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# Source Water Assessment

A Hydrogeologic Susceptibility and  
Vulnerability Assessment for  
Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn  
Drinking Water System,  
Nenana, Alaska  
PWSID # 390243

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT # 292  
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

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By Ecology & Environment, Inc.

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT # 292

August 2002

The Drinking Water Protection Program 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. 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 Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn Source of Public Drinking Water, Nenana, Alaska

By Ecology & Environment, Inc.

## Drinking Water Protection Program Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system consisting of one well in Nenana, Alaska. Identified potential and current sources of contaminants for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn public drinking water source include a paved road, glycol storage and an underground gasoline tank. These identified potential and existing sources of contamination are considered sources of bacteria and viruses, nitrates and/or nitrites, and volatile organic chemicals. Overall, the public water sources for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn received a vulnerability rating of **Low** for bacteria and viruses, **High** for nitrates and nitrites, and **Medium** for volatile organic chemicals.

### INTRODUCTION

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) is completing source water assessments for all public drinking water sources in the State of Alaska. The purpose of this assessment is to provide owners and/or operators, communities, and local governments with information they can use to preserve the quality of Alaska's public drinking water supplies. The results of this source water assessment can be used to decide where voluntary protection efforts are needed and feasible, and also what efforts will be most effective in reducing contaminant risks to your water system. Ecology and Environment, Inc. has been contracted to perform these assessments under the supervision of ADEC.

This source water assessment combines a review of the natural conditions at the site and the potential and existing contaminant risks. These are combined to determine the overall vulnerability of the drinking water source to contamination.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE CLEAR/NENANA AREA

#### Location

For the purposes of this report, the Nenana area encompasses the communities of Nenana (pop. 486), Anderson (pop. 513), and Clear. Nenana and Clear are located along the George Parks Highway at Mile 304.5 and Mile 280, respectively. The junction of the Parks Highway and the access road to Anderson and Clear Air Force Station is located at Mile 283.5; Anderson is 6 miles from the highway (Figure 1).



Figure 1

#### Precipitation

The Nenana area averages nearly 10 inches of precipitation per year, with approximately 49 inches of annual snowfall (ACRC 2002).

#### Topography and Drainage

Nenana, Anderson, and Clear are characterized by fairly flat topography, with numerous small creeks that generally flow north to the Nenana and Tanana Rivers.

#### Groundwater Use

There is no municipal water supply in Anderson or Clear. Residences, businesses, and the school have

their own water wells and septic systems. The majority of residents of Nenana are served by two municipal wells and by city sewage lines; approximately 24 homes are still on private wells, with approximately 15 using private septic systems (ADCED 2002).

**Geology and Soils**

The surficial geology of the Nenana area chiefly comprises alluvial deposits of the Nenana and Tanana Rivers. Nenana river alluvium consists of interfingering lenses of washed, clean gravel, sand and silt. The average size of gravel in the recent Nenana River alluvium decreases with increasing distance from the mountains. Near the town of Nenana, the deposits are composed predominantly of sand and silt, while near Clear they consists chiefly of coarse gravel with some cobbles and boulders. A large portion of the alluvium consists of reworked glacial debris. Tanana River alluvium consists chiefly of sand and silt (Kachadoorian 1960).

**SKINNY DICK'S HALFWAY INN PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SYSTEM**

Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system. The system consists of one well near the Parks Highway milepost 328.

There is no well log on file for this well; if one could be located, it would improve the accuracy of this report. According to the most recent Sanitary Survey (6/8/99), the installation of the well occurred in 1969 to a total depth of approximately 300 feet below ground surface. The well has a sanitary seal. A properly installed sanitary seal may provide protection against contaminants from entering the source waters at the well casing. The land surface is also appropriately sloped away from the well providing adequate surface water drainage. It is assumed that the well is not grouted according to ADEC regulations (grouting was not required prior to 1993). Proper grouting provides added protection against contaminants travelling along the well casing and into source waters. The aquifer is assumed to be confined due to the 300-foot well depth.

This system operates year-round and serves approximately 2 residents and more than 25 non-residents.

**SKINNY DICK'S HALFWAY 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. Some areas are more likely to allow contamination to reach the well than others. 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 a release of contaminants within the DWPA 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. The input parameters describing the attributes of the aquifer in this calculation were adopted from the U.S. Geological Survey (*Patrick et al. 1989*). Additional methods were also used to take into account any uncertainties in groundwater flow and aquifer characteristics to arrive at a meaningful DWPA (Please refer to the Guidance Manual for Class B Water Systems for additional information).

The DWPAs established for wells by the ADEC are separated into four zones. These zones correspond to differences in the time-of-travel (TOT) of the water moving through the aquifer to the well. 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 DWPA zones and the calculated time-of-travel for each:

**Table 1. Definition of Zones**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Definition</b>
A	¼ the distance to the 2-year TOT
B	Less than the 2-year TOT
C	Less than the 5-year TOT
D	Less than the 10 year TOT

As an example, water moving through the aquifer in Zone B will most likely reach the well in less than 2 years from the time it crosses the outer limit of Zone B.

Zone A also incorporates the area downgradient from the well to take into account the area of the aquifer that is influenced by pumping of the well. Water within the aquifer in Zone A will reach the well in several hours to several months.

## 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 Skinny Dick's Halfway 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 water system assessments, three categories of drinking water contaminants were inventoried. They include:

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

Inventoried potential sources of contamination within Zones A through Zone D were associated with residential and light industrial type activities. The sources are summarized in the tables in Appendix B of the Guidance Manual.

## RANKING OF CONTAMINANT RISKS

Once the potential and existing sources of contamination have been identified, they are sorted and ranked 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. Further, contaminant risks are a function of the number and density of those types of contaminant sources as well as the proximity of those sources to the well.

## VULNERABILITY OF SKINNY DICK'S HALFWAY INN DRINKING WATER SOURCE

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

- Natural susceptibility; and
- Contaminant risks.

Each of the three categories of drinking water contaminants has been analyzed and an overall vulnerability score of 0 to 100 is ultimately assigned:

Natural Susceptibility (0 – 50 points)

+

Contaminant Risks (0 – 50 points)

=

Vulnerability of the Drinking Water Source to Contamination (0 – 100).

A score for the Natural Susceptibility is achieved by analyzing the properties of the well and the aquifer.

Susceptibility of the Wellhead (0 – 25 Points)

+

Susceptibility of the Aquifer (0 – 25 Points)

=

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

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.

Table 2 shows the Overall Susceptibility score and rating for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn (see Charts 1 and 2).

**Table 2. Natural Susceptibility - Susceptibility of the Wellhead and Aquifer to Contamination**

	Score	Rating
Susceptibility of the Wellhead	5	Low
Susceptibility of the Aquifer	8	Low
Natural Susceptibility	13	Low

Contaminant risks to a drinking water source depend on the type, number or density, and distribution of

contaminant sources. This data has been derived from an examination of existing or historical contamination that has been detected at the drinking water source through routine sampling. It also evaluates potential sources of contamination. Table 3 summarizes the Contaminant Risks for each category of drinking water contaminants (see Charts 3, 5, and 7).

**Table 3. Contaminant Risks**

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	12	Low
Nitrates and/or Nitrites	50	Very High
Volatile Organic Chemicals	40	Very High

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 (see Charts 4, 6, and 8).

**Table 4. Overall Vulnerability of Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn to Contamination by Category**

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	25	Low
Nitrates and Nitrites	65	High
Volatile Organic Chemicals	55	Medium

Tables 2 through 4 in Appendix B contain a list of potential and existing sources of contamination with respect to bacteria and viruses, nitrates and/or nitrites, and volatile organic chemicals.

Only a small amount of bacteria and viruses are required to endanger public health. If bacteria and viruses have been detected during recent water sampling of the system at Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn, the result is a maximum score on Chart 3.

The sampling history for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn well indicates that nitrates and/or nitrites are found in concentrations resulting from man-made sources of nitrate/ nitrite contamination at this site. Nitrate concentrations in uncontaminated groundwater are typically less than 2 milligrams per liter (mg/L) and are derived primarily from the decomposition of organic matter in soils [Wang, Strelakos, Jokela, 2000]. Existing nitrate concentration in Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn well is approximately 9.5 mg/L or 95% of the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 10mg/L. The MCL is the maximum level of contaminant that is allowed to exist in drinking water and still be consumed by humans without harmful health effects. Due to the high solubility and weak retention by soil, nitrates are

very mobile, moving at approximately the same rate as water. Though existing nitrate contamination was detected at the site, concentrations remain at safe levels with respect to human health (See Chart 5 - Contaminant Risks for Nitrates and/or Nitrites in Appendix D).

Class B Public Water systems are not required to test for volatile organic chemicals (VOCs); therefore, no score for pre-existing contamination has been assigned. The vulnerability score for VOCs reflects the potential for contamination from the sources indicated on Table 4 in Appendix B.

## SUMMARY

A *Source Water Assessment* has been completed for the sources of public drinking water serving Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn. The overall vulnerability of this source to contamination is **Low** for bacteria and viruses, **High** for nitrates and nitrites, and **Medium** 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 Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn 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 Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn public drinking water source.

## REFERENCES CITED

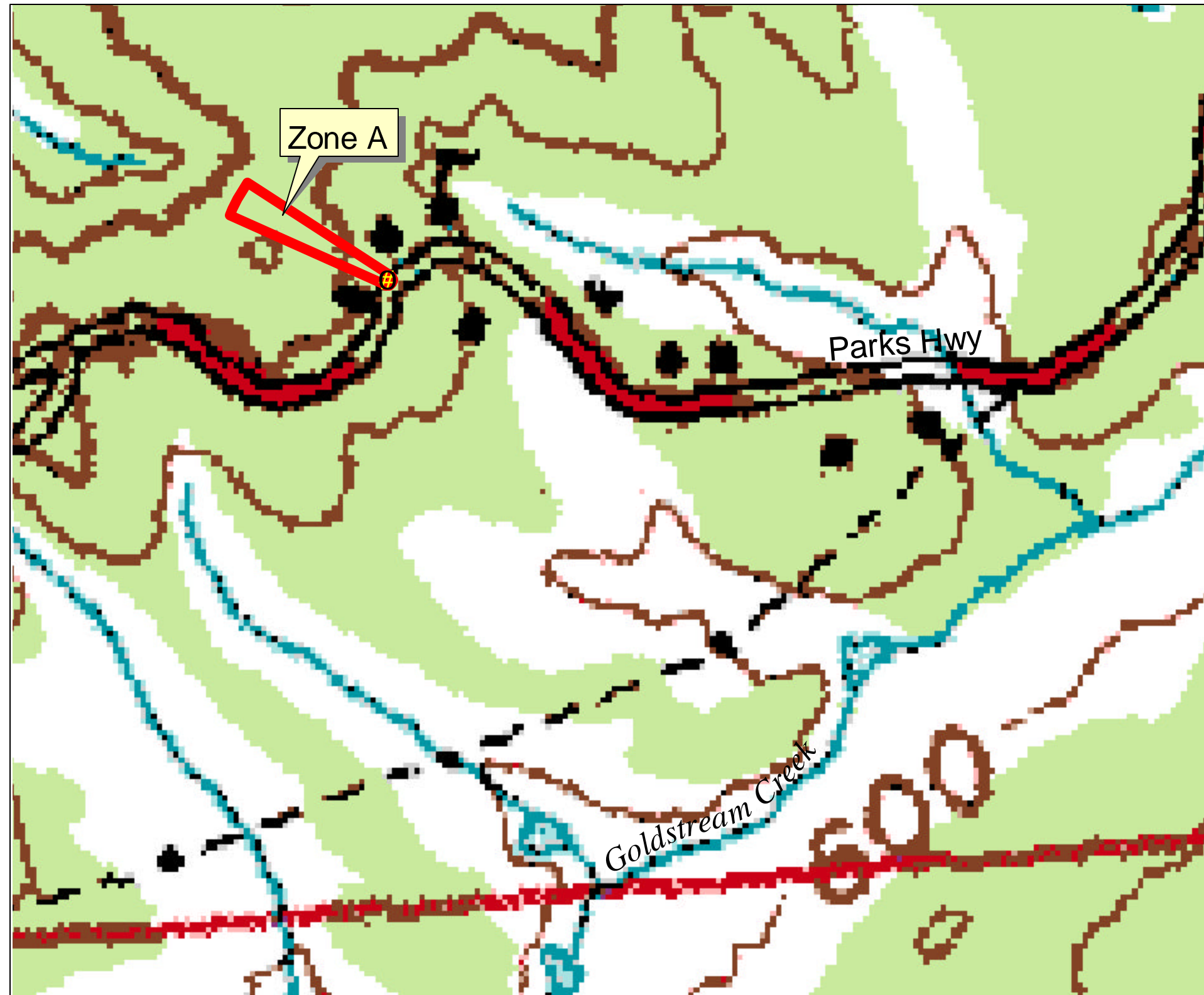
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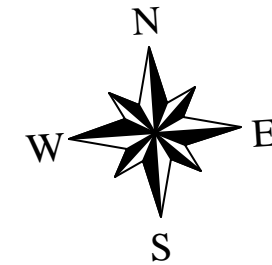
## **APPENDIX A**

### **Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn Drinking Water Protection Area (Map 1)**

# Drinking Water Protection Area for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn



-  Skinny Dick's Well
-  Zone A (Few Months Travel Time)



PWSID 390246.001

*Map 1*

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn (Tables 1-4)**

**Table 1**

**Contaminant Source Inventory for  
Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn**

**PWSID 390243.001**

<b>Contaminant Source Type</b>	<b>Contaminant Source ID</b>	<b>CS ID tag</b>	<b>Zone</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Map Number</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Tanks, gasoline (underground)	T12	T12-1	A	SKINNY DICK'S HALFWAY INN	2	INFERRED FROM SITE MAP/FILE INFO
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	A	GEORGE PARK'S HIGHWAY	2	
Glycol (disposal or storage)	X07	X7-1	A	SKINNY DICK'S HALFWAY INN	2	INFERRED FROM SITE MAP/FILE INFO

**Table 2**

*Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for  
Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn  
Sources of Bacteria and Viruses*

**PWSID 390243.001**

<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>Location</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	A	Low	GEORGE PARK'S HIGHWAY	2	

**Table 3**

*Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for  
Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn  
Sources of Nitrates/Nitrites*

*PWSID 390243.001*

<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>Location</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	A	Low	GEORGE PARK'S HIGHWAY	2	

**Table 4**

*Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for  
Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn  
Sources of Volatile Organic Chemicals*

**PWSID 390243.001**

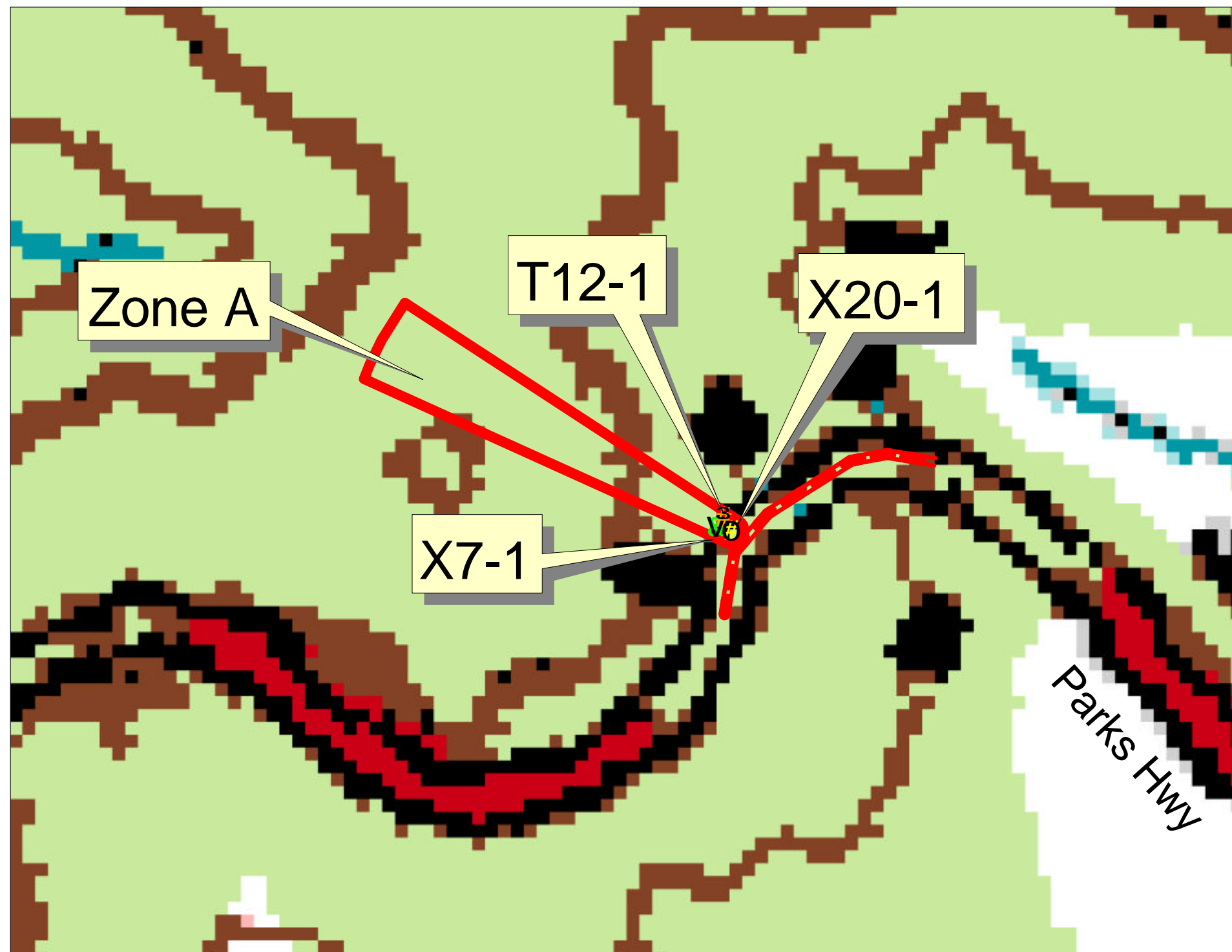
<i>Contaminant Source Type</i>	<i>Contaminant Source ID</i>	<i>CS ID tag</i>	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Risk Ranking for Analysis</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Tanks, gasoline (underground)	T12	T12-1	A	High	SKINNY DICK'S HALFWAY INN	2	INFERRED FROM SITE MAP/FILE INFO
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	A	Low	GEORGE PARK'S HIGHWAY	2	

## **APPENDIX C**

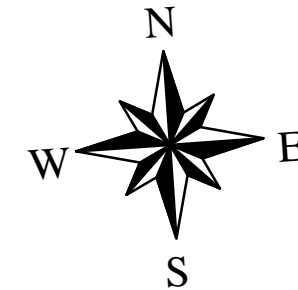
### **Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn Drinking Water Protection Area and Potential and Existing Contaminant Sources (Map 2)**



# Drinking Water Protection Area for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn and Potential and Existing Sources of Contamination



- Skinny Dick's Public Water Well
- Tanks, gasoline (underground) -T12
- Glycol Storage -X7
- Road-X20
- Zone A (Few Months Travel Time)

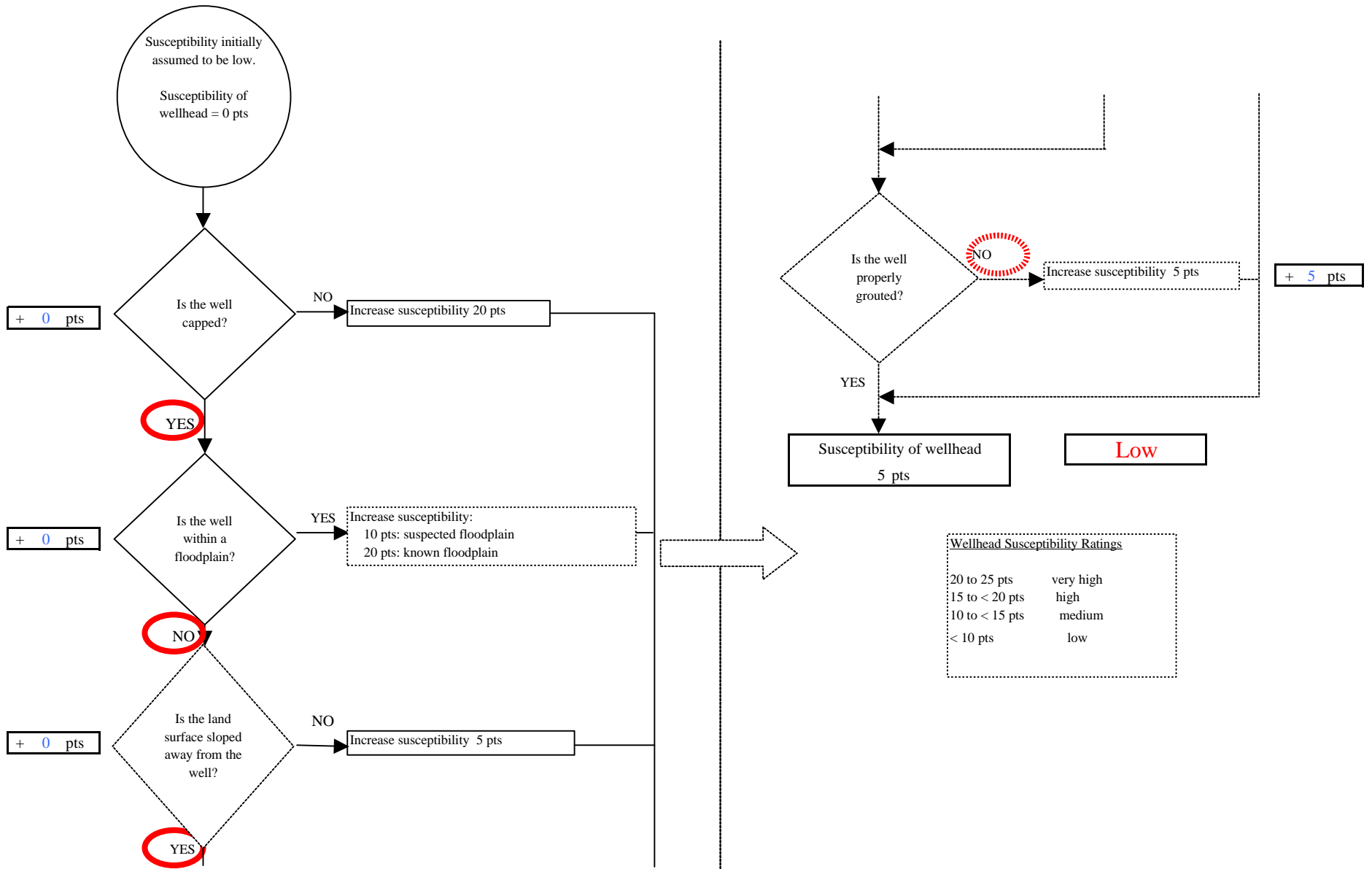


0 0.5 1 Miles

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Vulnerability Analysis for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn Public Drinking Water Source (Charts 1-8)**

**Chart 1. Susceptibility of the wellhead - Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn**



**Chart 2. Susceptibility of the aquifer - Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn**

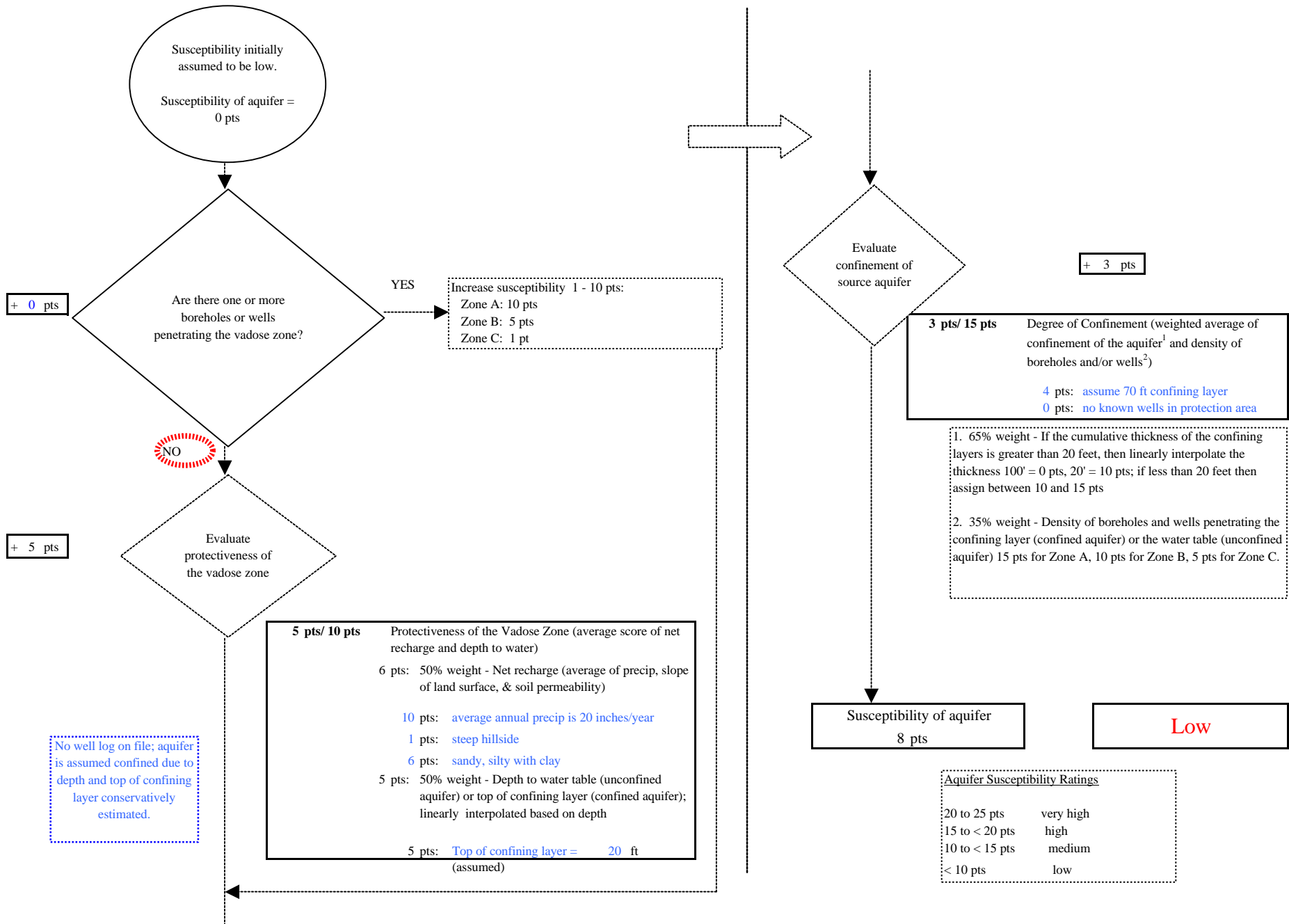
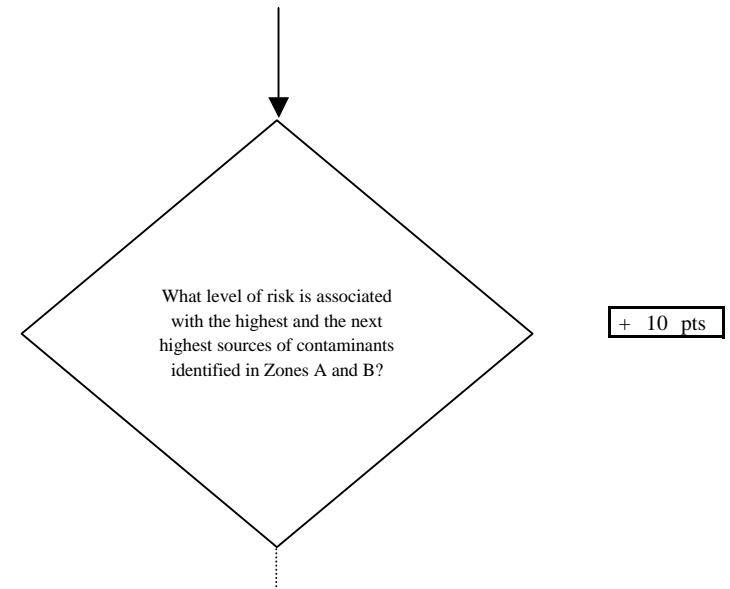
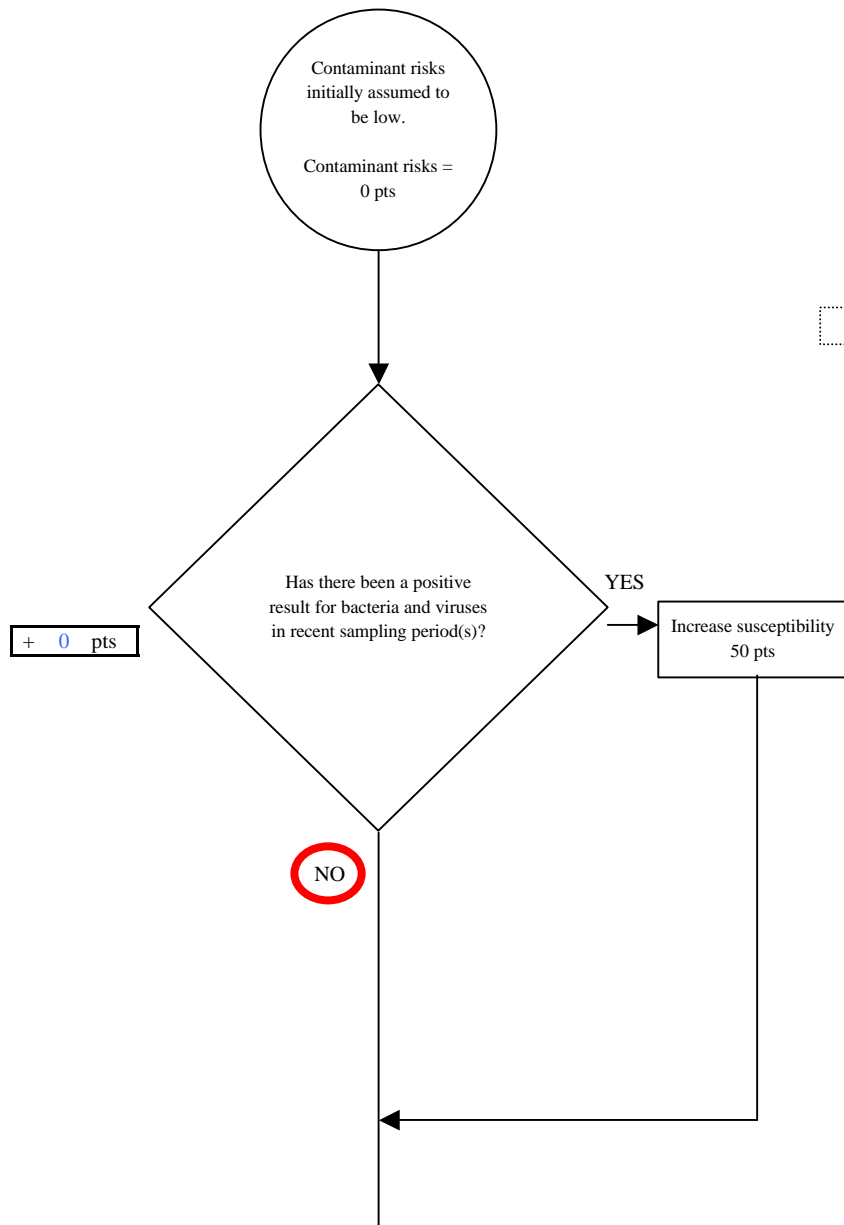


Chart 3. Contaminant risks for *Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn - Bacteria & Viruses*



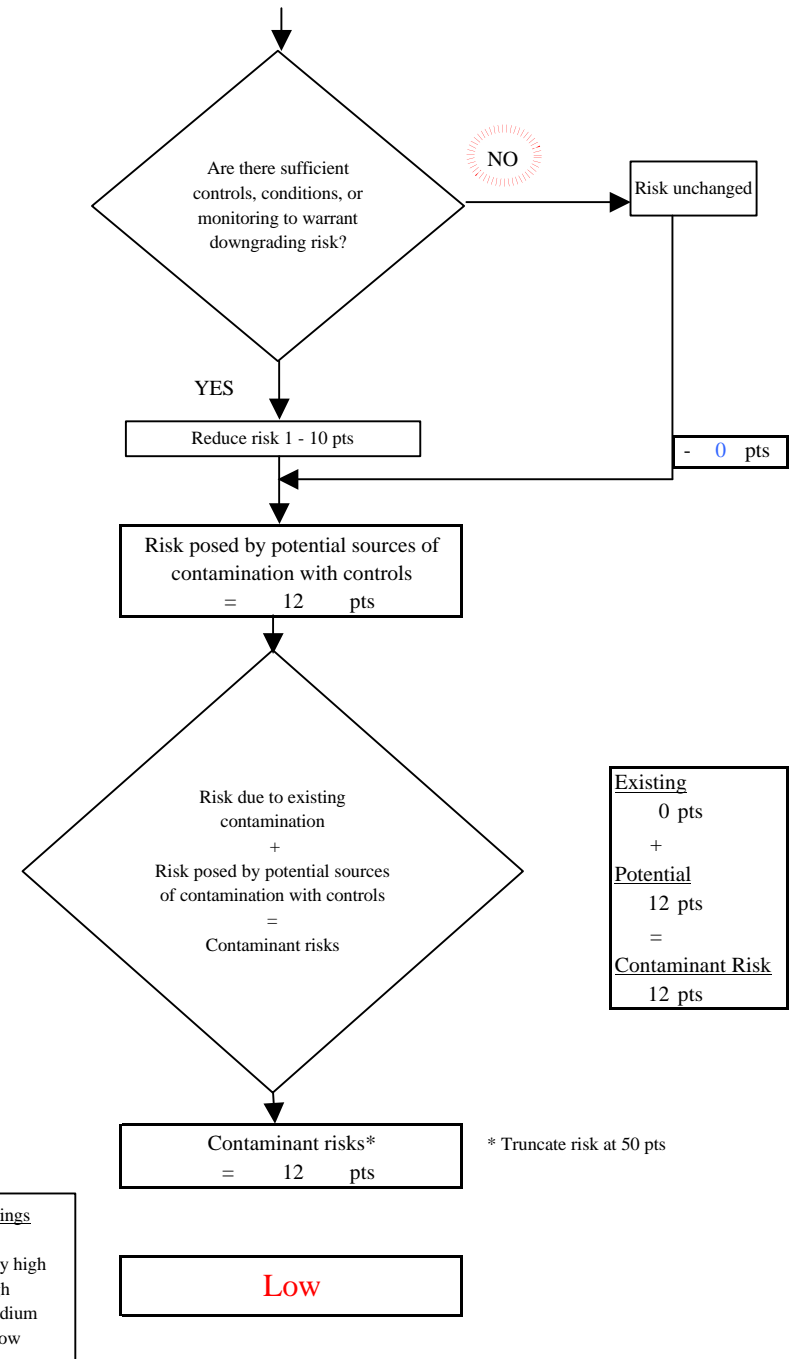
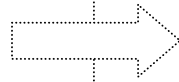
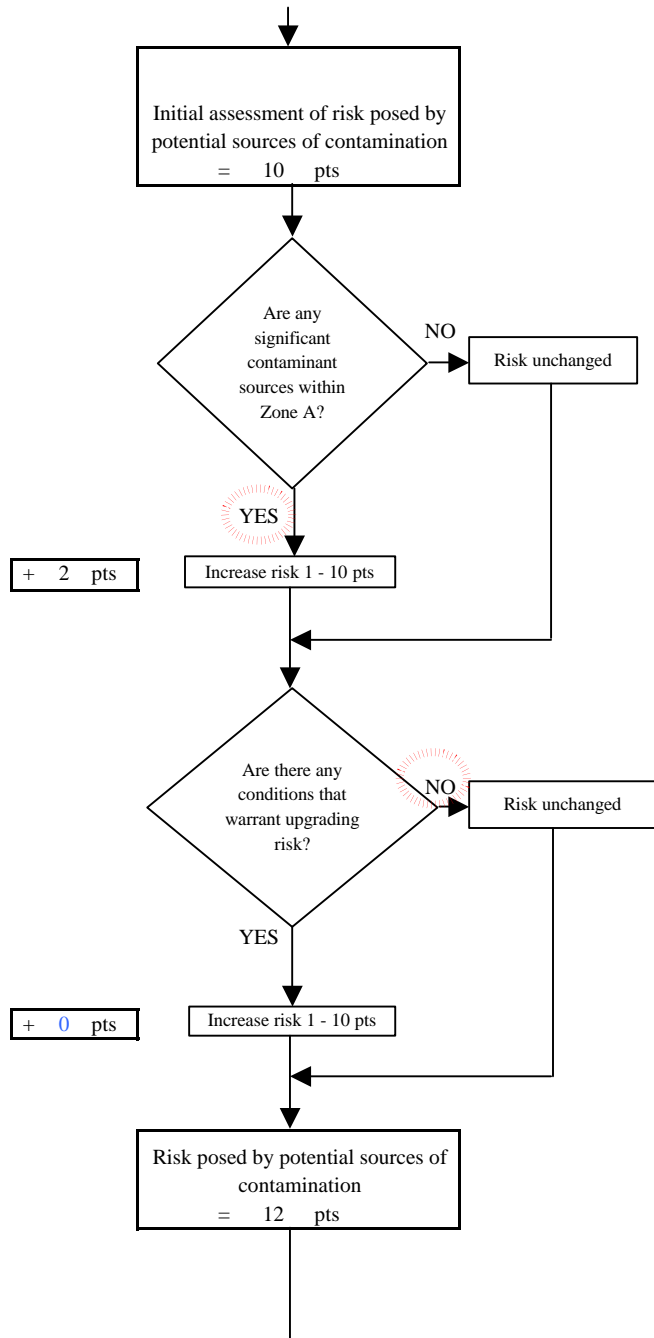
Risk Rankings for Contaminant Sources Identified in Zones A and B			
	Zone A	Zone B	Total
Very Highs(s)	0	0	0
High(s)	0	0	0
Medium(s)	0	0	0
Low(s)	1	0	1

	LOW 10 pts	MEDIUM 20 pts	HIGH 30 pts	VERY HIGH 40 pts
LOW	≥ 10 sources + 10 pts	≥ 10 sources + 5 pts	≥ 20 sources + 5 pts	----
MEDIUM	----	≥ 2 sources + 5 pts	≥ 5 sources + 5 pts	≥ 10 sources + 5 pts
HIGH	----	----	≥ 1 source + 10 pts	≥ 2 sources + 10 pts
VERY HIGH	----	----	----	≥ 1 source + 10 pts

Matrix Score 10

Note: Septic systems, sewerlines, and roads are each assigned a risk ranking for each individual contaminant source in the CSI. The VA, however, counts these contaminant sources as a group and assigns a calculated number of either "lows" or "mediums" based on the density.

**Chart 3. Contaminant risks for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn - Bacteria & Viruses**



**Chart 4. Vulnerability analysis for *Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn* - Bacteria & Viruses**

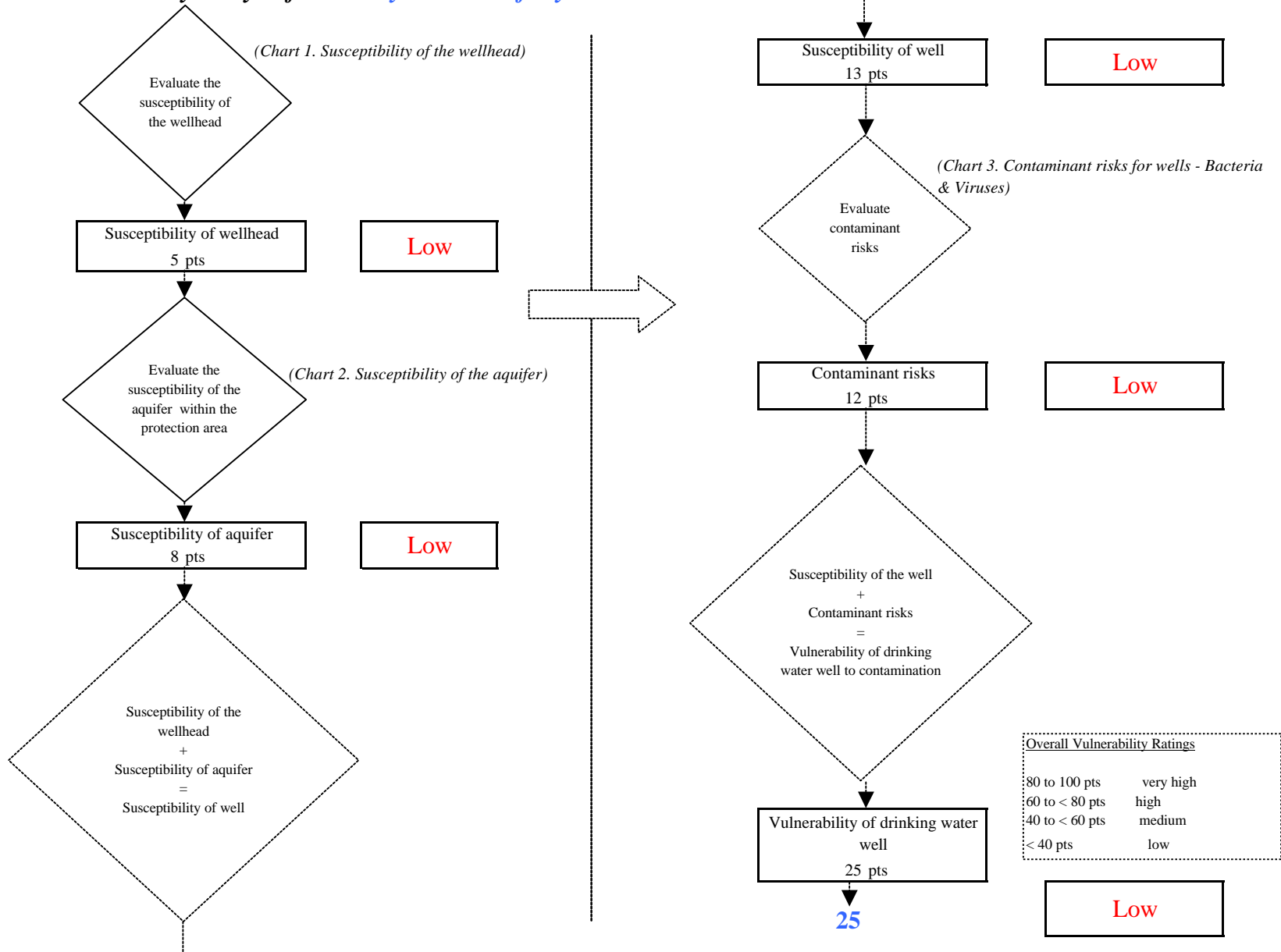


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for *Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn* - Nitrates and Nitrites

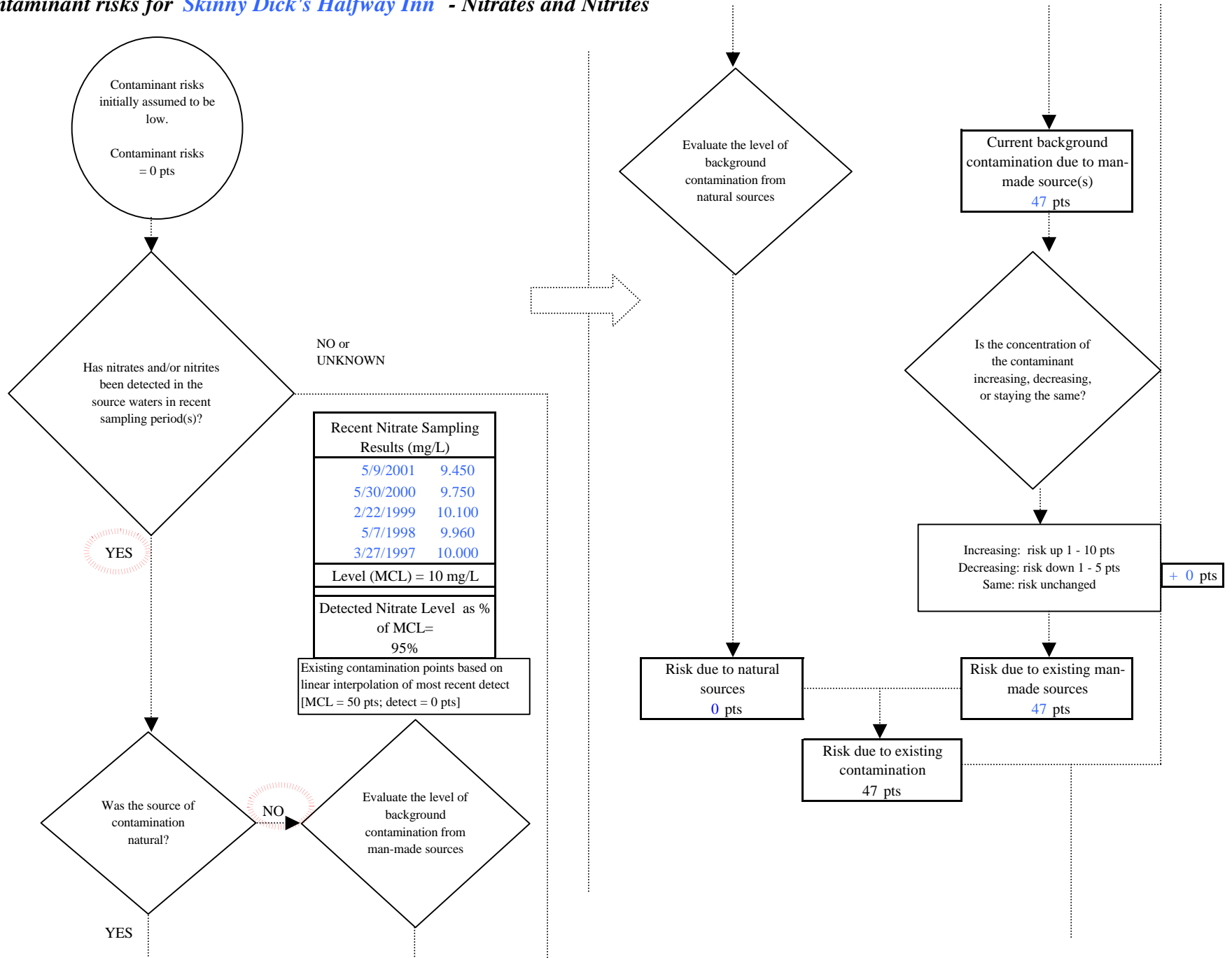




Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn - Nitrates and Nitrites

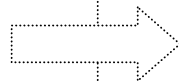
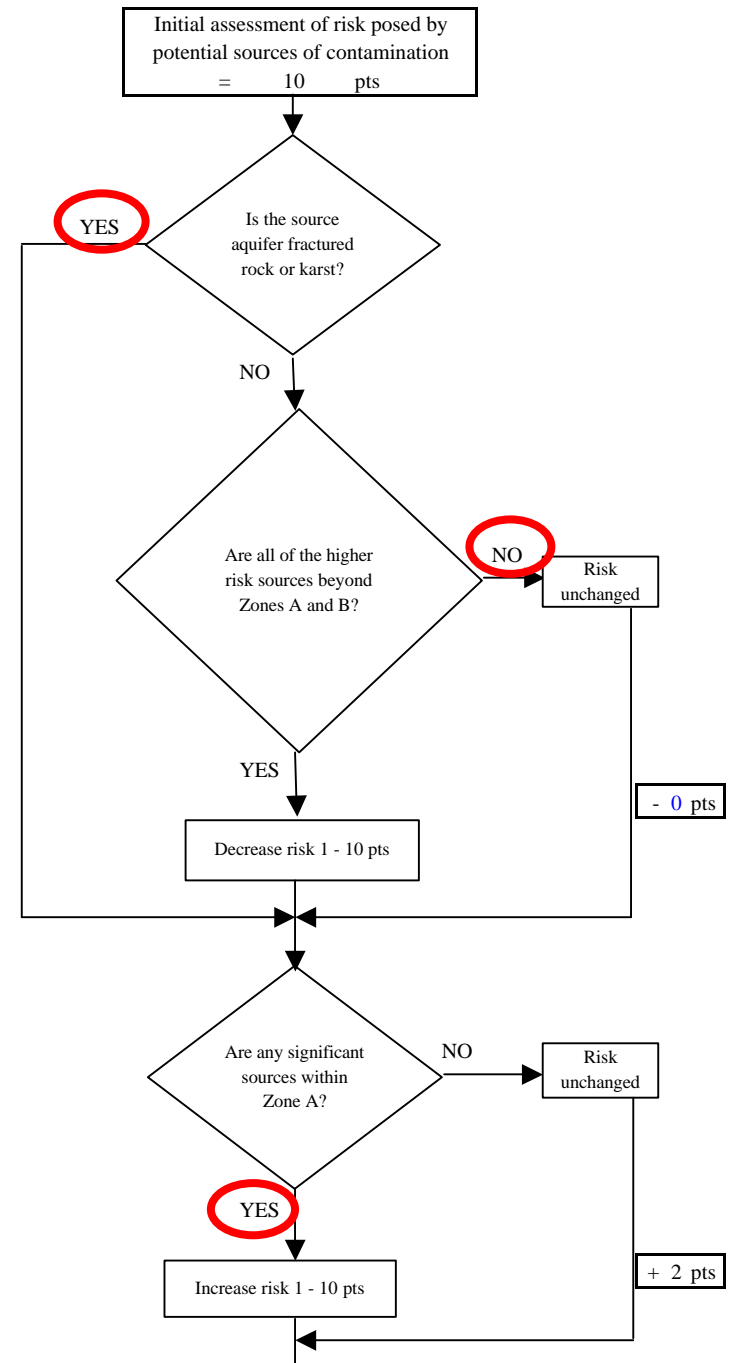
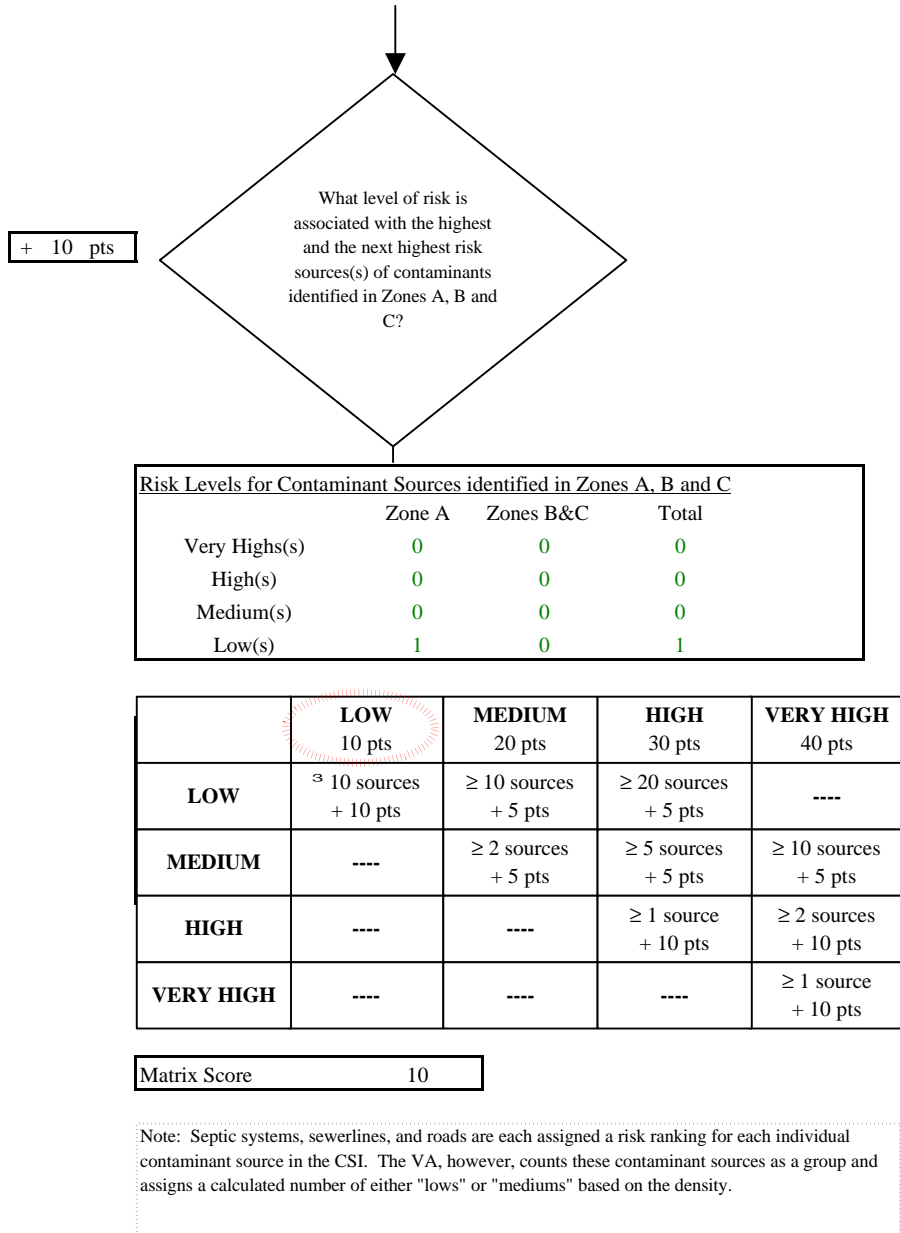
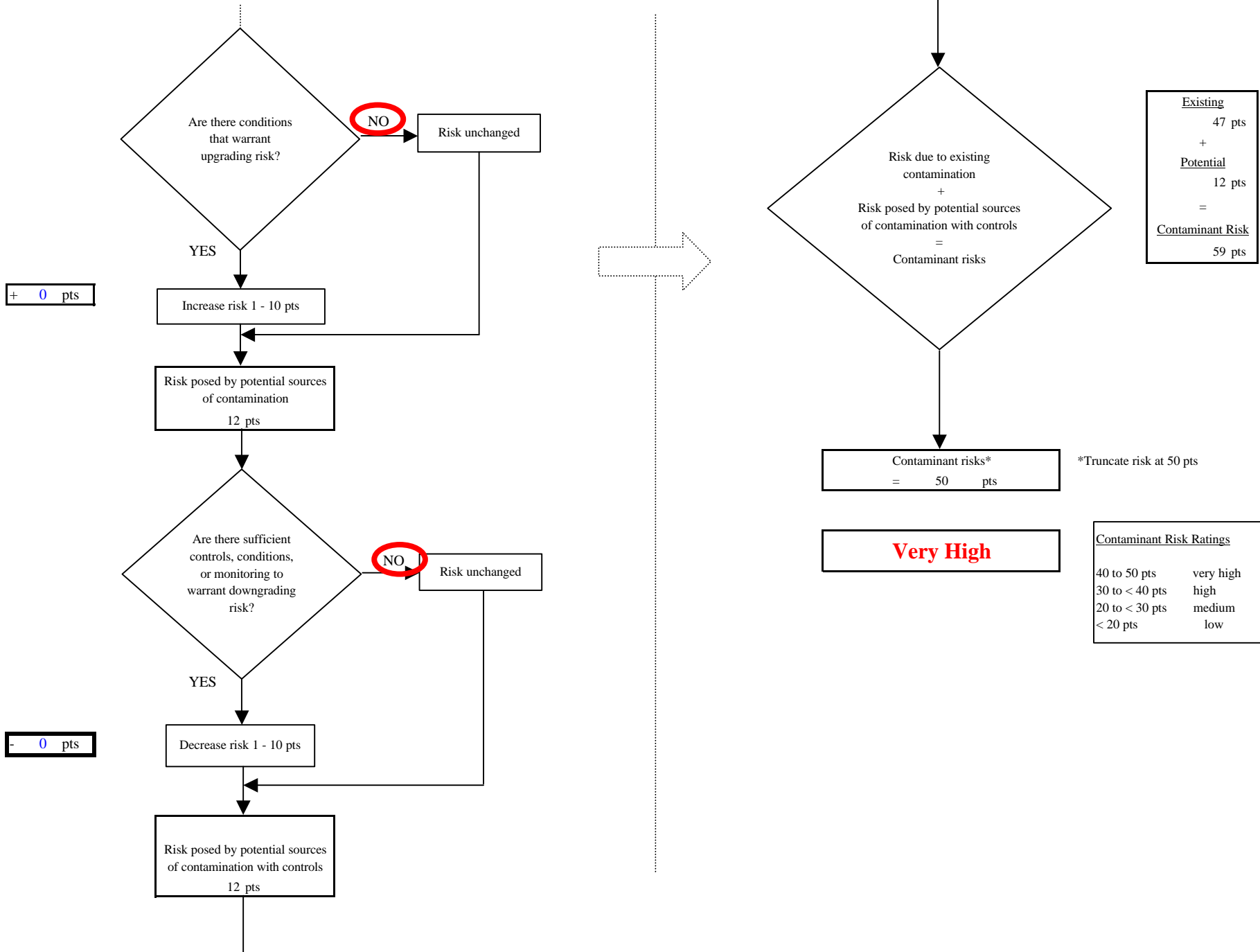


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn - Nitrates and Nitrites



**Chart 6. Vulnerability analysis Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn - Nitrates and Nitrites**

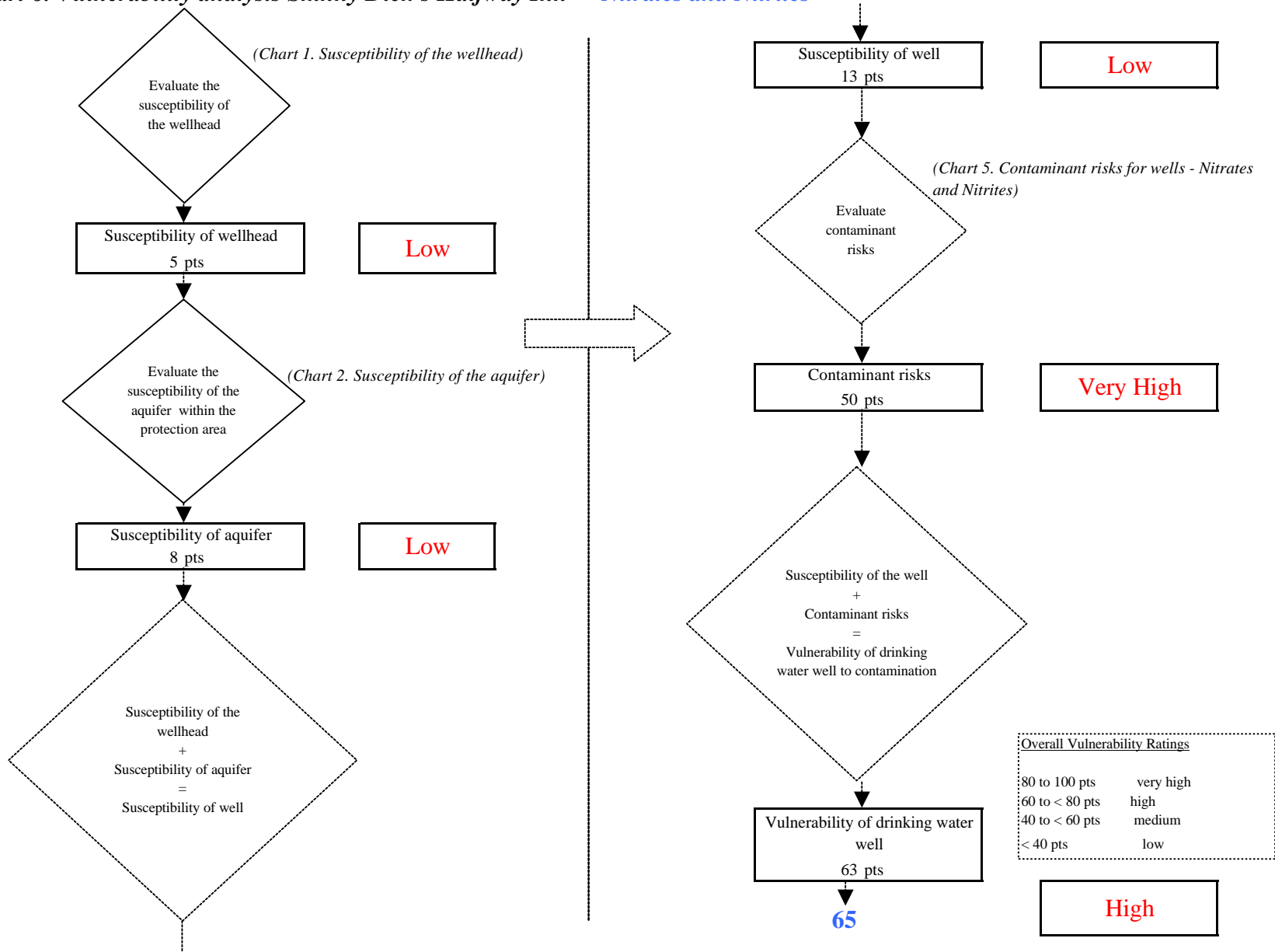
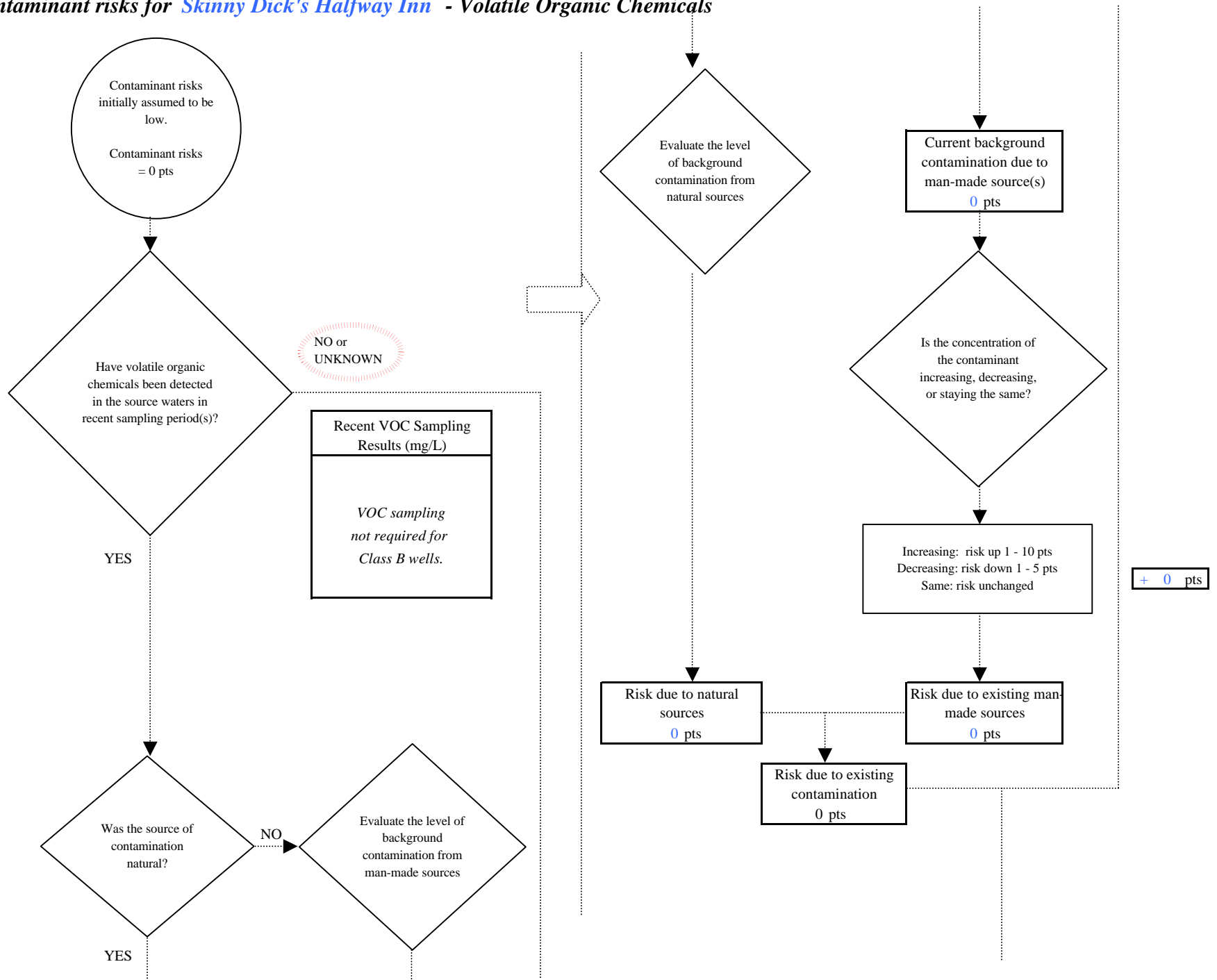
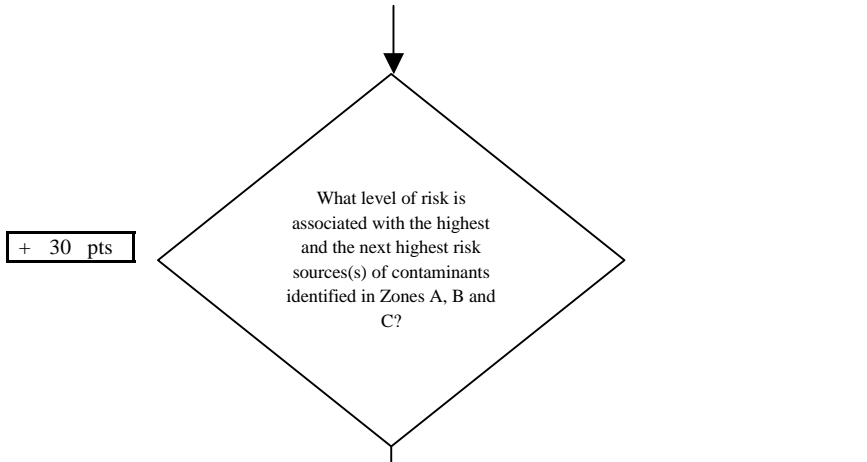


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for *Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn* - Volatile Organic Chemicals



**Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn - Volatile Organic Chemicals**



+ 30 pts

Risk Levels for Contaminant Sources identified in Zones A, B and C			
	Zone A	Zones B&C	Total
Very High(s)	0	0	0
High(s)	1	0	1
Medium(s)	0	0	0
Low(s)	1	0	1

	LOW 10 pts	MEDIUM 20 pts	HIGH 30 pts	VERY HIGH 40 pts
<b>LOW</b>	≥ 10 sources + 10 pts	≥ 10 sources + 5 pts	≥ 20 sources + 5 pts	----
<b>MEDIUM</b>	----	≥ 2 sources + 5 pts	≥ 5 sources + 5 pts	≥ 10 sources + 5 pts
<b>HIGH</b>	----	----	≥ 1 source + 10 pts	≥ 2 sources + 10 pts
<b>VERY HIGH</b>	----	----	----	≥ 1 source + 10 pts

Matrix Score 30

Note: Septic systems, sewerlines, and roads are each assigned a risk ranking for each individual contaminant source in the CSI. The VA, however, counts these contaminant sources as a group and assigns a calculated number of either "lows" or "mediums" based on the density.

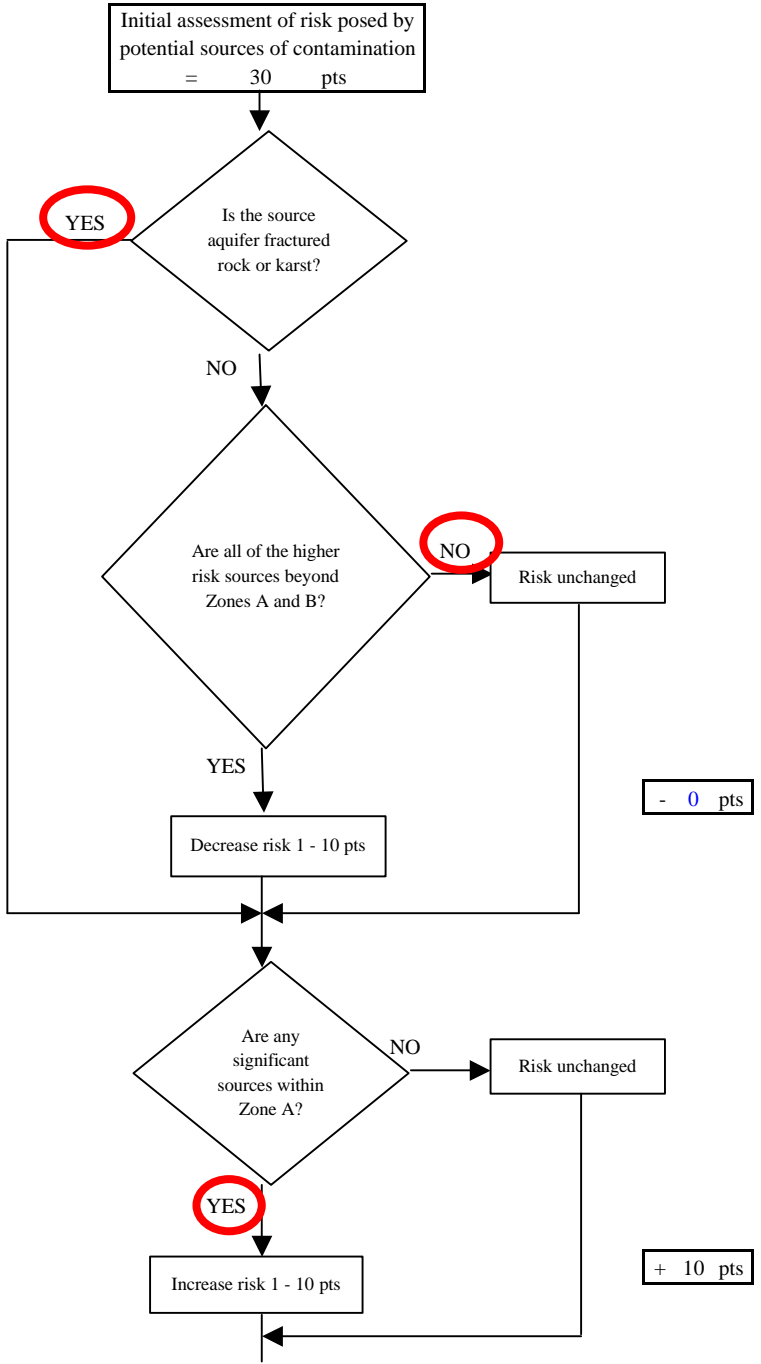
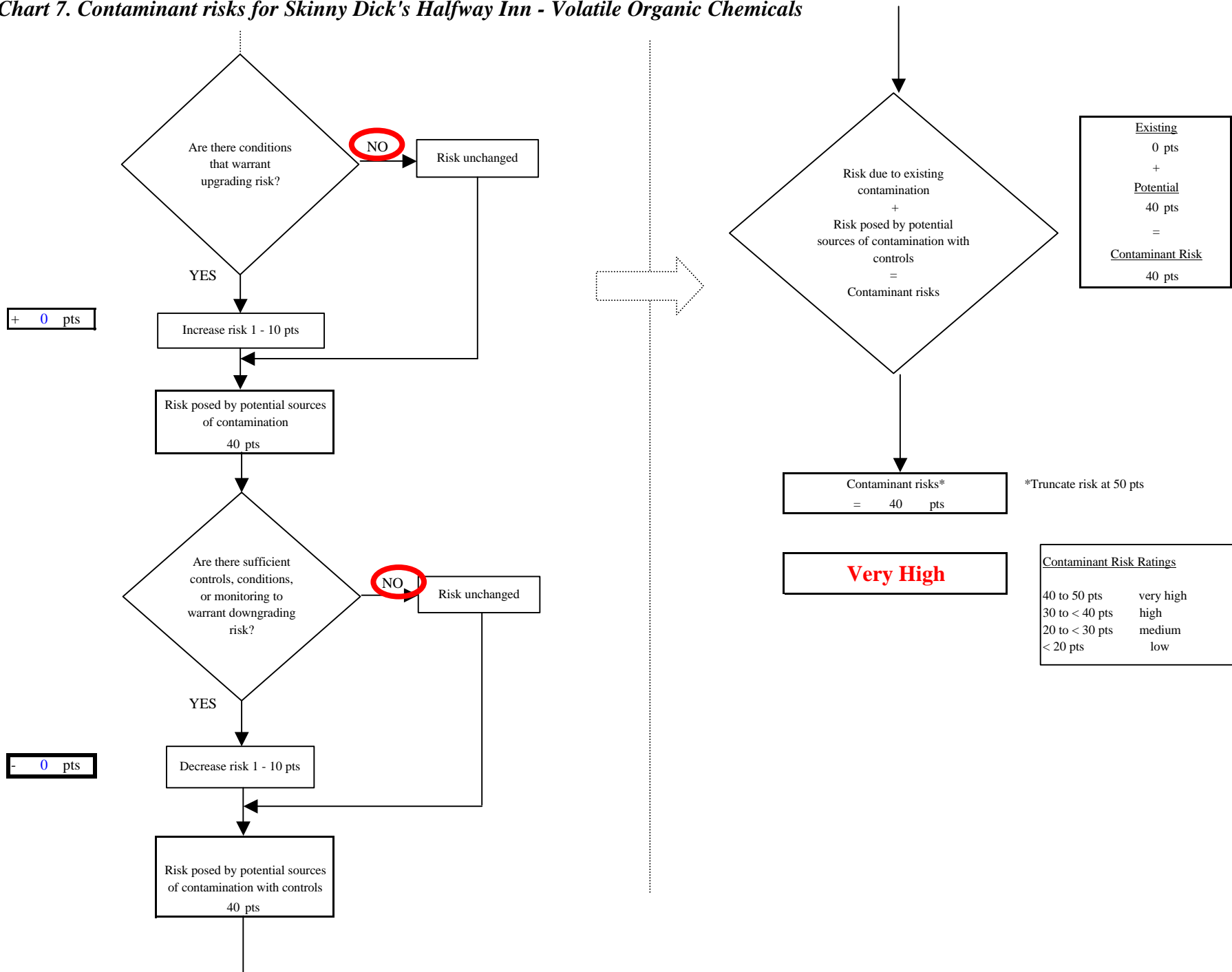


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn - Volatile Organic Chemicals



**Chart 8. Vulnerability analysis for *Skinny Dick's Halfway Inn* - Volatile Organic Chemicals**

