Source Water Assessment

A Hydrogeologic Susceptibility and Vulnerability Assessment for Homeshore Cafe Public Drinking Water System, Gustavus, Alaska PWSID # 111560.001

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION REPORT 1605

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

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Drinking Water Protection
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The public water system for Homeshore Cafe is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system consisting of one well located Gustavus, Alaska. The wellhead received a susceptibility rating of **Low** and the aquifer received a susceptibility rating of **Very High**. Combining these two ratings produces a **Medium** rating for the natural susceptibility of the well. Identified potential and current sources of contaminants for Homeshore Cafe public drinking water source include: septic systems, assumed heating oil tanks, roads, a water supply well, 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 public water sources for Homeshore Cafe received a vulnerability rating of **Low** for bacteria and viruses, as well as nitrates and nitrites. The system received a vulnerability rating of **High** for volatile organic chemicals. 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 Homeshore Cafe to protect public health.

HOMESHORE CAFE PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SYSTEM

Homeshore Cafe public water system is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system. The system consists of one well located on Gustavus Road, less than a mile southwest of the airport in Gustavus, Alaska (see Map A in Appendix A). Gustavus is located 48 air miles northwest of Juneau. It is bounded on three sides by Glacier Bay National Park and the water of Icy Passage on the fourth. The population of Gustavus is 442 and is partially seasonal (ADCCED, 2008).

Half of the year-round homes in Gustavus are plumbed with their own water wells and septic systems. A community well offering treated water is available for others. Electricity is provided by Gustavus Electric Company and a permitted landfill is available for refuse (ADCCED, 2008).

According to the well log, the well extends approximately 30 feet below the ground surface and is screened in an unconfined aquifer consisting of silt. This system operates continuously and serves 50 non-residents through one service connection.

HOMESHORE CAFE 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 drinking water protection area. The drinking water protection area is the area circling the well (the area influenced by pumping) and also the area upgradient of the well, usually forming a parabola shape. Because releases of contaminants within the protection area are most likely to impact the well, this area will serve as the focus for voluntary protection efforts.

There are many different methods for calculating the size of protection areas. Drinking Water Protection (DWP) uses a combination of two simple groundwater flow equations, the Thiem and uniform flow equations for all groundwater wells screened in unconsolidated material. The orientation of the protection zone is then drawn using a water table elevation map (if available) or a land surface elevation map of the area. The protection zone calculated by the DWP is an estimate using the available information and resources, and may differ slightly from the actual capture zone. Because of uncertainties and changing site conditions, a factor of safety is added to the protection zone to form the drinking water protection area for the well.

The parameters used to calculate the shape of this protection zone are general for the whole alluvial plain and were obtained from various United States Geological Survey (USGS) reports, area well logs, and the Groundwater textbook by Freeze and Cherry (Freeze and Cherry, 1979).

The protection areas established for wells by the DEC are usually separated into two 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. An analytical calculation was

used to determine the size and shape of the protection area.

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 two protection area zones for wells and the calculated time-of-travel for each:

Table 1. Definition of Zones

Zone	Definition
A	Several months time-of-travel
B	Less than the 2 year time-of-travel

The drinking water protection area for Homeshore Cafe was determined using an analytical calculation and includes Zones A and B (see Map A of Appendix A).

INVENTORY OF POTENTIAL AND EXISTING CONTAMINANT SOURCES

DWP has completed an inventory of potential and existing sources of contamination within the Homeshore Cafe drinking water protection area. 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, the following three categories of drinking water contaminants were inventoried:

- 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.

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 HOMESHORE CAFE DRINKING WATER SYSTEM

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

- Natural Susceptibility; and
- Contaminant Risks.

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

Susceptibility of the Wellhead (0-25 Points)
+
Susceptibility of the Aquifer (0-25 Points)
=
Natural Susceptibility of the Well (0-50 Points)

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

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

Factors contributing to the susceptibility of the wellhead are: whether the sanitary seal is in place, protection from flooding, and if the well casing is properly grouted.

The wellhead for the Homeshore Cafe received a **Low** susceptibility rating. The most recent sanitary survey (05/30/2006) indicates the land surface is properly sloped away from the well providing adequate surface water drainage. A sanitary seal prevents potential contaminant from entering the well while sloping of the land surface and grouting to help to prevent potential contaminant from traveling down the outside of the well casing.

Factors contributing to the susceptibility of the aquifer are: whether the aquifer is confined or unconfined, whether the well is completed in unconsolidated or fractured bedrock, whether wells and bore holes are penetrating the aquifer and, if applicable, and the confining layer.

The Homeshore Cafe system draws water from an unconfined aquifer consisting of silt. The aquifer received a **Very High** susceptibility rating because of the unconfined nature and the presence of boreholes and wells in the protection area. Because an unconfined aquifer is recharged by surface water and precipitation that migrates downward from the surface, it is susceptible to contamination from outside sources. Furthermore, the presence of other wells penetrating the vadose zone of the protection area can allow contaminants to travel into the shared aquifer with precipitation and runoff.

Table 2 summarizes the Susceptibility scores and ratings for the Homeshore Cafe system.

Table 2. Susceptibility

	Score	Rating
Susceptibility of the Wellhead	0	Low
Susceptibility of the Aquifer	25	Very High
Natural Susceptibility	25	Medium

Contaminant risks are derived from an evaluation of the routine sampling results of the water system and the presence of potential sources of contamination. Contaminant risks to a drinking water source depend on the type and distribution of contaminant sources. 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	
40-50 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 for the Homeshore Cafe system.

Table 3. Contaminant Risks

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	12	Low
Nitrates and/or Nitrites	12	Low
Volatile Organic Chemicals	35	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:

Natural Susceptibility (0-50 Points)
+
Contaminant Risks (0-50 Points)
=
Vulnerability of the Drinking Water Source to Contamination (0-100 Points)

Again, rankings are assigned according to a point score:

Overall Vulnerability Ratings	
80-100 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 for the Homeshore Cafe system. Note: scores are rounded off to the nearest five.

Table 4. Overall Vulnerability

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	35	Low
Nitrates and/or Nitrites	35	Low
Volatile Organic Chemicals	60	High

Bacteria and Viruses

The contaminant risk for bacteria and viruses is **Low** with septic systems and roads contributing to the risk to the drinking water well.

Coliforms (a bacteria) are found naturally in the environment and although they aren't necessarily a health threat, they are an indicator of other potentially harmful bacteria in the water, more specifically, fecal coliforms and E. coli, which only come from human and animal fecal waste. Harmful bacteria can cause

diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms (EPA, 2008).

Only a small amount of bacteria and viruses are required to endanger public health. Positive samples increase the overall vulnerability of the drinking water source, indicating that the source is susceptible to bacteria and virus contamination. Bacteria and viruses have not been detected during recent water sampling of the system at Homeshore Cafe (data reviewed in April, 2008).

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 **Low**.

Nitrates and Nitrites

The contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites is **Low** with the septic systems, roads, and airport contributing to the risk to the drinking water well.

The sampling history for Homeshore Cafe indicates that nitrates have not been detected in the water (data reviewed in April, 2008).

After combining the contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to contamination is **Low**.

Volatile Organic Chemicals

The contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals is **High** with the septic systems, heating oil tanks, roads, and airport contributing to the risk to the drinking water well.

The drinking water at Homeshore Cafe has not recently been sampled for volatile organic chemicals (data reviewed in April, 2008).

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 **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 Homeshore Cafe 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 Homeshore Cafe drinking water source.

REFERENCES

Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development (ADCED), Accessed 2008 [WWW document]. URL: http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/commdb/CF_COMDB.htm

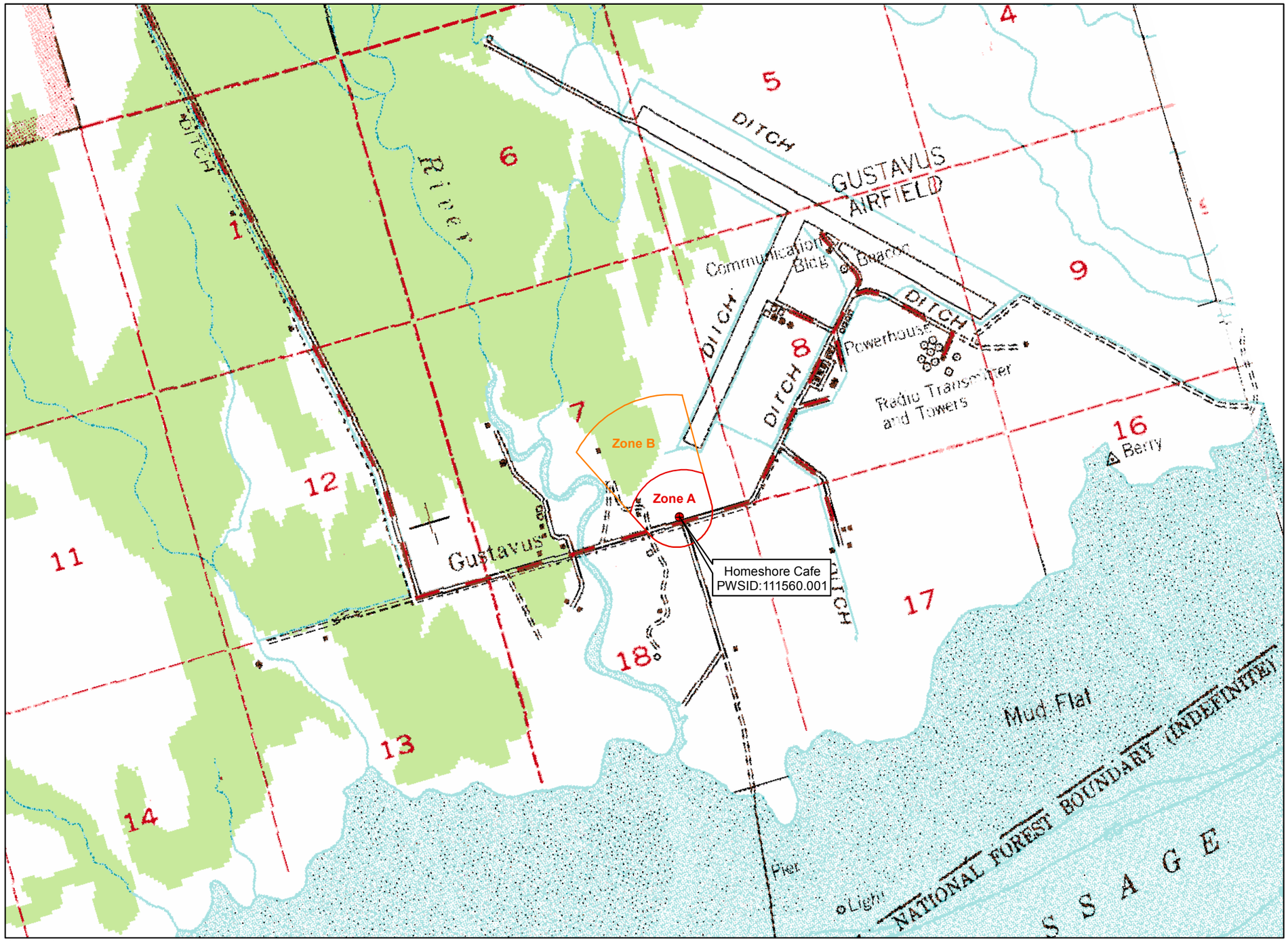
Freeze, R.A. and Cherry, J.A., 1979. Groundwater. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Accessed 2008 [WWW document]. URL: http://www.epa.gov/safewater/contaminants/index.html.

APPENDIX A

Homeshore Cafe
Drinking Water Protection Area Location Map
(Map A)

Public Water Well System for PWS #111560.001 Homeshore Cafe



Legend

Class B Public Water System

Groundwater Protection Zones

Zone A Protection Area - Several Months Travel Time

Zone B Protection Area - 2 Years Travel Time

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

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.

N W E S

0 3,000 6,000 12,000 Feet

Homeshore Cafe
PWS 111560.001

Appendix A Map A

APPENDIX B

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Homeshore Cafe (Tables 1-4)

Table 1

Contaminant Source Inventory for ***HOMESHORE CAFE***

PWSID 111560.001

Contaminant Source Type	*Contaminant Source ID*	*CS ID tag*	*Zone*	*Map Number*	*Comments*
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R02-01	A	C	
Tanks, heating oil, residential (above ground)	R08	R08	A	C	1 assumed
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20	A	C	2 roads
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R02-02	B	C	
Tanks, heating oil, residential (above ground)	R08	R08	B	C	1 assumed
Water supply wells	W09	W09	B	C	
Airports	X14	X14	B	C	

Table 2

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for HOMESHORE CAFE

Sources of Bacteria and Viruses

PWSID 111560.001

Contaminant Source Type	*Contaminant Source ID*	*CS ID tag*	*Zone*	*Risk Ranking for Analysis*	*Map Number*	*Comments*
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R02-01	A	Low	C	
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20	A	Low	C	2 roads
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R02-02	B	Low	C	

Table 3

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for HOMESHORE CAFE

Sources of Nitrates/Nitrites

PWSID 111560.001

Contaminant Source Type	*Contaminant Source ID*	*CS ID tag*	*Zone*	*Risk Ranking for Analysis*	*Map Number*	*Comments*
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R02-01	A	Low	C	
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20	A	Low	C	2 roads
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R02-02	B	Low	C	
Airports	X14	X14	B	Low	C	

Table 4

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for HOMESHORE CAFE

Sources of Volatile Organic Chemicals

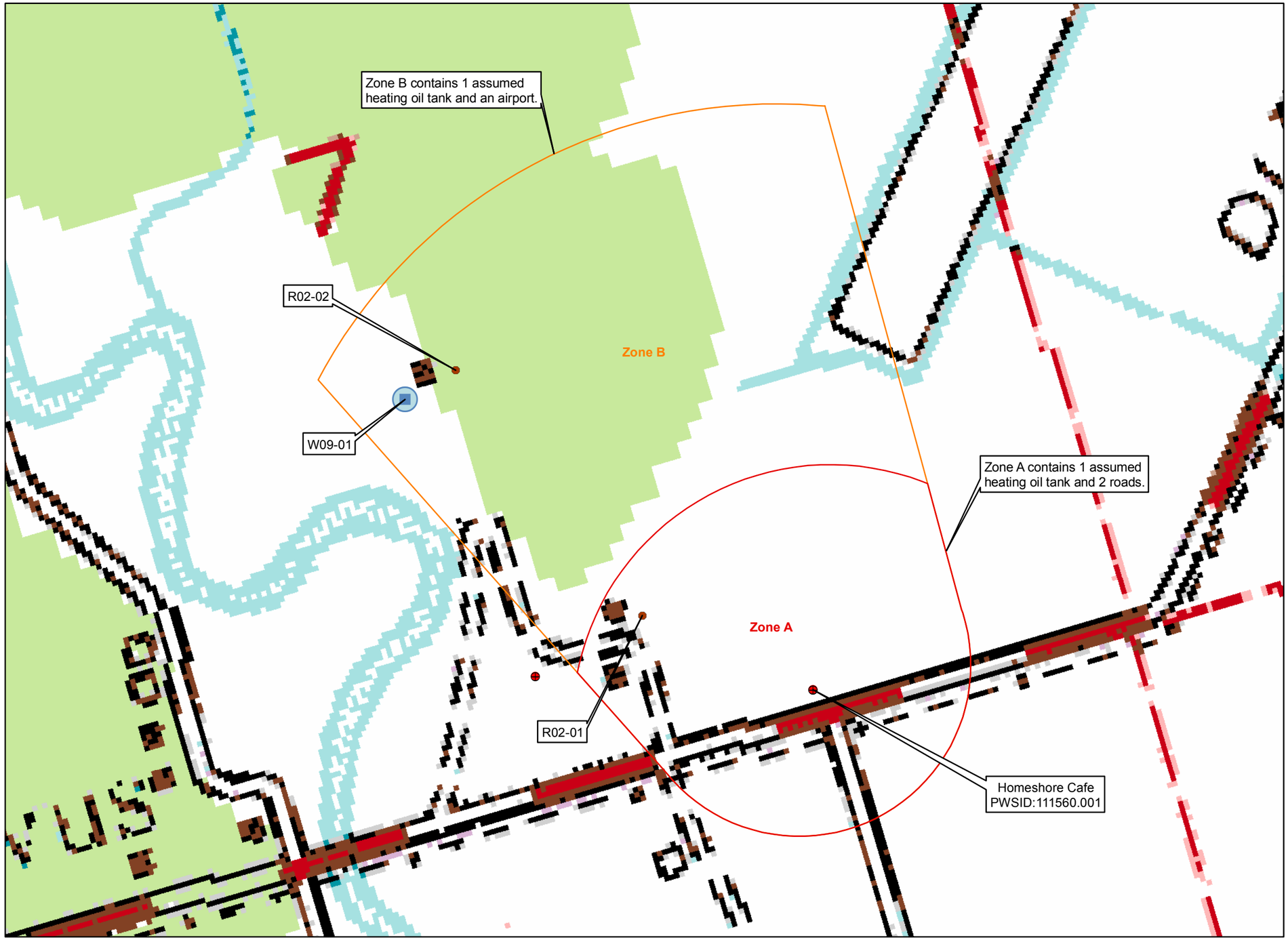
PWSID 111560.001

Contaminant Source Type	***Contaminant Source ID***	***CS ID tag***	***Zone***	***Risk Ranking for Analysis***	***Map Number***	***Comments***
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R02-01	A	Low	C	
Tanks, heating oil, residential (above ground)	R08	R08	A	Medium	C	1 assumed
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20	A	Low	C	2 roads
Septic systems (serves one single-family home)	R02	R02-02	B	Low	C	
Tanks, heating oil, residential (above ground)	R08	R08	B	Medium	C	1 assumed
Airports	X14	X14	B	High	C	

APPENDIX C

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

Public Water Well System for PWS #111560.001 Homeshore Cafe
Showing Potential and Existing Sources of Contamination



Legend

- Class B Public Water System

Groundwater Protection Zones

- Zone A Protection Area - Several Months Travel Time
- Zone B Protection Area - 2 Years Travel Time

Existing or Potential Contaminant Sources

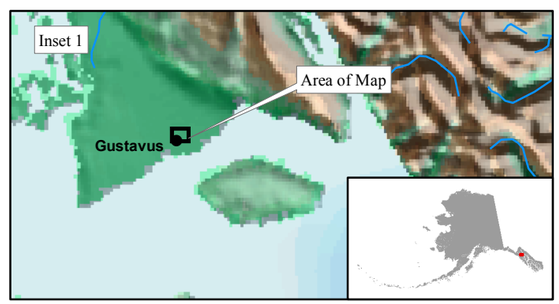
- Residential Septics (R02)
- Water supply wells (W09)

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

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.



Alaska DEC

N
W E
S

0 625 1,250 2,500 Feet

Homeshore Cafe
PWS 111560.001

Appendix C Map C