

## **Source Water Assessment**

A Hydrogeologic Susceptibility and Vulnerability Assessment for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Drinking Water System, Ninilchik, Alaska PWSID # 248103 June 2003

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT # 654 Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

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By Ecology & Environment, Inc.

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT # 654

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 Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Source of Public Drinking Water, Ninilchik, Alaska

By Ecology & Environment, Inc.

## Drinking Water Protection Program Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

## **Executive Summary**

Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system consisting of one well in Ninilchik, Alaska. The wellhead received a susceptibility rating of Low and the aguifer received a susceptibility rating of High. Combining these two ratings produces a Low rating for the natural susceptibility of the well. Identified potential and current sources of contaminants for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook public drinking water source include: roads, residential areas and active logging areas. 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 source for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook received a vulnerability rating of **High** for bacteria and viruses. Low for nitrates and nitrites, and Low 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 Ninilchik Area**

#### Location

Ninilchik is located at mile 134 to 138 of the Sterling Highway, on the Kenai Peninsula, approximately 180 miles south of Anchorage and 38 miles southwest of the City of Kenai (see the inset of Map 1 in Appendix A). The population was 772 in 2000 (ADCED 2003). The economy centers on commercial and sport fishing, and tourism.

#### Precipitation

The Ninilchik area averages about 17.5 inches of precipitation per year (WCI 2003). The region receives approximately 53 inches of annual snowfall (ACRC 2003).

#### **Topography and Drainage**

Ninilchik is located between the base of the Caribou Hills and Cook Inlet, at the mouth of the Ninilchik River. Deep Creek enters the Inlet just to the south. The topography is relatively gentle, with some small hills. Drainage patterns are often poorly defined in the Ninilchik lowlands, and hummocky terrain and muskeg are the predominant features. Channels draining the Caribou Hills uplands are better defined (Savard & Scully, 1984).

#### **Groundwater Use**

The majority of households in the Ninilchik area either have private wells, or haul their own water. There is a community well operated by the Ninilchik Village Council. Two-thirds of residences have individual septic systems; the remainder use outhouses. A little over half of the residences are occupied on a seasonal basis (ADCED 2003).

#### **Geology and Soils**

The vast majority of sediments exposed along the western side of the Kenai Peninsula are Quaternary sediments (Magoon, Adkison, and Egbert, 1976). These sediments are from former glacial streams, abandoned-channel deposits, glacial moraines and deposits from existing streams (Glass, 1996). They generally consist of a combination of sand, gravel, silt, and clay. There can be significant variation in the composition of sediment layers over relatively small areas. As a consequence, aquifers in the area may be either confined or unconfined, depending on the local sequence of sediment layers (Glass, 1996). The Tertiary-aged Sterling Formation is exposed along the shoreline cliffs of eastern Cook Inlet, from approximately Kasilof to Happy Valley. It comprises sandstone, siltstone and some coal (Magoon, Adkison, and Egbert, 1976).

## Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Public Drinking Water System

Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system. The system consists of one well located at mile 136 of the Sterling Highway.

The well was installed on July 7, 1994 to a total depth of 35 feet. The condition of the sanitary seal is unknown. A properly installed sanitary seal may provide protection against contaminants from entering the source waters at the well casing. The site is properly drained and the well is grouted. Proper grouting provides added protection against contaminants traveling along the well casing and into source waters. The well operates from April to September and serves an unknown number of non-residents.

## **Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook 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 is 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 this aquifer were derived from Freeze and Cherry (1979), Glass (1996), and from a review of well logs in the area found in the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and United States Geological Survey databases. 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

Zone	Definition
А	<sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> the distance to the 2-year time-of-travel
В	Less than the 2-year time-of-travel
С	Less than the 5-year time-of-travel
D	Less than the 10 year time-of-travel

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 Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook 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 the drinking water protection area were associated with residential and light industrial type activities. The sources are displayed on Map 2 of Appendix C and summarized in the tables in Appendix B.

## **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. 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 Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Drinking Water Source

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 achieved by analyzing 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 well for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook is completed in a confined aquifer. Confined aquifers are somewhat protected from migration of water from the surface by an overlying low-permeability layer, such as a clay. However, contaminants at the surface have the potential to impact this aquifer adversely because wells penetrating the aquifer can act as conduits. The confining layers in this area can be somewhat discontinuous, which also increases the susceptibility of the aquifer. Table 2 shows the Susceptibility scores and ratings for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook (see Charts 1 and 2).

#### Table 2. Susceptibility

	Score	Rating
Susceptibility of the Wellhead	0	Low
Susceptibility of the Aquifer	19	High
Natural Susceptibility	19	Low

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 or 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 (see Charts 3, 5, and 7).

#### Table 3. Contaminant Risks

Category Bacteria and Viruses	Score 50	<b>Rating</b> Very High
Nitrates and/or Nitrites	16	Low
Volatile Organic Chemicals	12	Low

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).

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 (see Charts 4, 6, and 8).

 
 Table 4. Overall Vulnerability to Contamination by Category

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	70	High
Nitrates and Nitrites	35	Low
Volatile Organic Chemicals	30	Low

#### **Bacteria and Viruses**

The contaminant risk for bacteria and viruses is Very High. Only a small amount of bacteria and viruses are required to endanger public health. Due to the detection of bacteria and viruses during recent water sampling, the score on Chart 2 is the maximum score. However, that score has been downgraded to reflect that the last positive test occurred in 1998, and that subsequent tests have showed nondetectable concentrations of bacteria and viruses. The roads and residential areas represent the risk to the drinking water well (See Chart 3 – Contaminant Risks for Bacteria and Viruses in Appendix D).

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

#### **Nitrates and Nitrites**

The contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites is Low with the roads, residential areas and active logging areas representing the risk to this source of public drinking water (See Chart 5 - Contaminant Risks for Nitrates and/or Nitrites in Appendix D). Nitrates are very mobile, moving at approximately the same rate as water.

The last five years' sampling history for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook public water source indicates the most recent concentration detected was 0.800 mg/L on 5/20/96, which represents 8% of the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL). While nitrates and nitrites can occur naturally in groundwater, a level of 20% of the MCL or more is considered to be due to manmade sources. Water with levels of nitrates and nitrites below 100% of the MCL is considered safe to drink by ADEC. After combining the contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to contamination by nitrates and nitrites is Low.

#### **Volatile Organic Chemicals**

The contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals is Low with the roads, residential areas and active logging areas representing the risk for volatile organic chemicals (See Chart 7 – Contaminant Risks for Volatile Organic Chemicals in Appendix D).

Residents in the area typically heat their homes with various types of on-site fuel sources, including propane and heating oil stored in aboveground or underground storage tanks. Although this report does not address heating oil tanks (unless their location is known), they can pose a risk of volatile organic chemical contamination to drinking water sources. The most common causes of fuel leaks of these heating oil systems are overfilling the tank, ruptured fuel lines, leaking storage tanks, damaged or faulty valves and vandalism. Secondary containment around the tank and regular system maintenance can help prevent many of these harmful fuel leaks and help protect the drinking water supply.

Class B water systems generally are not required to test for volatile organic chemicals. After combining the potential contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to contamination by volatile organic chemicals is Low.

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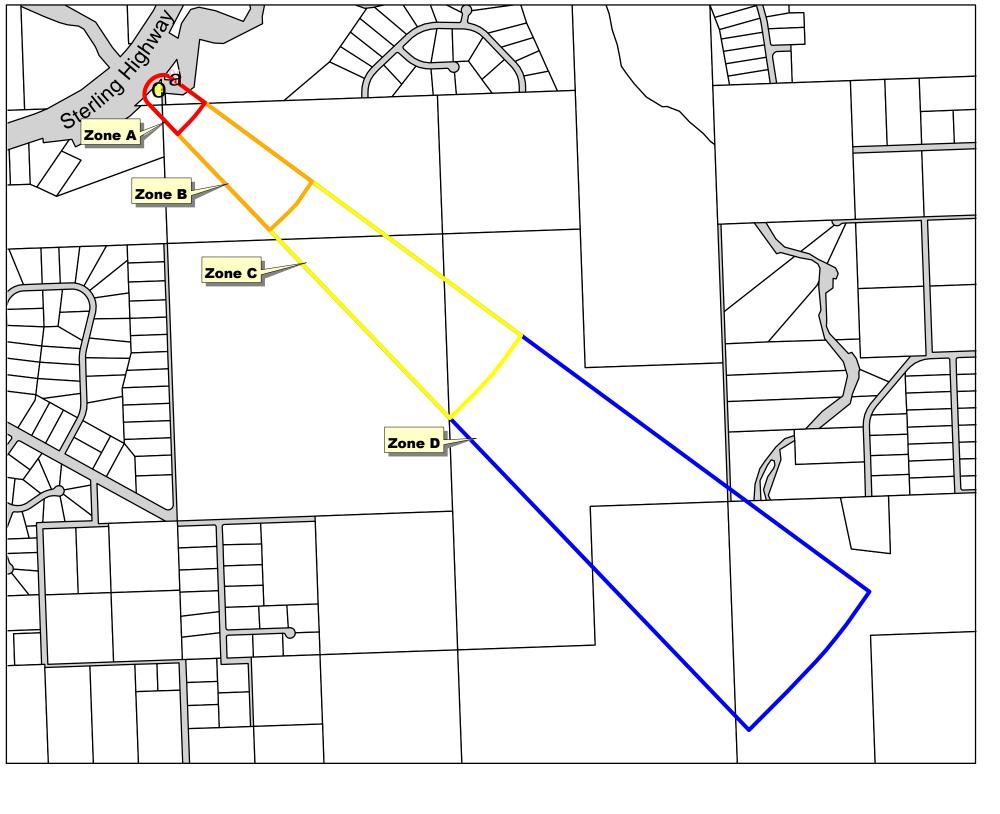
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## **APPENDIX A**

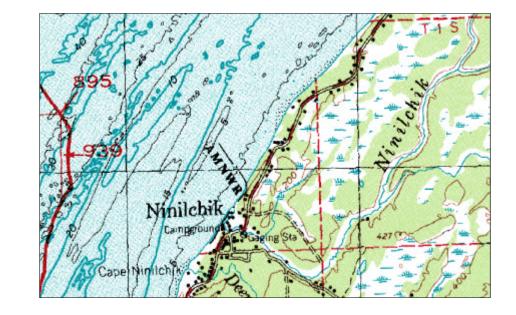
## Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Drinking Water Protection Area (Map 1)

# Drinking Water Protection Area for Division of Parks-Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook



1000





0 1000 2000 3000 4000 Feet

Water Sources

- O Div. Parks Deep Creek South Well
  - Div. Parks Deep Creek North Well
  - Zone A (Few Months Travel Time)
  - Zone B (Less Than 2 Years Travel Time)
  - Zone C (Less Than 5 Years Travel Time)
- Zone D (Less Than 10 Years Travel Time)



Map 1

## **APPENDIX B**

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook (Tables 1-4)

## Contaminant Source Inventory for **Div. Parks Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook**

## PWSID 248103.001

1

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Location	Map Number	Comments
Residential Areas	R01	R1-1	А		2	0.75 acres
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	А		2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-1	С	Palmer, W.I. et al	2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-2	С	Catherine P. Oliver	2	
Residential Areas	R01	R1-2	С		2	45.7 acres

## Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Div. Parks Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Sources of Bacteria and Viruses

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Risk Ranking for Analysis	Location	Map Number Comments
Residential Areas	R01	R1-1	А	Low		2 0.75 acres
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	А	Low		2

## Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Div. Parks Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Sources of Nitrates/Nitrites

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Risk Ranking for Analysis	Location	Map Number	Comments
Residential Areas	R01	R1-1	А	Low		2	0.75 acres
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	А	Low		2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-1	С	Low	Palmer, W.I. et al	2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-2	С	Low	Catherine P. Oliver	2	
Residential Areas	R01	R1-2	С	Low		2	45.7 acres

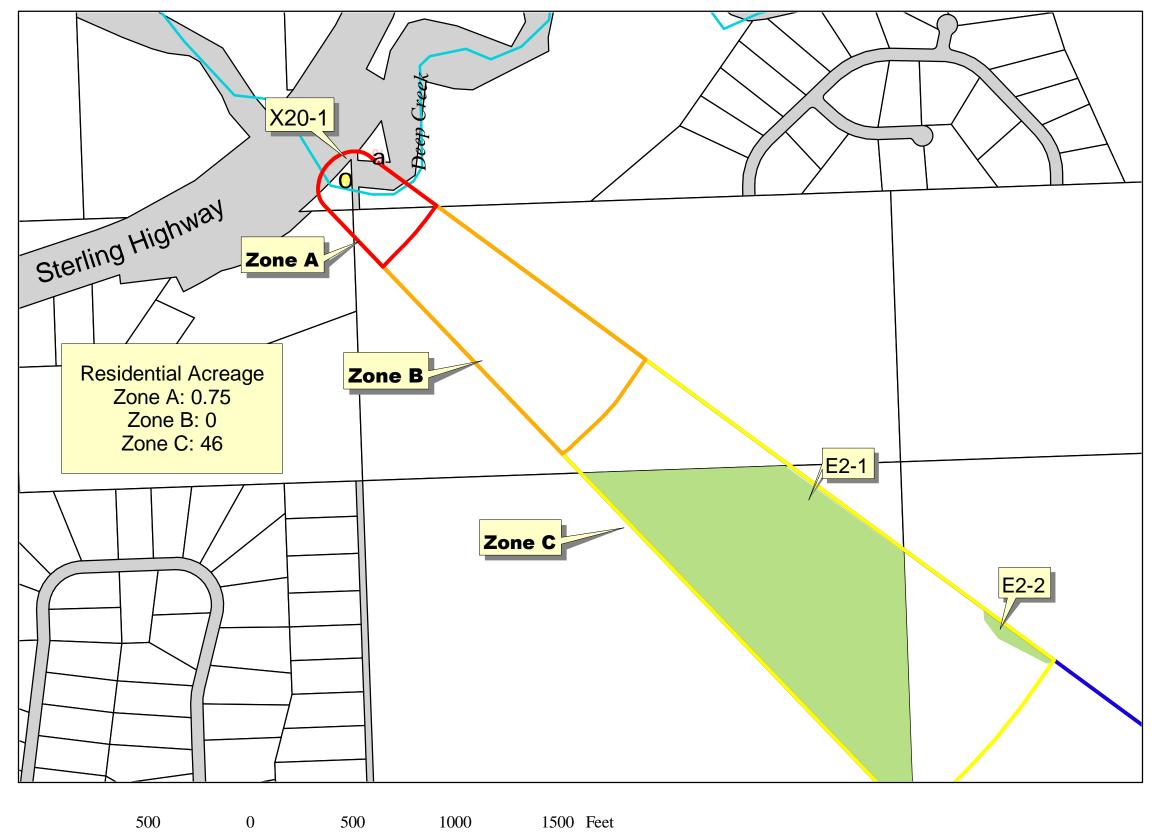
## Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Div. Parks Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Sources of Volatile Organic Chemicals

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Risk Ranking for Analysis	Location	Map Number	Comments
Residential Areas	R01	R1-1	А	Low		2	0.75 acres
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	А	Low		2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-1	С	Low	Palmer, W.I. et al	2	
Logging (active)	E02	E2-2	С	Low	Catherine P. Oliver	2	
Residential Areas	R01	R1-2	С	Low		2	45.7 acres

## **APPENDIX C**

Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Drinking Water Protection Area and Potential and Existing Contaminant Sources (Map 2)

# Drinking Water Protection Area for Division of Parks-Deep Creek South and Existing and Potential Sources of Contamination



**PWSID 248103.001** 

Water Sources

- O Div. Parks Deep Creek South-Well
- a Div. Parks Deep Creek North-Well
- Zone A (Few Months Travel Time)
- Zone B (Less Than 2 Years Travel Time)
- Zone C (Less Than 5 Years Travel Time)
- Zone D (Less Tha 10 Years Travel Time)
- Logging Areas



Map 2

## **APPENDIX D**

Vulnerability Analysis for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook Public Drinking Water Source (Charts 1-8)

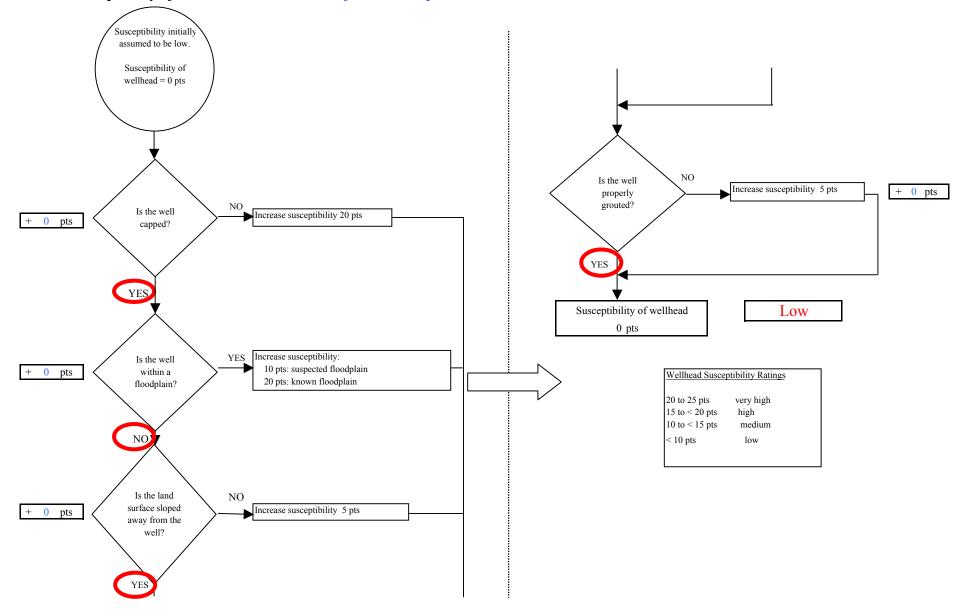
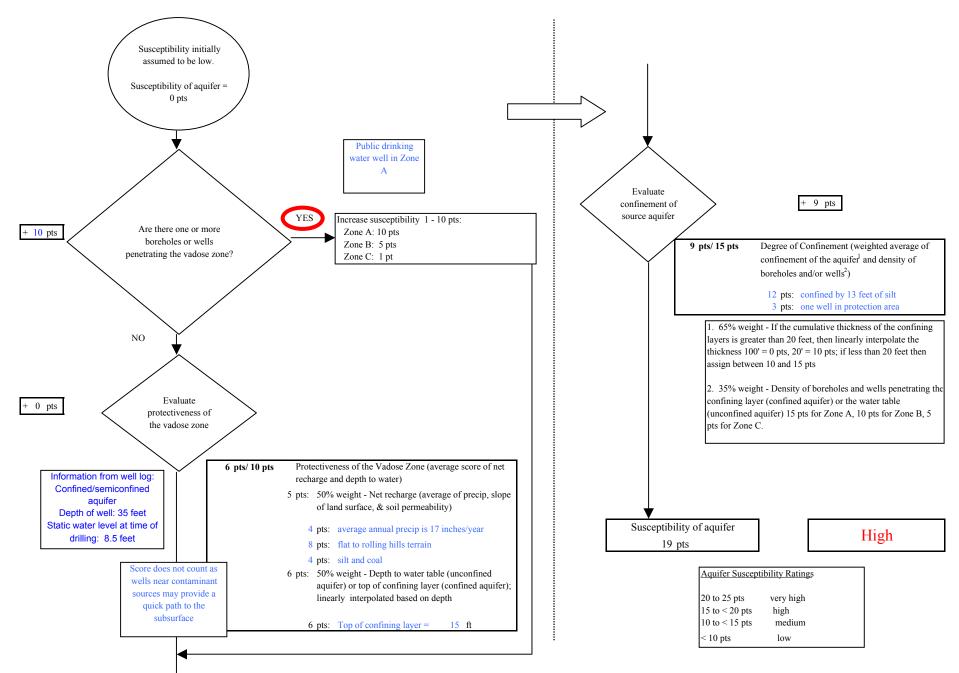
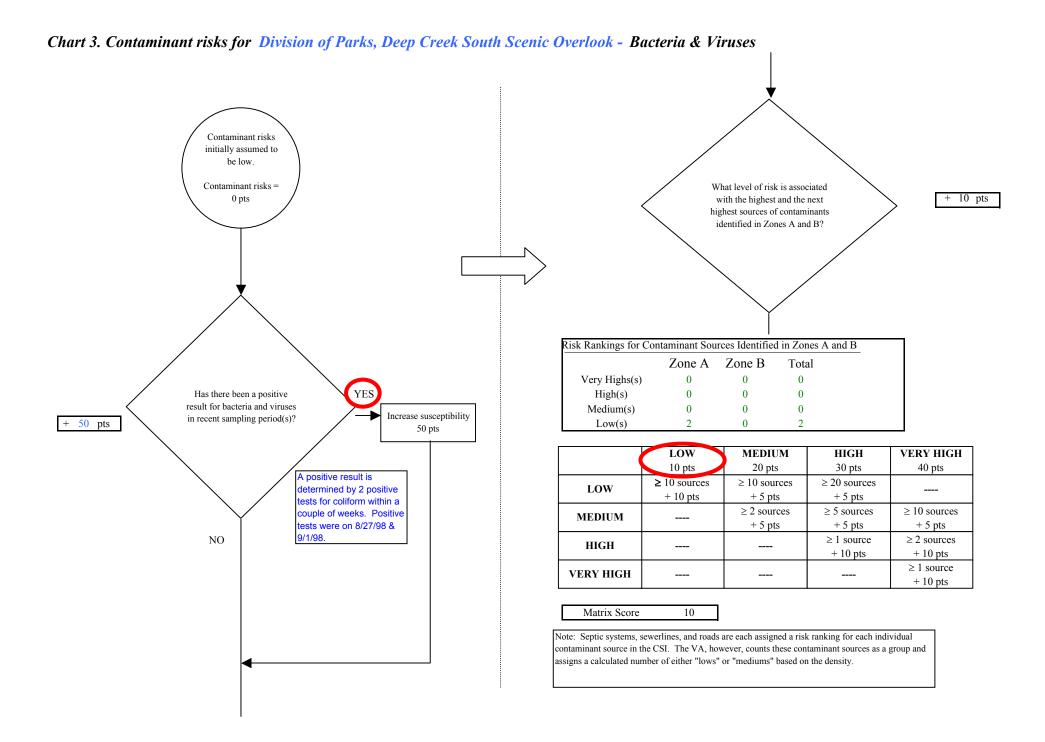
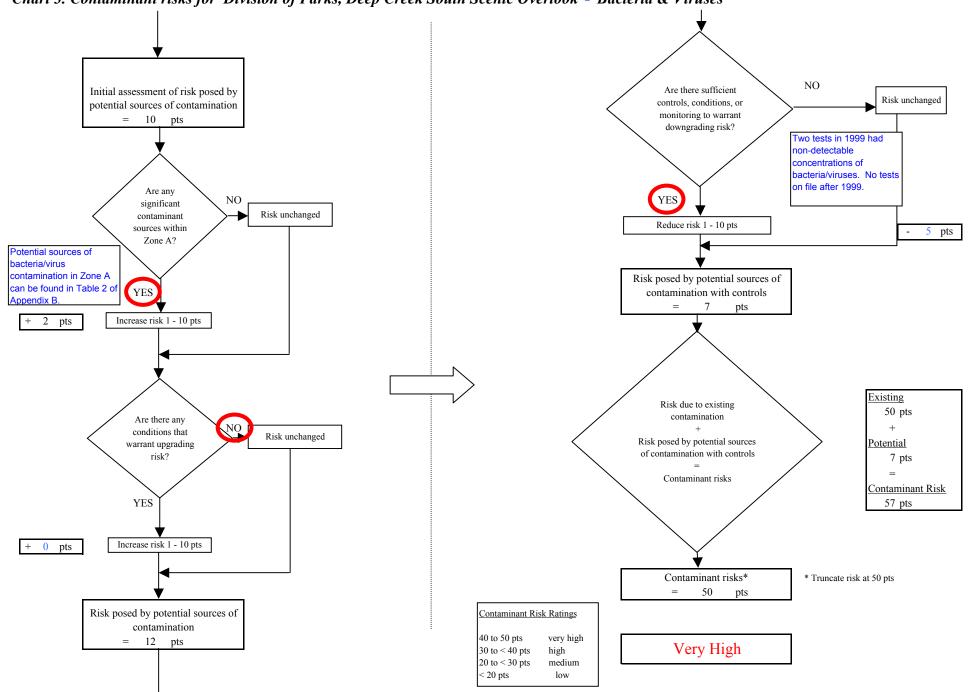


Chart 1. Susceptibility of the wellhead - Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook









## Chart 3. Contaminant risks for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook - Bacteria & Viruses

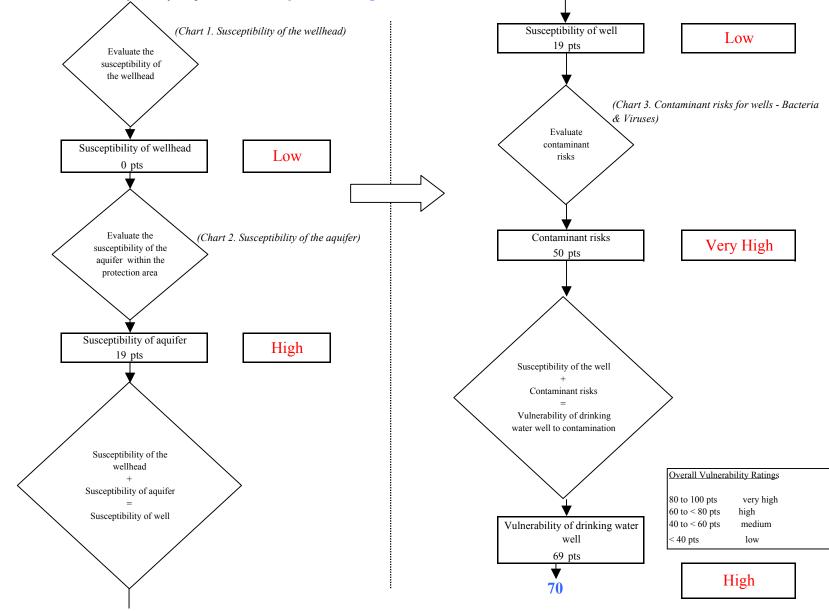
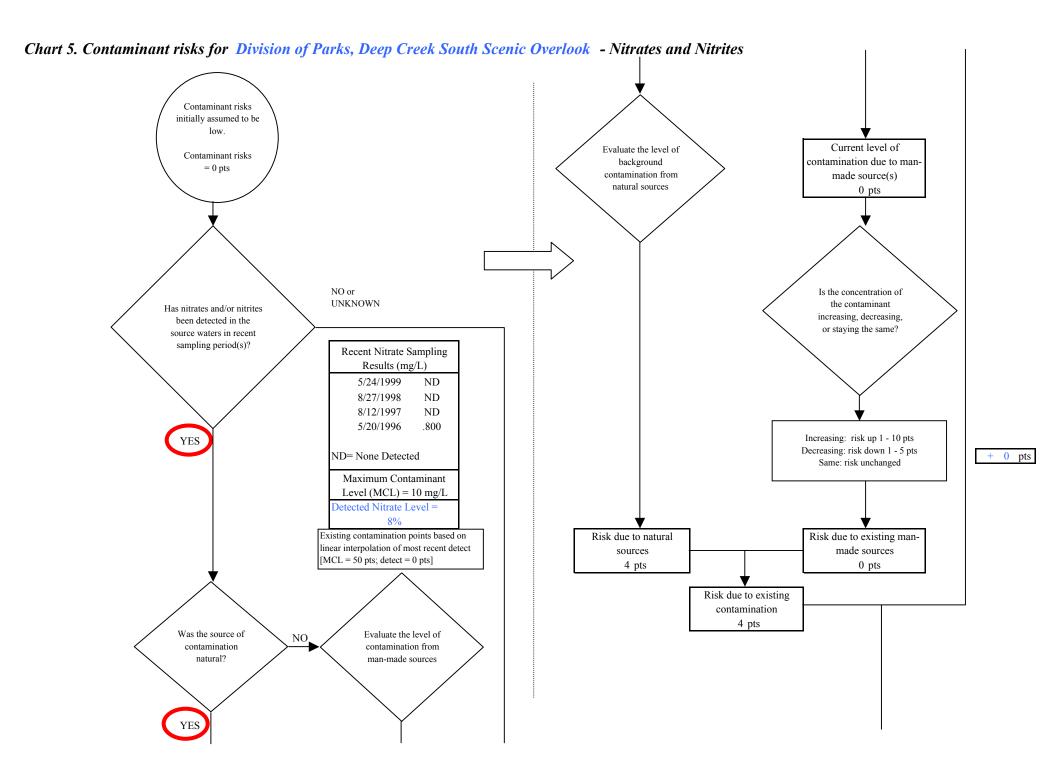
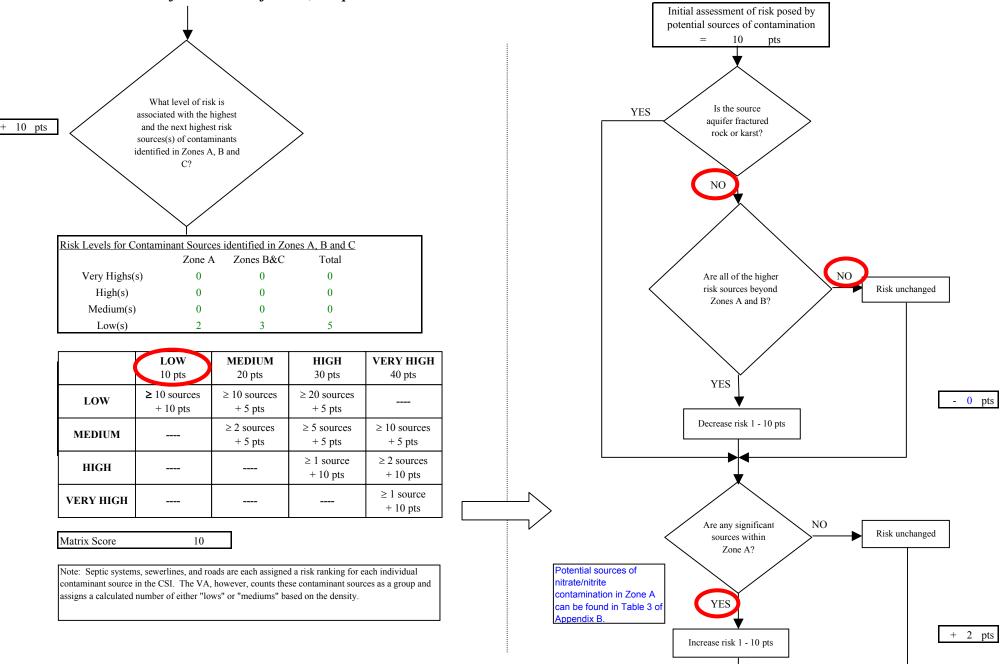


Chart 4. Vulnerability analysis for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook - Bacteria & Viruses





## Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook - Nitrates and Nitrites

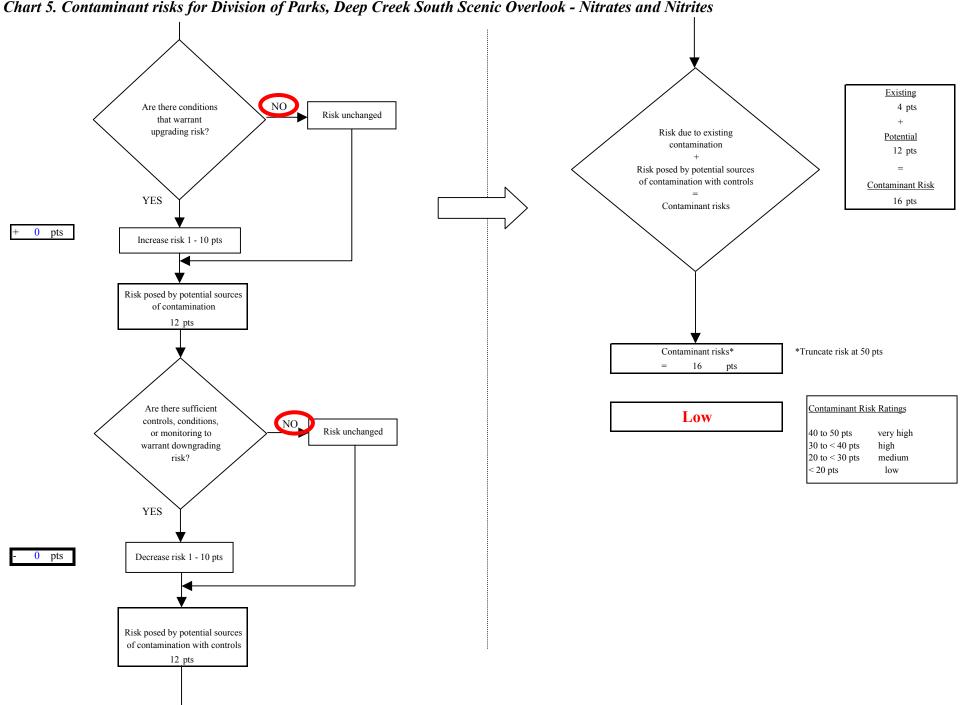


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook - Nitrates and Nitrites

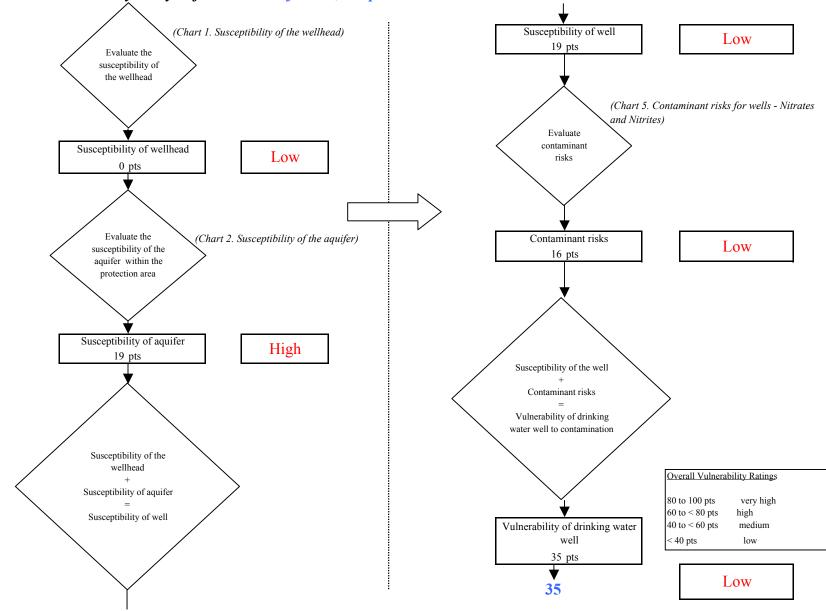
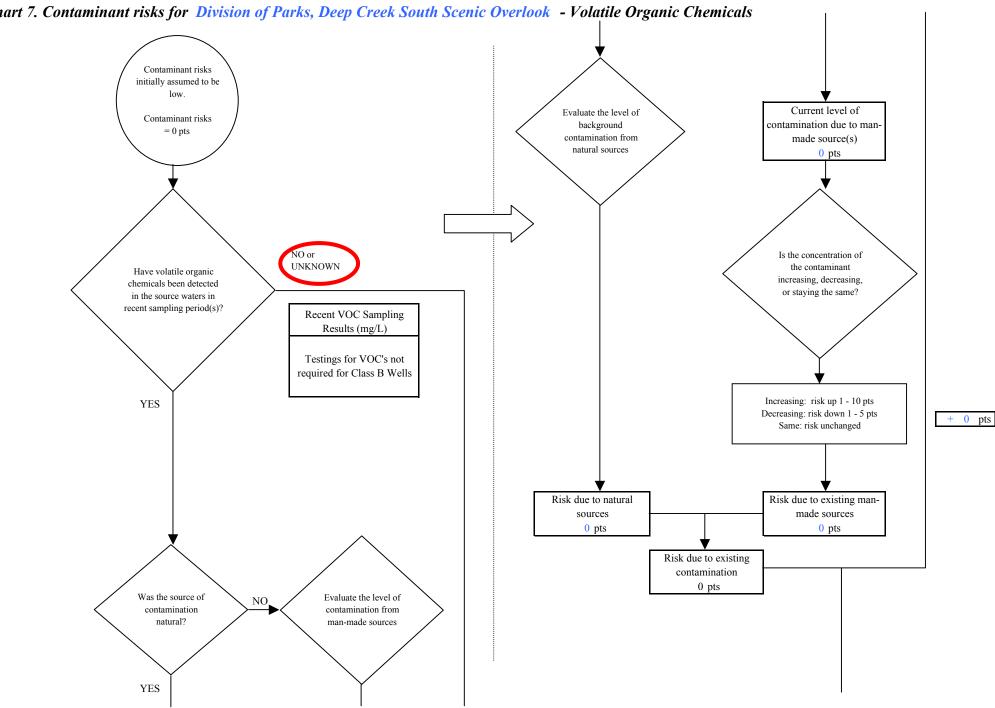
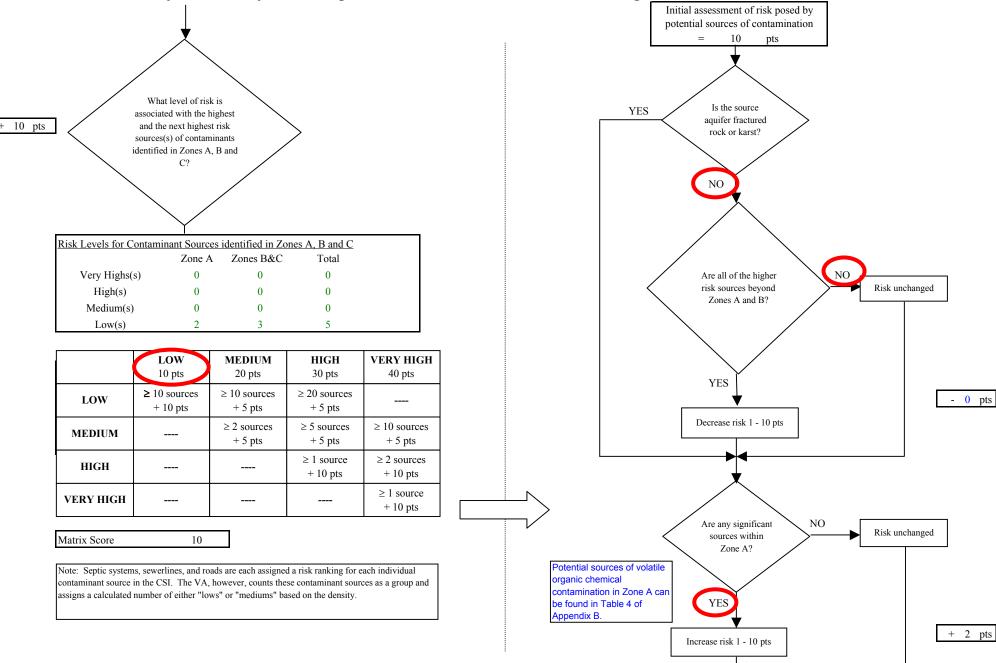


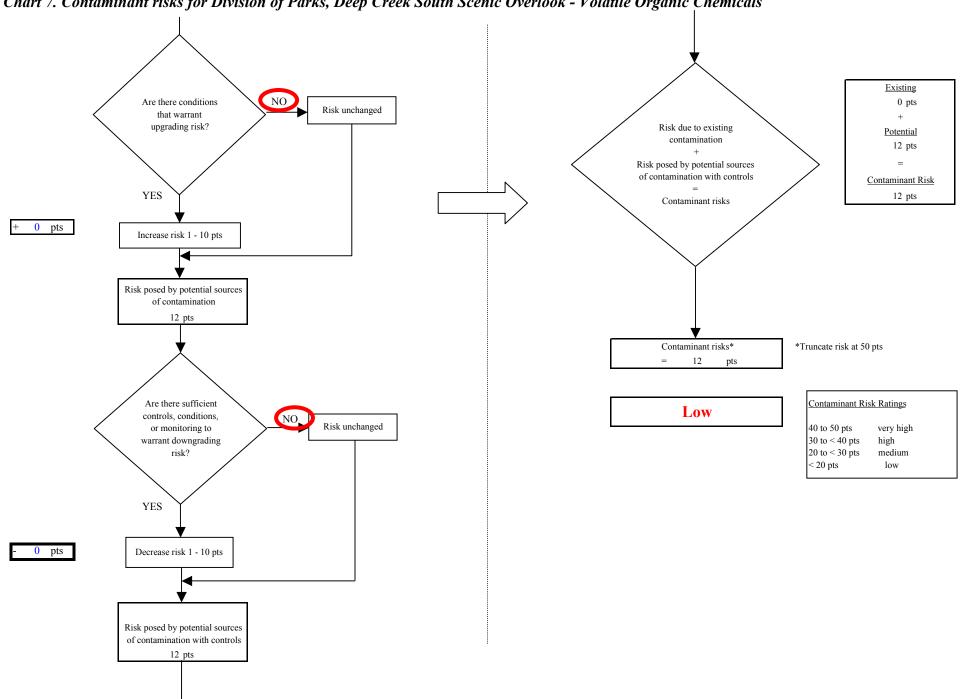
Chart 6. Vulnerability analysis for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook - Nitrates and Nitrites







## Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook - Volatile Organic Chemicals





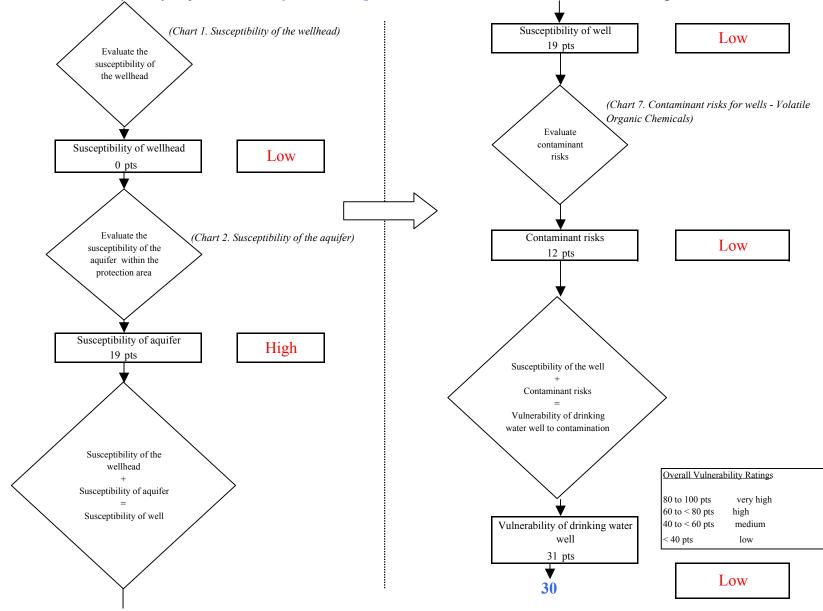


Chart 8. Vulnerability analysis for Division of Parks, Deep Creek South Scenic Overlook - Volatile Organic Chemicals