAL AND EXISTING CONTAMINANT SOURCES

The Drinking Water Protection Program has completed an inventory of potential and existing sources of contamination within the Willow Tree Inn DWPA. This inventory was completed through a search of agency records and other publicly available information. Potential sources of contamination to the drinking water aquifer include a wide range of categories and types. Potential drinking water contaminants are found within agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial areas, but can also occur within areas that have little or no development.

For the basis of all Class B public water system assessments, three categories of drinking water contaminants were inventoried. They include:

- Bacteria and viruses,
- Nitrates and/or nitrites,
- Volatile organic chemicals.

The sources are displayed on Map C of Appendix C and summarized in Table 1 of Appendix B.

RANKING OF CONTAMINANT RISKS

Once the potential and existing sources of contamination have been identified, they are assigned a ranking according to what type and level of risk they represent. Ranking of contaminant risks for a “potential” or “existing” source of contamination is a function of toxicity and volumes of specific contaminants associated with that source. Rankings include:

- Low,
- Medium,
- High, and
- Very High.

The time-of-travel for contaminants within the water varies and is dependent on the physical and chemical characteristics of each contaminant. Bacteria and Viruses are only inventoried in Zones A and B because of their short life span. Only “Very High” and “High” rankings are inventoried within the outer Zone D due to the probability of contaminant dilution by the time the contaminants get to the well. Tables 2 through 4 in Appendix B contain the ranking of potential and existing sources of contamination with respect to bacteria and viruses, nitrates and/or nitrites, and volatile organic chemicals.

VULNERABILITY OF THE WILLOW TREE INN DRINKING WATER SYSTEM

Vulnerability of a drinking water source to contamination is a combination of two factors:

- Natural susceptibility, and
- Contaminant risks.

Appendix D contains eight charts, which together form the ‘Vulnerability Analysis’ for a source water assessment for a public drinking water source. Chart 1 analyzes the ‘Susceptibility of the Wellhead’ to contamination by looking at the construction of the well and its surrounding area. Chart 2 analyzes the ‘Susceptibility of the Aquifer’ to contamination by looking at the naturally occurring attributes of the water source and influences on the groundwater system that might lead to contamination. Chart 3 analyzes ‘Contaminant Risks’ for the drinking water source with respect to bacteria and viruses. The ‘Contaminant Risks’ portion of the analysis considers potential sources of contaminants as well as a review of contamination that has or may have occurred, but has not arrived or been detected at the well. Lastly, Chart 4 contains the ‘Vulnerability Analysis for Bacteria and Viruses’. Charts 5 through 8 contain the Contaminant Risks and Vulnerability Analyses for nitrates and nitrites and volatile organic chemicals, respectively.

A score for the Natural Susceptibility is reached by considering the properties of the well and the aquifer.

Susceptibility of the Wellhead (0 – 25 Points)
(Chart 1 of Appendix D)

+

Susceptibility of the Aquifer (0 – 25 Points)
(Chart 2 of Appendix D)

=

Natural Susceptibility (Susceptibility of the Well)
(0 – 50 Points)

A ranking is assigned for the Natural Susceptibility according to the point score:

Natural Susceptibility Ratings	
40 to 50 pts	Very High
30 to < 40 pts	High
20 to < 30 pts	Medium
< 20 pts	Low

The Willow Tree Inn’s water well is in an unconfined aquifer. Unconfined aquifers are more susceptible to potential groundwater quality impacts posed by the migration of surface water contaminants downward from the surface. Table 2 shows the susceptibility scores and ratings for this PWS.

Table 2. Susceptibility

	Score	Rating
Susceptibility of the Wellhead	20	Very High
Susceptibility of the Aquifer	25	Very High
Natural Susceptibility	45	Very High

Contaminant risks to a drinking water source depend on the type, number or density, and distribution of contaminant sources. This score has been derived from an examination of existing and historical contamination that has been detected at the drinking water source through routine sampling. It also evaluates potential sources of contamination. Flow charts are used to assign a point score, and ratings are assigned in the same way as for the natural susceptibility:

Contaminant Risk Ratings	
40 to 50 pts	Very High
30 to < 40 pts	High
20 to < 30 pts	Medium
< 20 pts	Low

Table 3 summarizes the Contaminant Risks for each category of drinking water contaminants.

Table 3. Contaminant Risks

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	40	Very High
Nitrates and/or Nitrites	45	Very High
Volatile Organic Chemicals	45	Very High

Finally, an overall vulnerability score is assigned for each water system by combining each of the contaminant risk scores with the natural susceptibility score:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{Natural Susceptibility (0 – 50 points)} \\
 + \\
 \text{Contaminant Risks (0 – 50 points)} \\
 = \\
 \text{Vulnerability of the} \\
 \text{Drinking Water Source to Contamination (0 – 100).}
 \end{array}$$

Again, rankings are assigned according to a point score:

Overall Vulnerability Ratings	
80 to 100 pts	Very High
60 to < 80 pts	High
40 to < 60 pts	Medium
< 40 pts	Low

Table 4 contains the overall vulnerability scores (0 – 100) and ratings for each of the three categories of drinking water contaminants. Note: scores are rounded off to the nearest five.

Table 4. Overall Vulnerability

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	85	Very High
Nitrates and Nitrites	90	Very High
Volatile Organic Chemicals	90	Very High

Bacteria and Viruses

The contaminant risk for bacteria and viruses is **Very High**. The risk is primarily attributed to the presence of an injection well in Zone A (see Table 2 – Appendix B).

No positive bacteria counts have been reported in recent (within five years) sampling events (See Chart 3 – Contaminant Risks for Bacteria and Viruses in Appendix D). Only a small amount of bacteria and viruses are required to endanger public health.

After combining the contaminant risk for bacteria and viruses with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to contamination is **Very High**.

Nitrates and Nitrites

The contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites is **Very High**. The risk to this source of public drinking water is primarily attributed to the presence of an injection well in Zone A (see Table 3 – Appendix B).

Nitrates are very mobile, moving at approximately the same rate as water. The sampling history for this well indicates that low levels of nitrates have been detected in recent sampling events. However, the reported concentrations of nitrates do not exceed the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 mg/L. Nitrate concentrations in uncontaminated groundwater are typically less than 2 mg/L; therefore, nitrate concentrations above 2 mg/L may be indicative of man-made sources (See Chart 5 - Contaminant Risks for Nitrates and/or Nitrites in Appendix D).

Nitrate levels are often derived from the decomposition of organic matter in soils. Although the nitrate source is unknown, such occurrences may be attributed to septic systems or other sources. After combining the contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to nitrate and nitrite contamination is **Very High**.

Volatile Organic Chemicals

The contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals is **Very High**. The risk is primarily attributed to the presence of an airport and aboveground fuel tanks located in Zones A and B. Numerous other potential contaminant sources are also found within the protection area (see Table 4 – Appendix B).

No recent sampling data was available in ADEC records for the Willow Tree Inn (See Chart 7 – Contaminant Risks for Volatile Organic Chemicals in Appendix D).

After combining the contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to contamination is **Very High**.

Using the Source Water Assessment

This assessment of contaminant risks can be used as a foundation for local voluntary protection efforts as well as a basis for the continuous efforts on the part of the Willow Tree Inn and the community of Dillingham to protect public health. It is anticipated that Source Water Assessments will be updated every five years to reflect any changes in the vulnerability and/or susceptibility of the drinking water source.

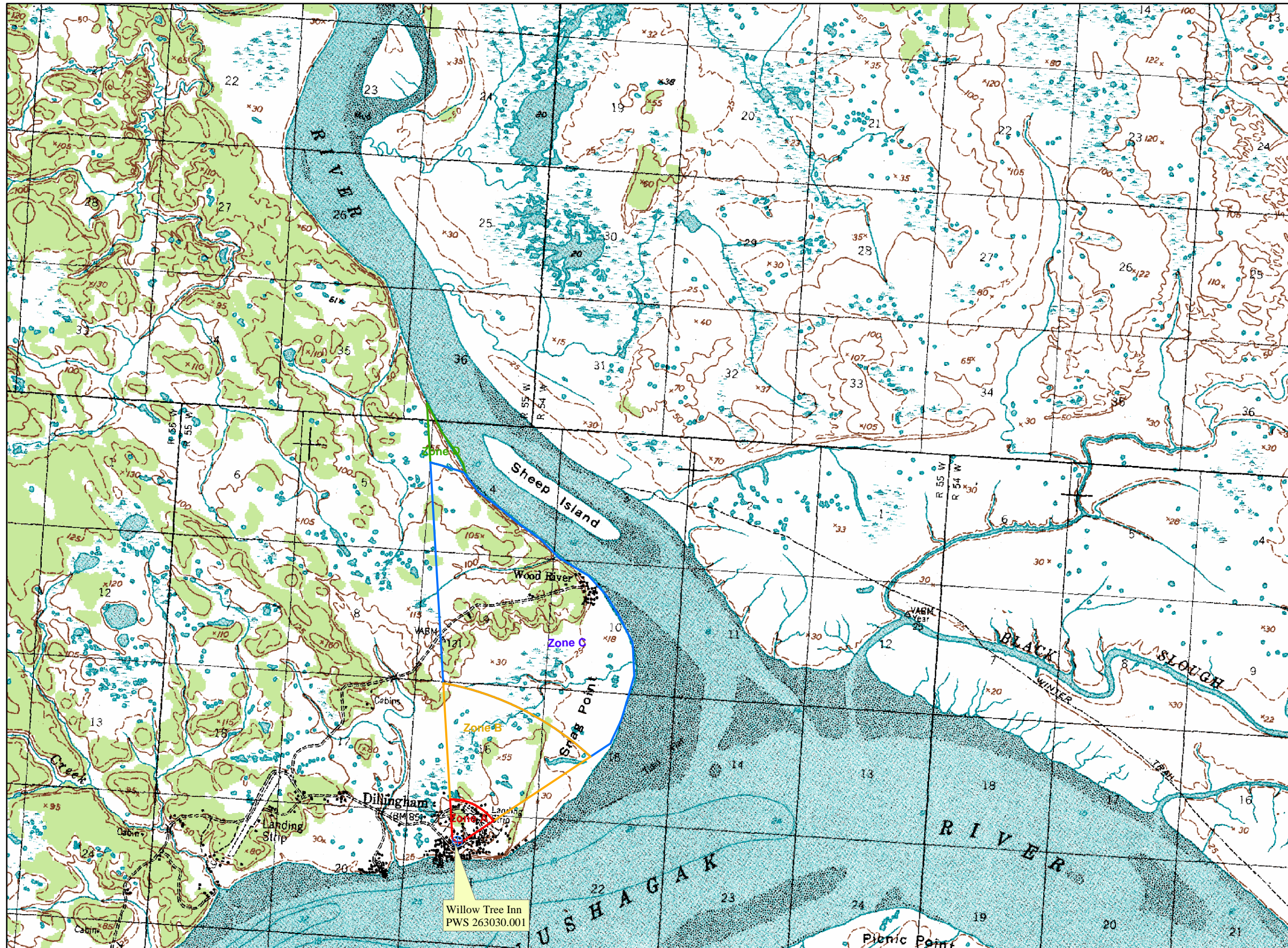
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APPENDIX A

Drinking Water Protection Area Location Map (Map A)

Public Water Well System for PWS #263030.001 Willow Tree Inn



LEGEND

- Public Water System Well
- Hydrography/Physical**
- Parcels
 - Stream
 - Lake or Pond
 - Contours
- Transportation**
- Primary Route (Class 1)
 - Secondary Route (Class 2)
 - Road (Class 3)
 - Road (Class 4)
 - Road (Class 5, Four-wheel drive)
 - Road Ferry Crossing
- Groundwater Protection Zones**
- Zone A Protection Area— Several Months Travel Time
 - Zone B Protection Area— 2 Years Travel Time
 - Zone C Protection Area— 5 Years Travel Time
 - Zone D Protection Area— 10 Years Travel Time

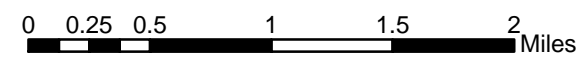
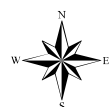
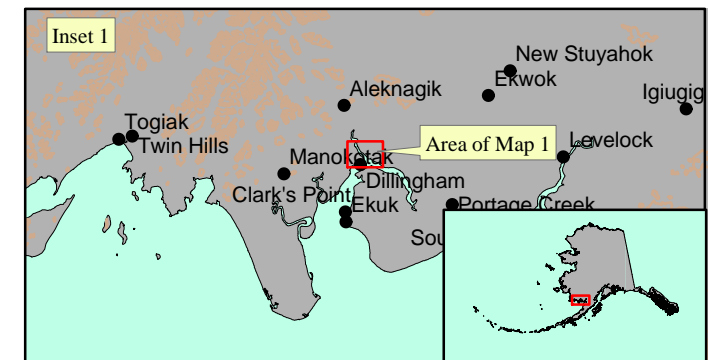
Data Sources:
 Contaminant Sources, Public Water System Wells, Contours
 Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)

Critical Facilities, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

All other data:
 United States Geological Survey (USGS)

Drinking Water Protection Areas based on "Alaska Drinking Water Protection Program - Guidance Manual for Class B Public Water Systems" published by ADEC

URS Corporation does not guarantee the accuracy or validity of the data provided.



Willow Tree Inn
 PWS 263030.001
Appendix A Map A

APPENDIX B

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Rankings (Tables 1-4)

Table 1**Contaminant Source Inventory for
Willow Tree Inn****PWSID 263030.00.**

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Map Number	Comments
Domestic wastewater collection systems (sewer lines or lift stati	D01	D01-01	A	C	It is assumed that 15 or less sewer lines are located in Zone A
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfie Disposal Method)	D10	D10-01	A	C	
Residential Areas	R01	R01-01	A	C	It is assumed that 50 or less acres of residential area is located in Zone A
Tanks, heating oil, residential (above ground)	R08	R08-01	A	C	It is assumed that 20 or less residential above ground heating oil tanks are located in Zone A
Water supply wells	W09	W09-01	A	C	
Water supply wells	W09	W09-02	A	C	
Water supply wells	W09	W09-03	A	C	
Water supply wells	W09	W09-04	A	C	
Airports	X14	X14-01	A	C	
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-01	A	C	It is assumed that there are 1 to 20 roads located in Zone A
Residential Areas	R01	R01-02	B	C	It is assumed that 50 or less acres of residential area is located in Zone B
Tanks, heating oil, residential (above ground)	R08	R08-02	B	C	It is assumed that 5 or less residential above ground heating oil tanks are pre: in Zone B
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-02	B	C	It is assumed that there are 1 to 20 roads located in Zone B
Water supply wells	W09	W09-05	C	C	

Table 2

*Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for
Willow Tree Inn
Sources of Bacteria and Viruses*

PWSID 263030.001

<i>Contaminant Source Type</i>	<i>Contaminant Source ID</i>	<i>CS ID tag</i>	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Risk Ranking for Analysis</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Domestic wastewater collection systems (sewer line or lift stations)	D01	D01-01	A	Medium	C	It is assumed that 15 or less sewer lines are located in Zone A
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-01	A	High	C	
Residential Areas	R01	R01-01	A	Low	C	It is assumed that 50 or less acres of residential area is located in Zone A
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-01	A	Low	C	It is assumed that there are 1 to 20 roads located in Zone A
Residential Areas	R01	R01-02	B	Low	C	It is assumed that 50 or less acres of residential area is located in Zone B
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-02	B	Low	C	It is assumed that there are 1 to 20 roads located in Zone B

Table 3

*Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for
Willow Tree Inn
Sources of Nitrates/Nitrites*

PWSID 263030.001

<i>Contaminant Source Type</i>	<i>Contaminant Source ID</i>	<i>CS ID tag</i>	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Risk Ranking for Analysis</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Domestic wastewater collection systems (sewer line or lift stations)	D01	D01-01	A	Medium	C	It is assumed that 15 or less sewer lines are located in Zone A
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-01	A	High	C	
Residential Areas	R01	R01-01	A	Low	C	It is assumed that 50 or less acres of residential area is located in Zone A
Airports	X14	X14-01	A	Low	C	
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-01	A	Low	C	It is assumed that there are 1 to 20 roads located in Zone A
Residential Areas	R01	R01-02	B	Low	C	It is assumed that 50 or less acres of residential area is located in Zone B
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-02	B	Low	C	It is assumed that there are 1 to 20 roads located in Zone B

Table 4

*Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for
Willow Tree Inn
Sources of Volatile Organic Chemicals*

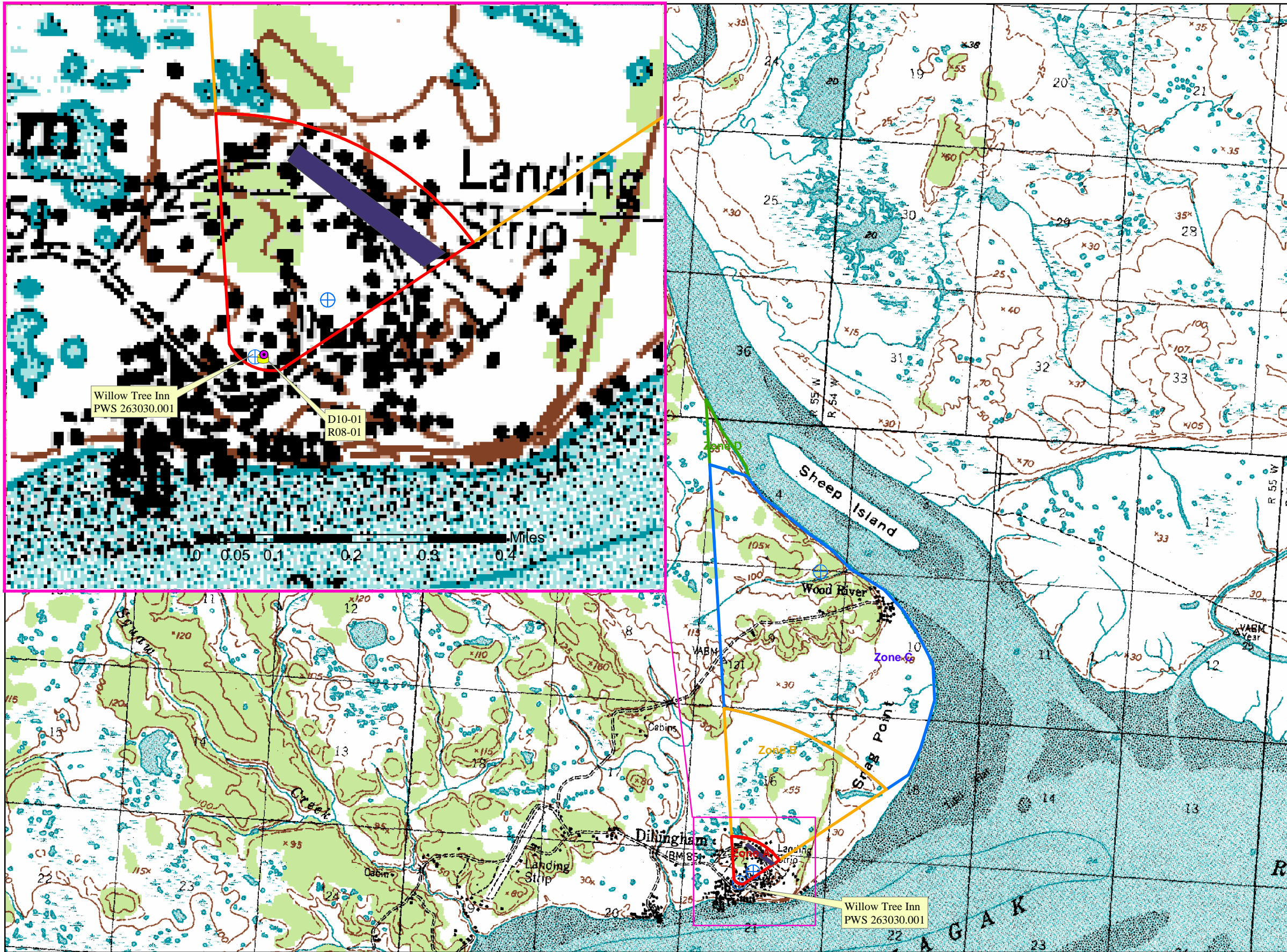
PWSID 263030.001

<i>Contaminant Source Type</i>	<i>Contaminant Source ID</i>	<i>CS ID tag</i>	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Risk Ranking for Analysis</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Domestic wastewater collection systems (sewer line or lift stations)	D01	D01-01	A	Low	C	It is assumed that 15 or less sewer lines are located in Zone A
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-01	A	Low	C	
Residential Areas	R01	R01-01	A	Low	C	It is assumed that 50 or less acres of residential area is located in Zone A
Tanks, heating oil, residential (above ground)	R08	R08-01	A	Medium	C	It is assumed that 20 or less residential above ground heating oil tanks are located in Zone A
Airports	X14	X14-01	A	High	C	
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-01	A	Low	C	It is assumed that there are 1 to 20 roads located in Zone A
Residential Areas	R01	R01-02	B	Low	C	It is assumed that 50 or less acres of residential area is located in Zone B
Tanks, heating oil, residential (above ground)	R08	R08-02	B	Medium	C	It is assumed that 5 or less residential above ground heating oil tanks are present in Zone B
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-02	B	Low	C	It is assumed that there are 1 to 20 roads located in Zone B

APPENDIX C

Drinking Water Protection Area and Potential and Existing Contaminant Sources (Map C)

**Public Water Well System for PWS #263030.001 Willow Tree Inn
Showing Potential and Existing Sources of Contamination**



LEGEND

- ⊕ Public Water System Well

Hydrography/Physical

- ▭ Parcels
- ~ Stream
- ▭ Lake or Pond
- ~ Contours

Transportation

- Primary Route (Class 1)
- - - Secondary Route (Class 2)
- Road (Class 3)
- ⋯ Road (Class 4)
- ⋯ Road (Class 5, Four-wheel drive)
- Road Ferry Crossing

Groundwater Protection Zones

- ▭ Zone A Protection Area— Several Months Travel Time
- ▭ Zone B Protection Area— 2 Years Travel Time
- ▭ Zone C Protection Area— 5 Years Travel Time
- ▭ Zone D Protection Area— 10 Years Travel Time or Watershed Boundary

Existing or Potential Contaminant Sources

- ⊕ Injection Well (Class V) Large Capacity Septic System (D10)
- ▭ Tanks, heating oil, residential (above ground) (R08)
- ▭ Airport/Landing Strip (X14)

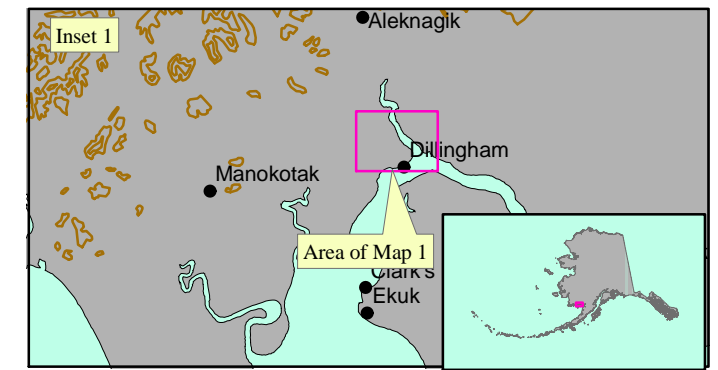
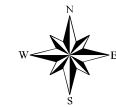
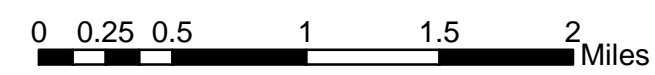
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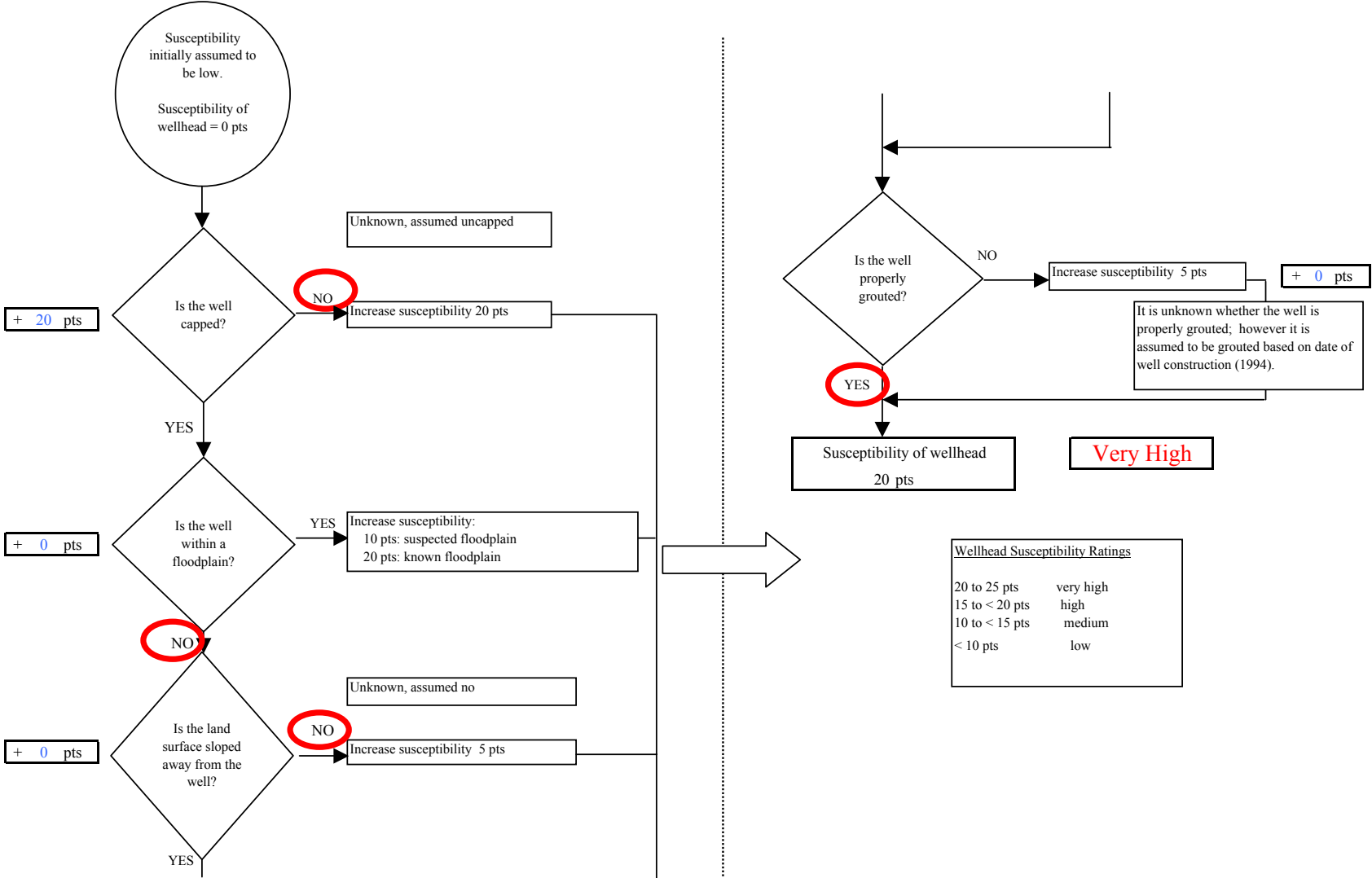


Willow Tree Inn
PWS 263030.001
Appendix C Map C

APPENDIX D

Vulnerability Analysis for Public Drinking Water Source (Charts 1-8)

Chart 1. Susceptibility of the wellhead - Willow Tree Inn (263030.001)



Wellhead Susceptibility Ratings	
20 to 25 pts	very high
15 to < 20 pts	high
10 to < 15 pts	medium
< 10 pts	low

Chart 2. Susceptibility of the aquifer - Willow Tree Inn (263030.001)

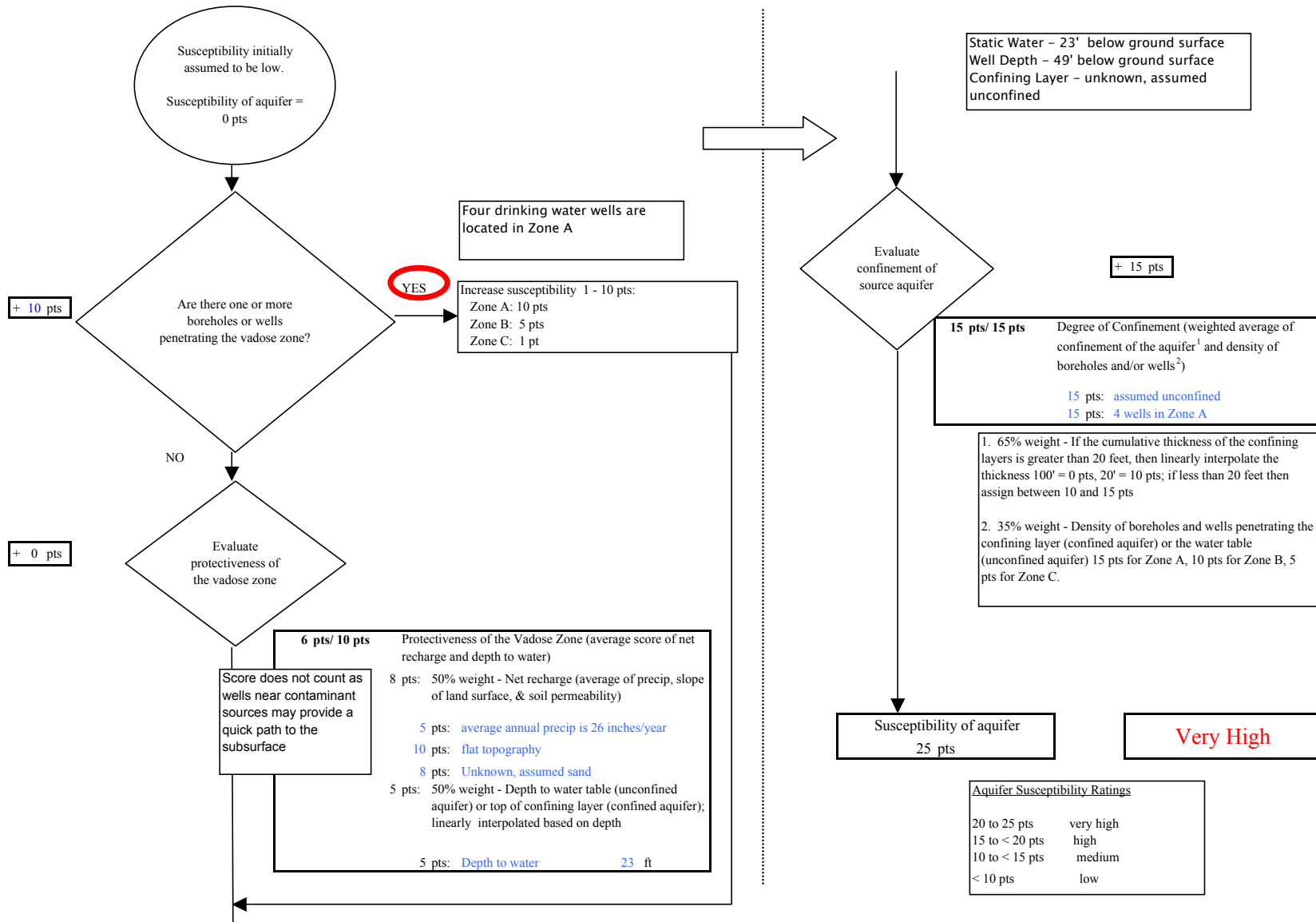


Chart 3. Contaminant risks for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Bacteria & Viruses

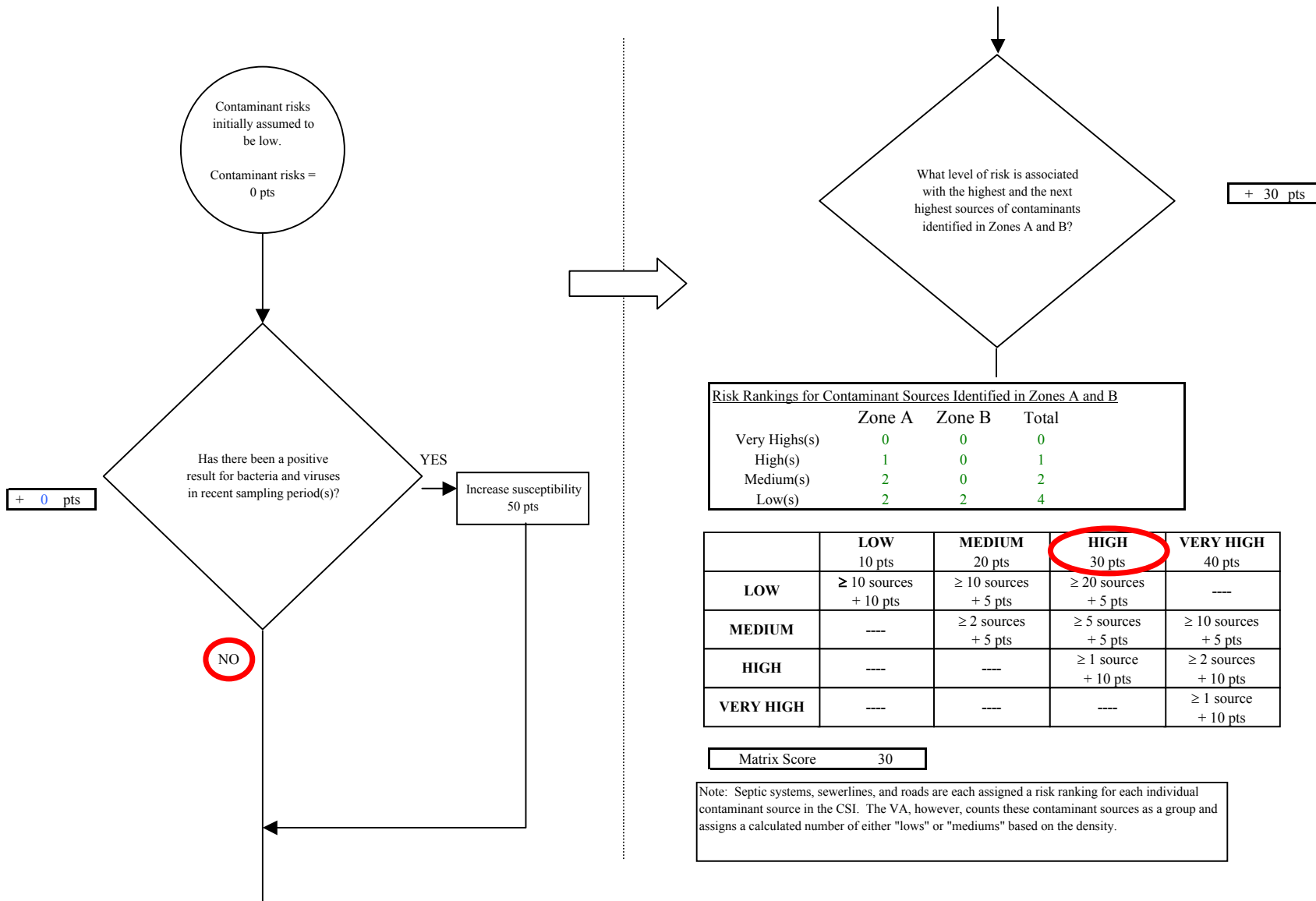


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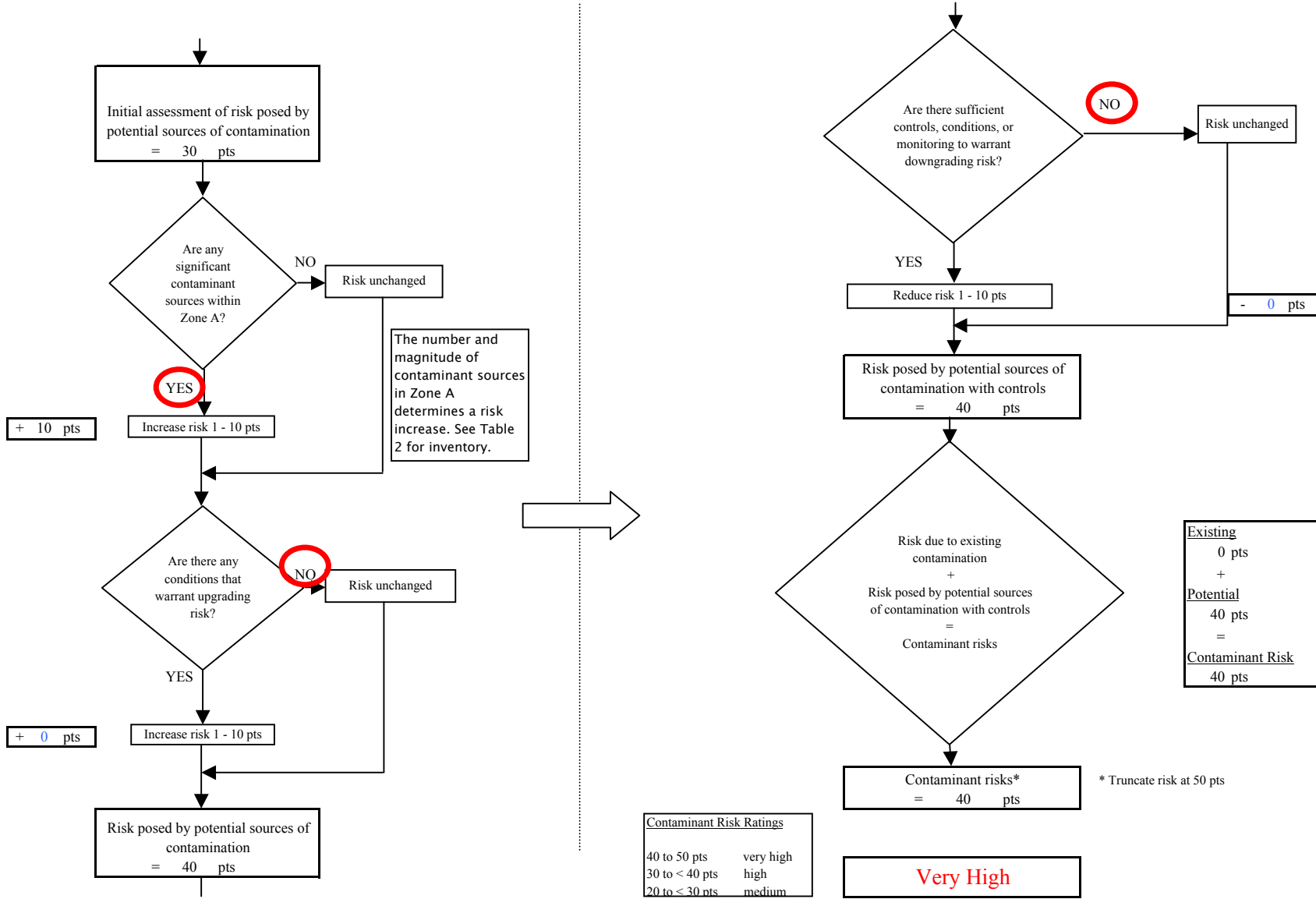


Chart 4. Vulnerability analysis for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Bacteria & Viruses

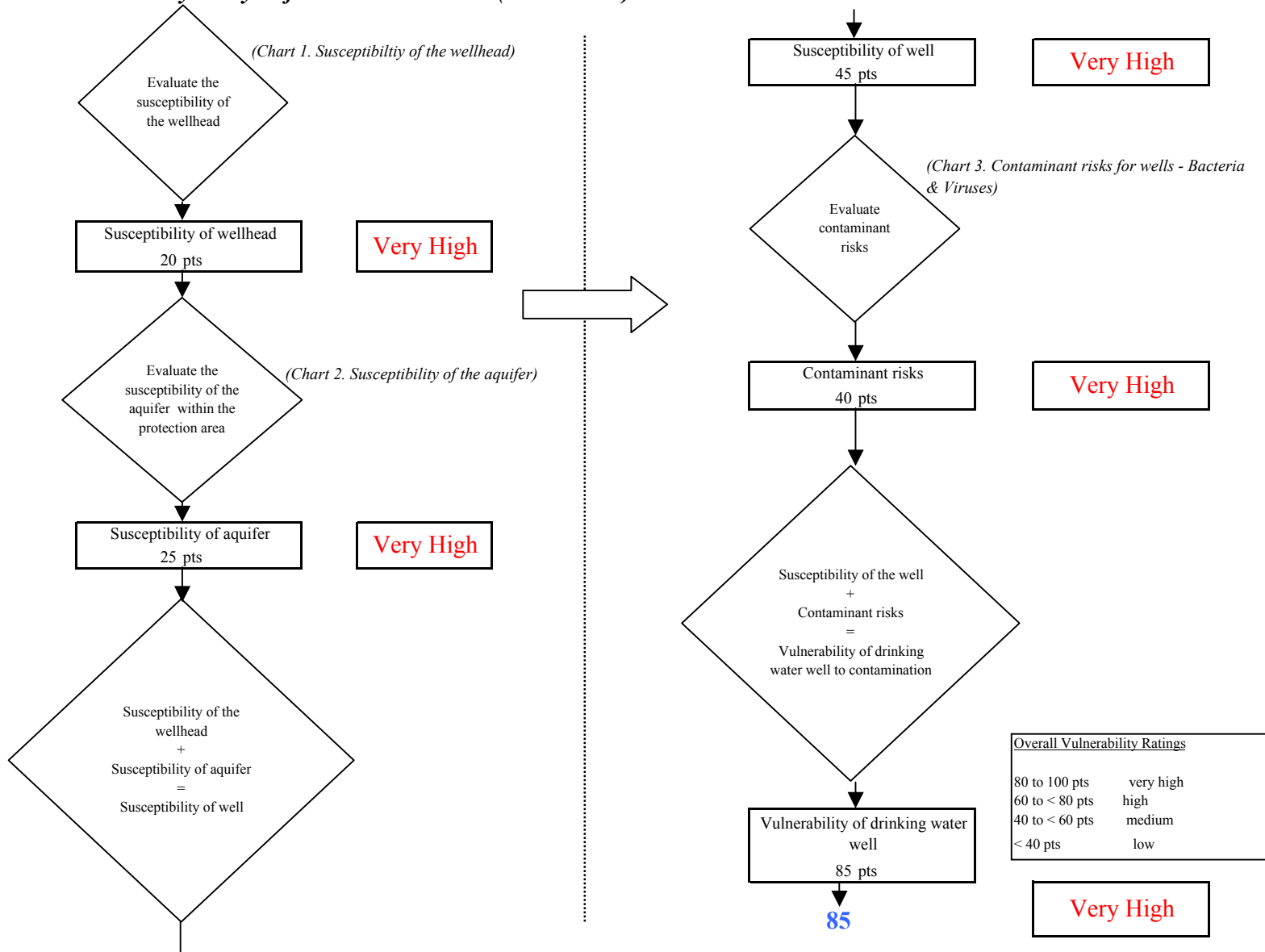


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Nitrates and Nitrites

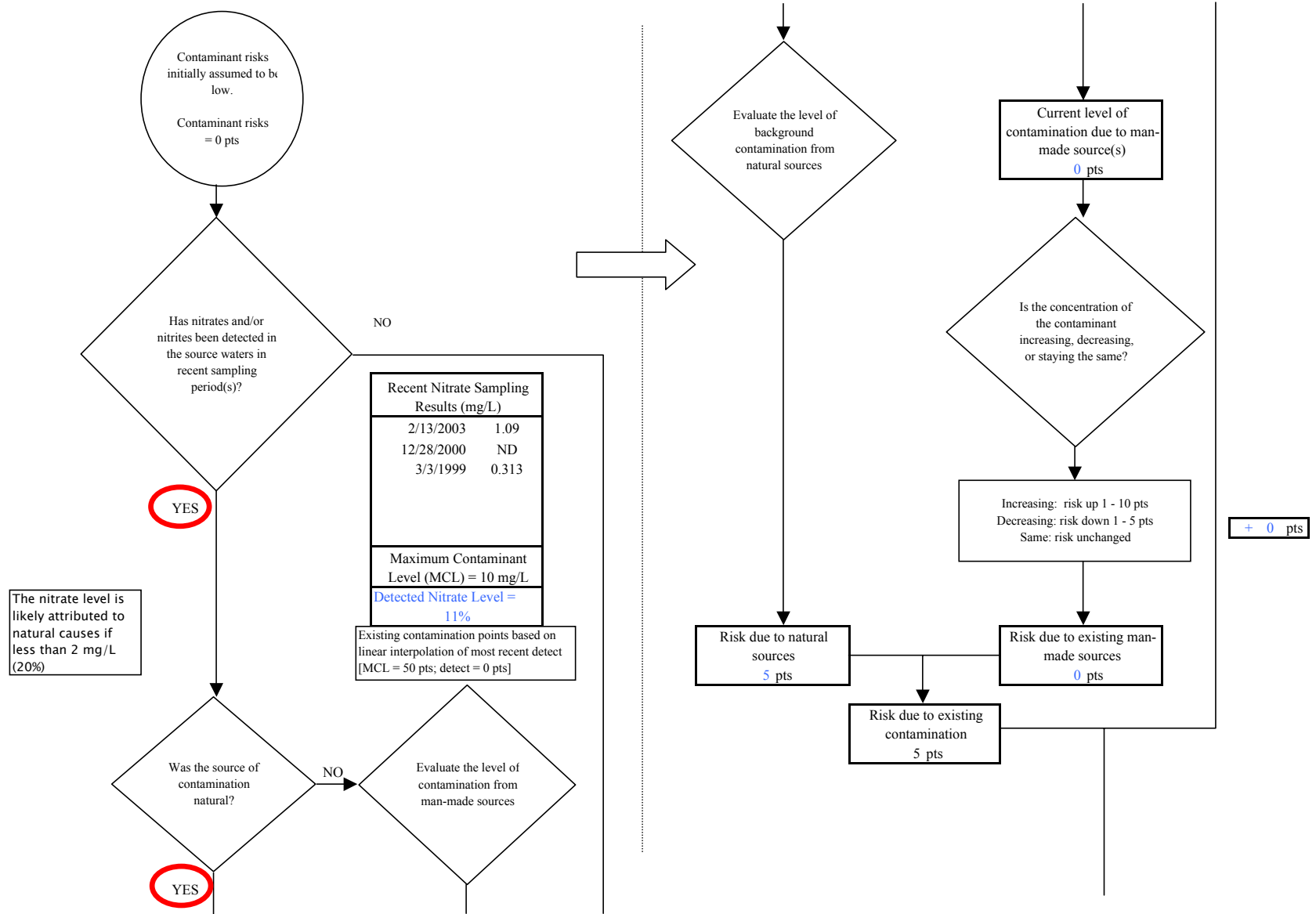


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Nitrates and Nitrites

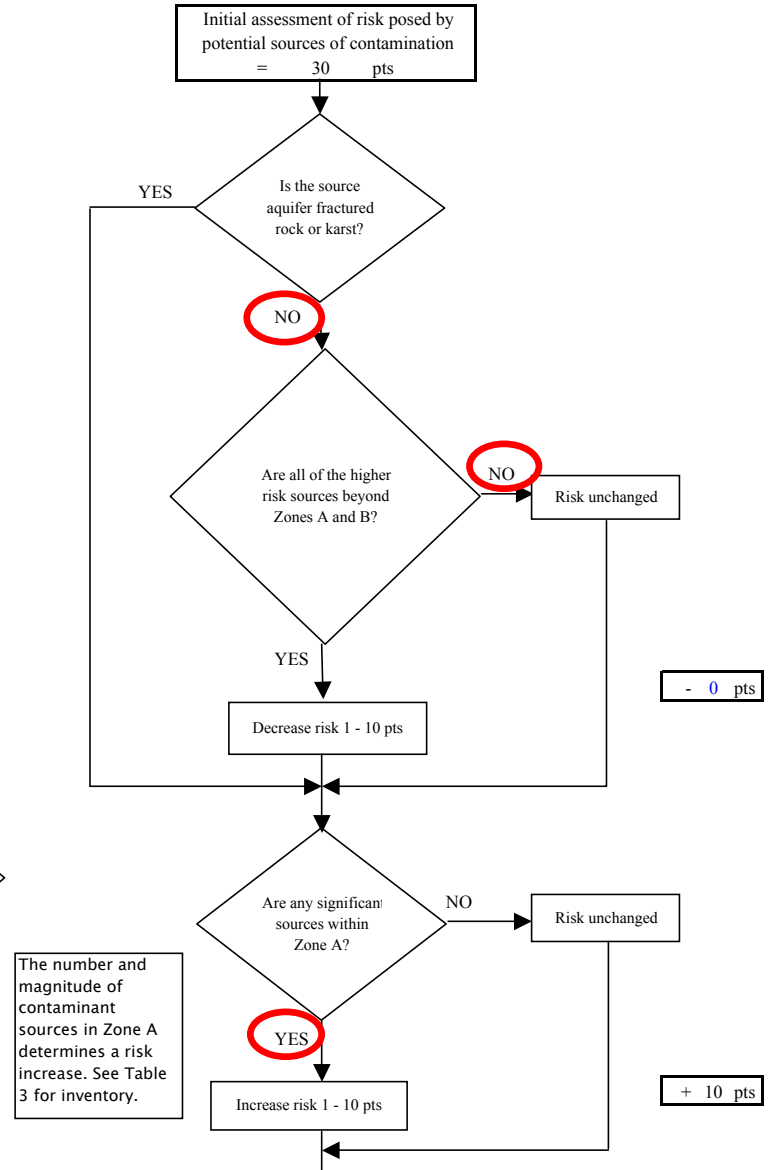
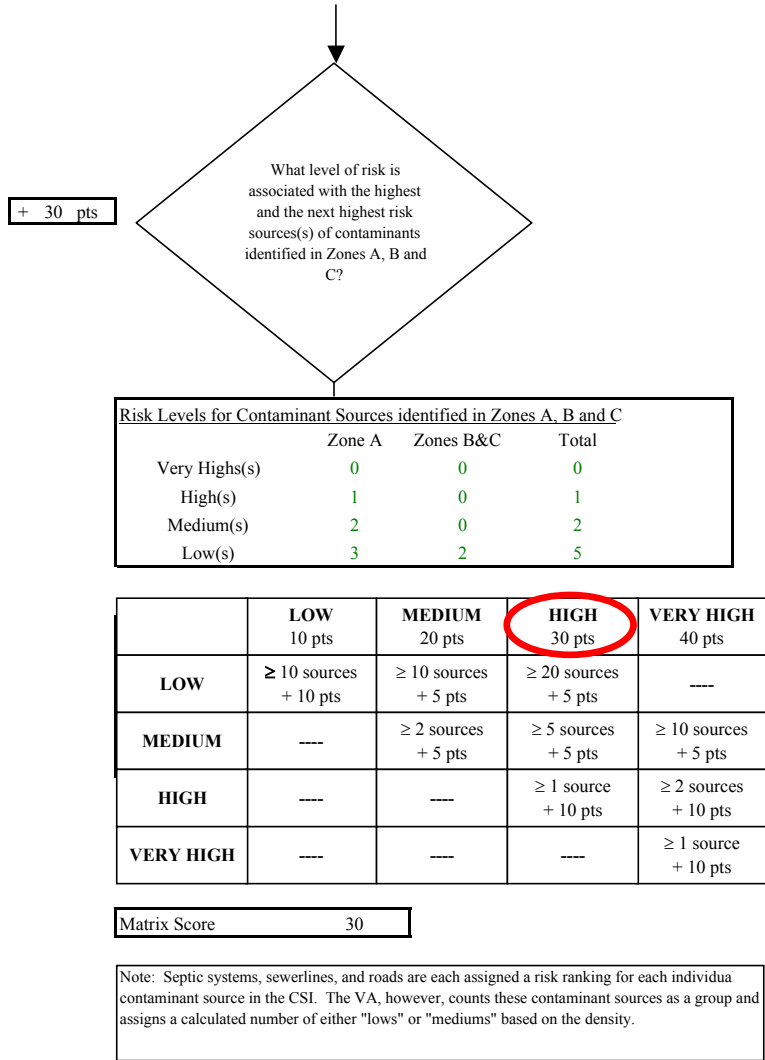


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Nitrates and Nitrites

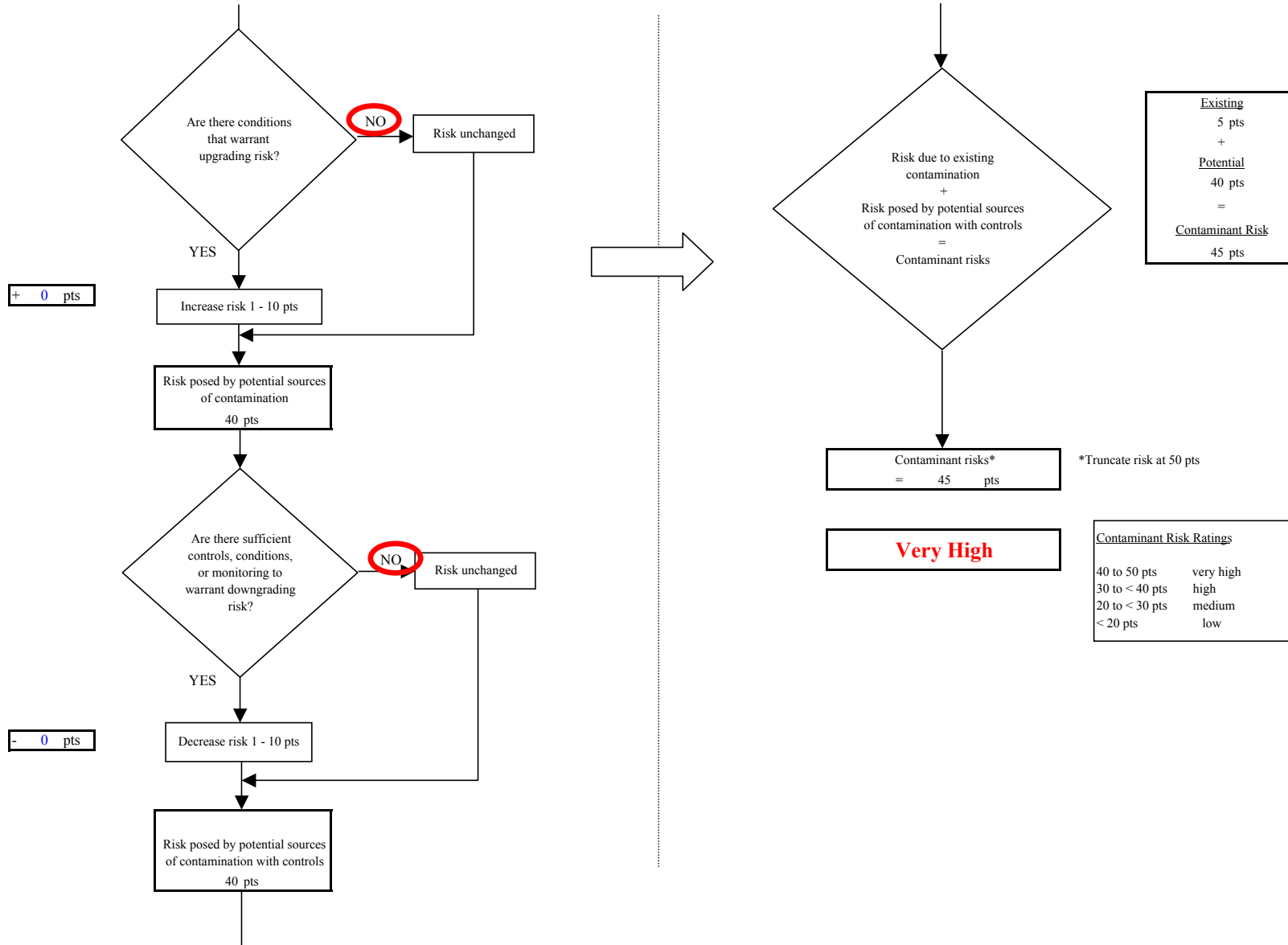


Chart 6. Vulnerability analysis for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Nitrates and Nitrites

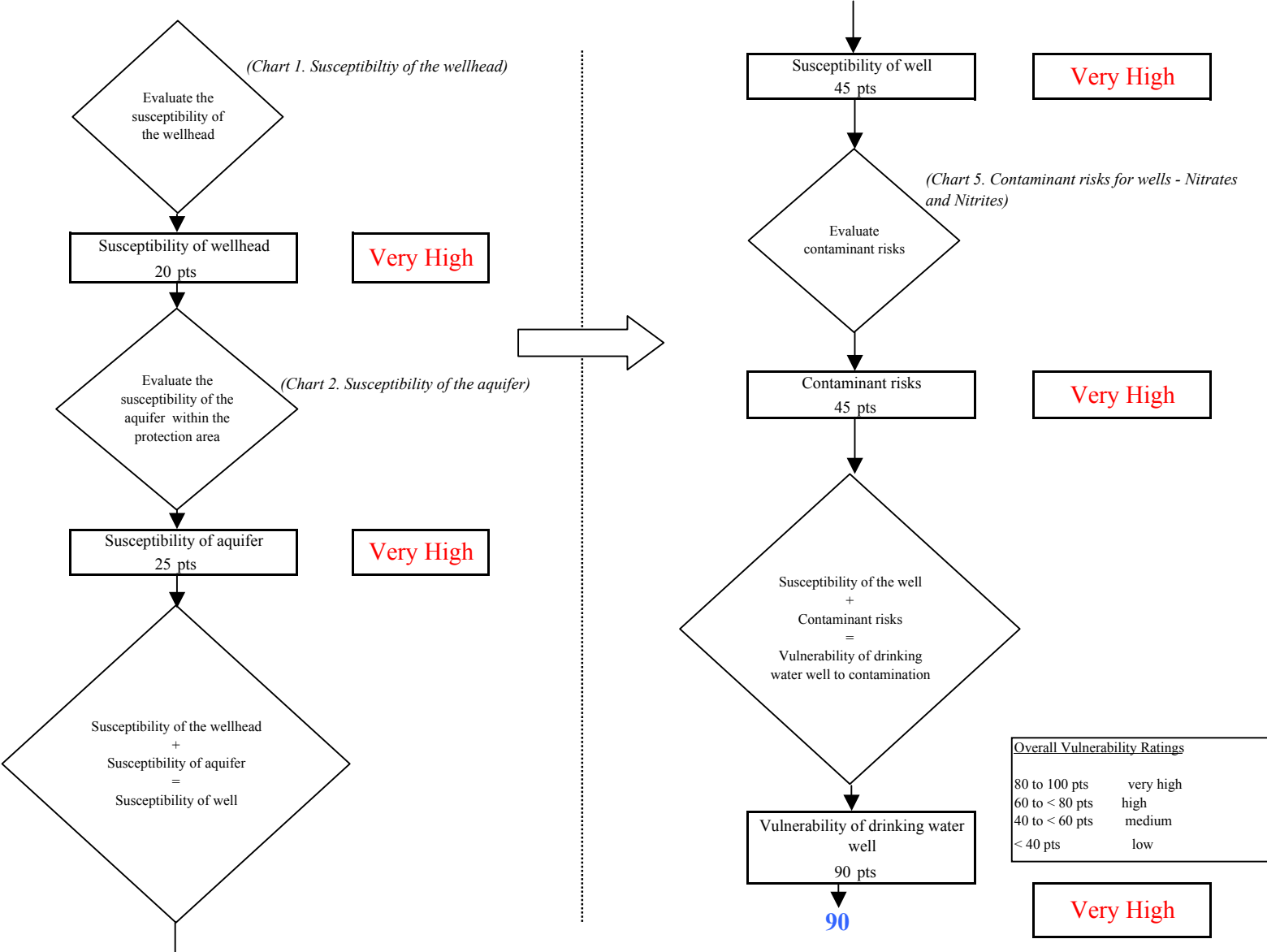


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Volatile Organic Chemicals

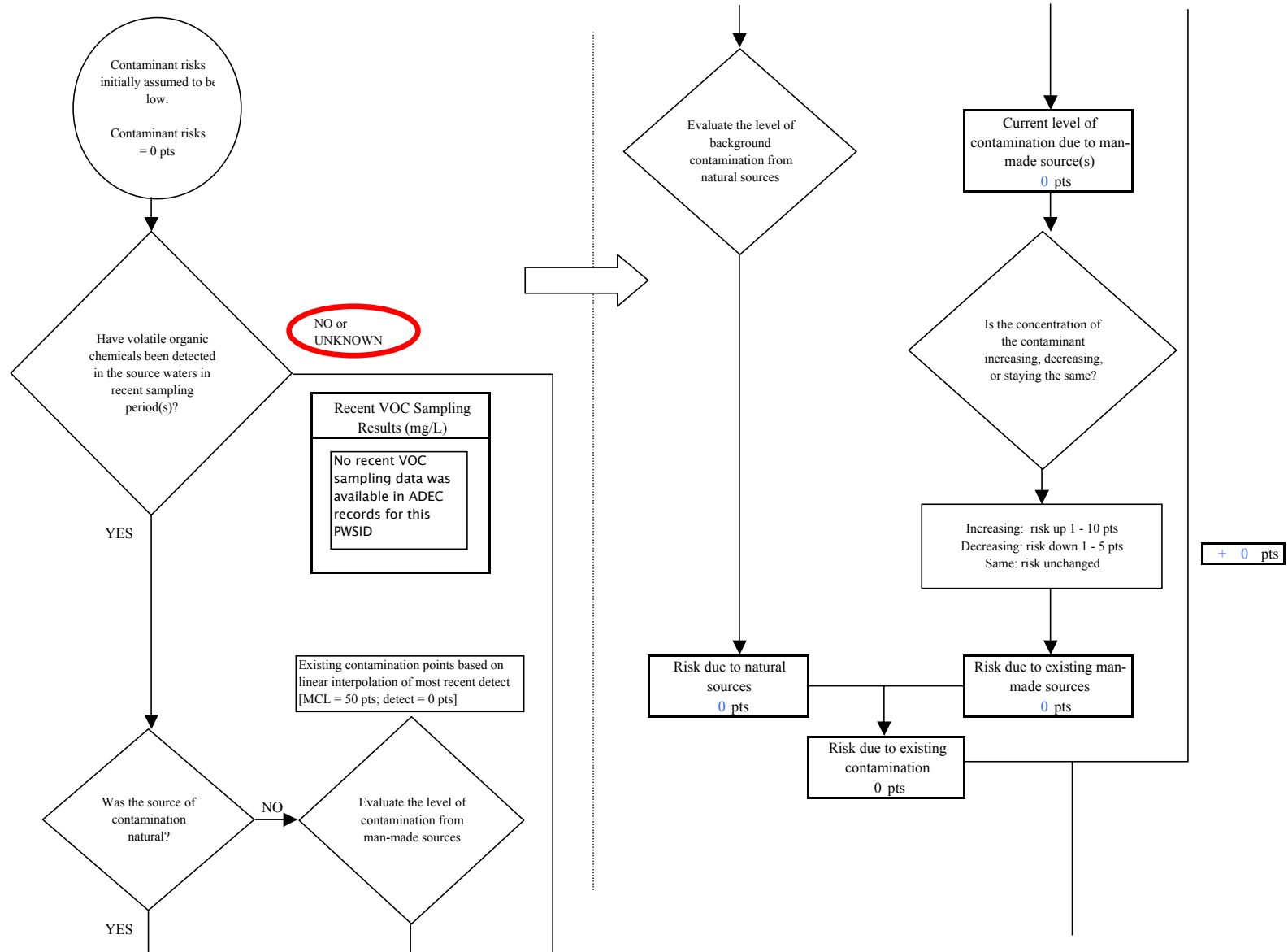


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Volatile Organic Chemicals

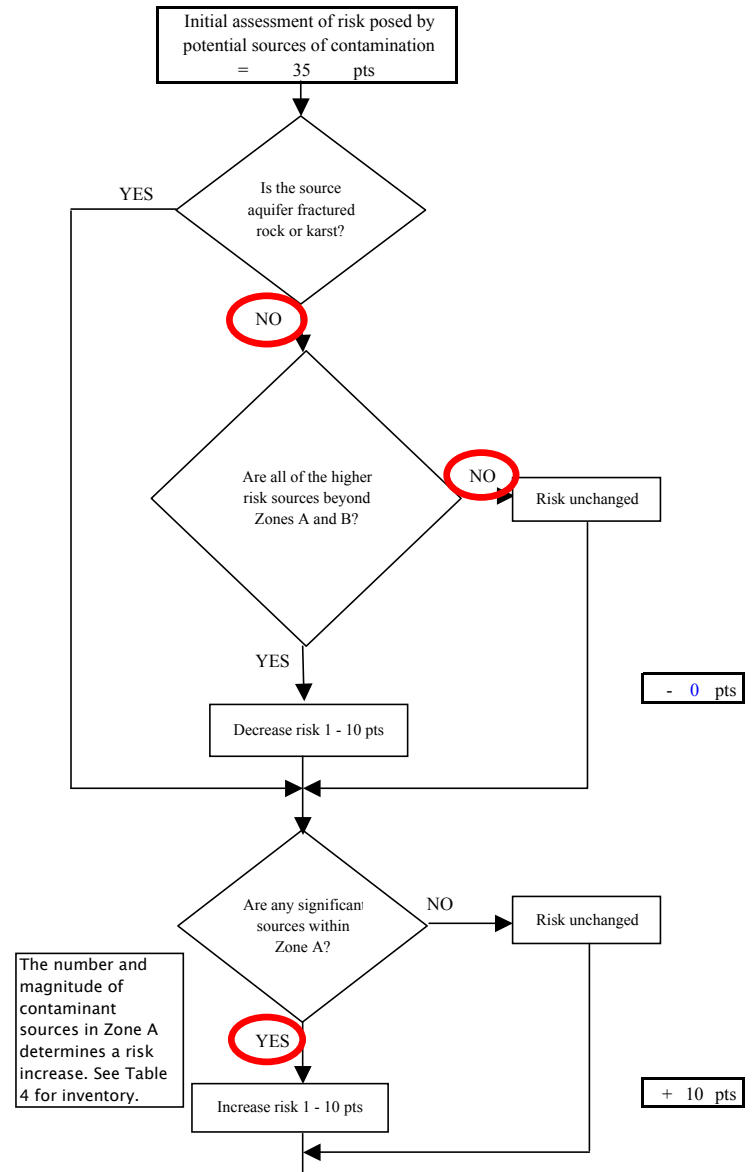
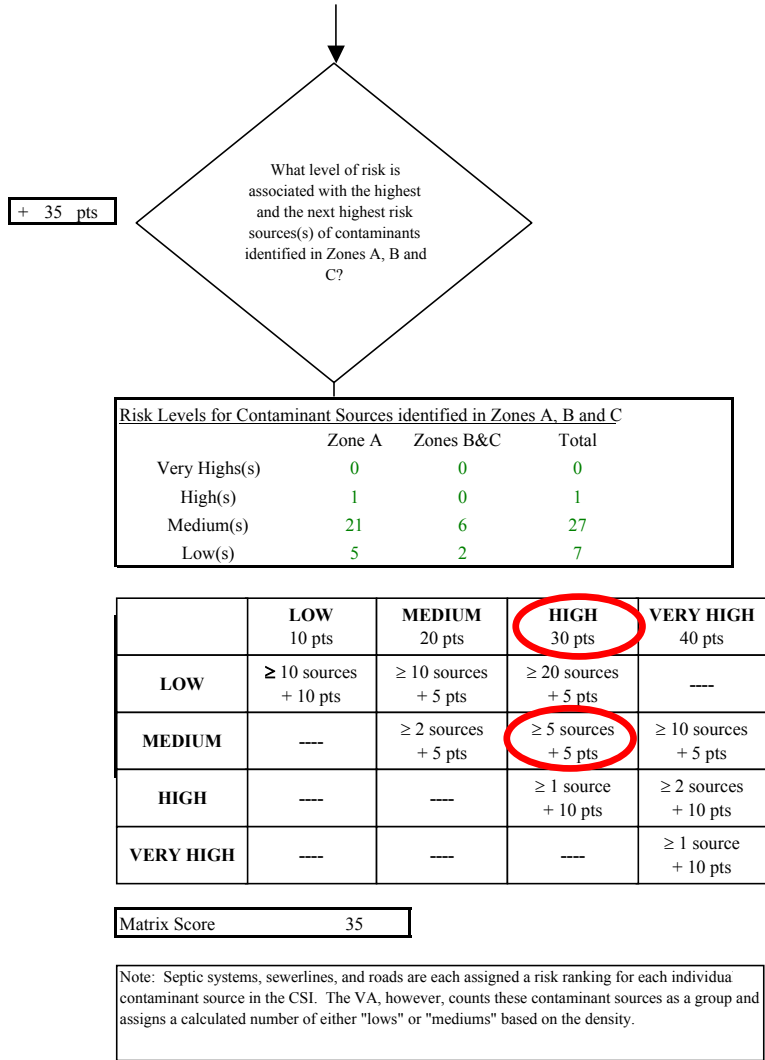


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Volatile Organic Chemicals

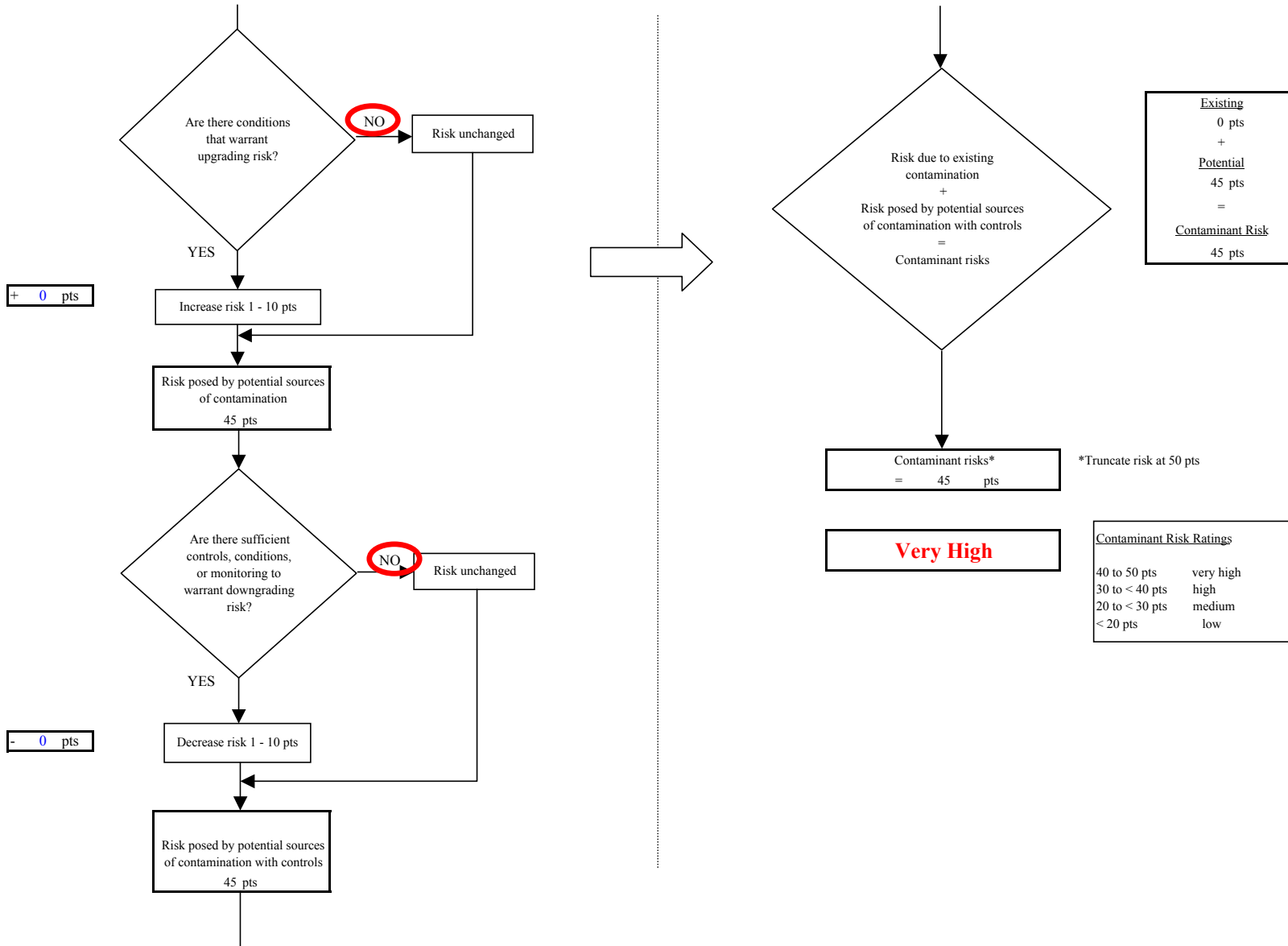


Chart 8. Vulnerability analysis for Willow Tree Inn (263030.001) - Volatile Organic Chemicals

