

Source Water Assessment

A Hydrogeologic Susceptibility and
Vulnerability Assessment for
Northway Airport Motel,
Northway, Alaska
PWSID #380248

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT NO. 896

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Source Water Assessment for Northway Airport Motel, Northway, Alaska PWSID #380248

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT NO. 896

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.

CONTENTS

SECTION		Page
	Executive Summary	1
	Northway Airport Motel Public Drinking Water System	1
	Northway Airport Motel Drinking Water Protection Area	1
	Inventory of Potential and Existing Contaminant Sources	2
	Ranking of Contaminant Risks	2
	Vulnerability of Northway Airport Motel Drinking Water System	2
	References	5

TABLES

TABLE		
	1. Definition of Zones	2
	2. Susceptibility	3
	3. Contaminant Risks	3
	4. Overall Vulnerability	3

APPENDICES

APPENDIX		
	A. Northway Airport Motel Drinking Water Protection Area (Map 1)	
	B. Contaminant Source Inventory for Northway Airport Motel (Table 1)	
	Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Northway Airport Motel – Bacteria and Viruses (Table 2)	
	Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Northway Airport Motel - Nitrates/Nitrites (Table 3)	
	Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Northway Airport Motel – Volatile Organic Chemicals (Table 4)	
	C. Northway Airport Motel Drinking Water Protection Area and Potential and Existing Contaminant Sources (Map 2)	
	D. Vulnerability Analysis for Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Northway Airport Motel Public Drinking Water Source (Charts 1 – 8)	

Source Water Assessment for Northway Airport Motel, Northway, Alaska

Drinking Water Protection Program Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The public water system for Northway Airport Motel is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system consisting of one well. The Northway Airport Motel is located at Mile 7, Northway Road, Northway, Alaska. The wellhead received a susceptibility rating of **Low** and the aquifer received a susceptibility rating of **Medium**. Combining these two ratings produces a **Low** rating for the natural susceptibility of the well. Identified potential and current sources of contaminants for Northway Airport Motel public drinking water source include large-capacity septic systems; aboveground heating oil tanks; DEC-recognized contaminated site; airports; and paved highways and roads. 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 Northway Airport Motel received a vulnerability rating of **Medium** for bacteria and viruses; nitrates and nitrites; and volatile organic chemicals.

NORTHWAY AIRPORT MOTEL PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SYSTEM

Northway Airport Motel public water system is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system. The Northway Airport Motel is located at Mile 7, Northway Road, Northway, Alaska (See Map 1 of Appendix A). Northway presently consists of three settlements: Northway Junction, at milepost 1264, Northway, at the airport, and the Native village, 2 miles north. Northway lies within the Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge, 42 miles from the Canadian border. The population of Northway is approximately 350.

Northway averages about 10 inches of precipitation per year, snowfall is 30 inches annually. Over half of the households are not plumbed. Due to high groundwater and deep permafrost, individual water wells and septic systems often freeze.

The Northway area topography is characterized by a series of rugged mountains and plateaus separated by wide valleys and lowlands. The elevation of Northway is 1,710 feet. Drainages along this area generally flow northwest.

According to a Sanitary Survey dated June 26, 2002, the existing well was installed in 1983 with 5-inch diameter casing to a depth of 260 feet below ground surface. It is assumed that the length of the well screen is 10 feet. The Survey indicates that the land surface is sloped away from the well, providing adequate surface water drainage. Because the well was installed prior to 1992, it is assumed that the well is not grouted according to ADEC standards. Proper grouting provides added protection against contaminants traveling along the well casing and into source waters.

This system operates year round and serves approximately 12 residents and 50 non-residents through one service connection.

NORTHWAY AIRPORT MOTEL 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 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 estimated from information contained in the well logs and/or the Sanitary Survey. 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 Public Water Systems for additional information).

The DWPAs established for wells by the ADEC are usually 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 TOT 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 Northway Airport Motel extends over two miles southeast of the well. Because the upland groundwater system may include fractured bedrock, the TOT may be more rapid than predicted. For this reason, the zones related to TOT have been expanded at the upland base. Development in the vicinity of the well is limited to only Zone A (See Map 1 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 Northway Airport Motel 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 2 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 TOT 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 NORTHWAY AIRPORT MOTEL 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

We assume the well for Northway Airport Motel is completed in an unconfined aquifer. Because unconfined aquifers are recharged by surface water and precipitation that migrates downward from the surface, contaminants at the surface have the potential to adversely impact this aquifer. Table 2 shows the Susceptibility scores and ratings for Northway Airport Motel.

Table 2. Susceptibility

	Score	Rating
Susceptibility of the Wellhead	5	Low
Susceptibility of the Aquifer	12	Medium
Natural Susceptibility	17	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 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	40	Very High
Volatile Organic Chemicals	40	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:

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.

Table 4. Overall Vulnerability

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	55	Medium
Nitrates and Nitrites	55	Medium
Volatile Organic Chemicals	55	Medium

Bacteria and Viruses

The contaminant risk for bacteria and viruses is **Very High** with large-capacity septic systems; and paved highways and roads representing the risks to the drinking water well (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. Recent sampling events indicated no recent positive results were detected for bacteria and viruses. However, after combining the contaminant risks with the overall natural susceptibility of the well, the vulnerability of the well to contamination by bacteria and viruses is **Medium**.

Nitrates and Nitrites

The contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites is **Very High** with large-capacity septic systems; airports; and paved highways and roads representing the risks to this source of public drinking water (See Chart 5 - Contaminant Risks for Nitrates and/or Nitrites in Appendix D). Due to the high solubility and weak retention by soil, nitrates are very mobile, moving at approximately the same rate as water.

Sampling history for Northway Airport Motel indicates that nitrates have not been detected in the water. 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 **Medium**.

Volatile Organic Chemicals

The contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals is **Very High** with large-capacity septic systems; aboveground heating oil tanks; airports; and paved highways and roads the only known risks for volatile organic chemicals (See Chart 7 – Contaminant Risks for Volatile Organic Chemicals in Appendix D).

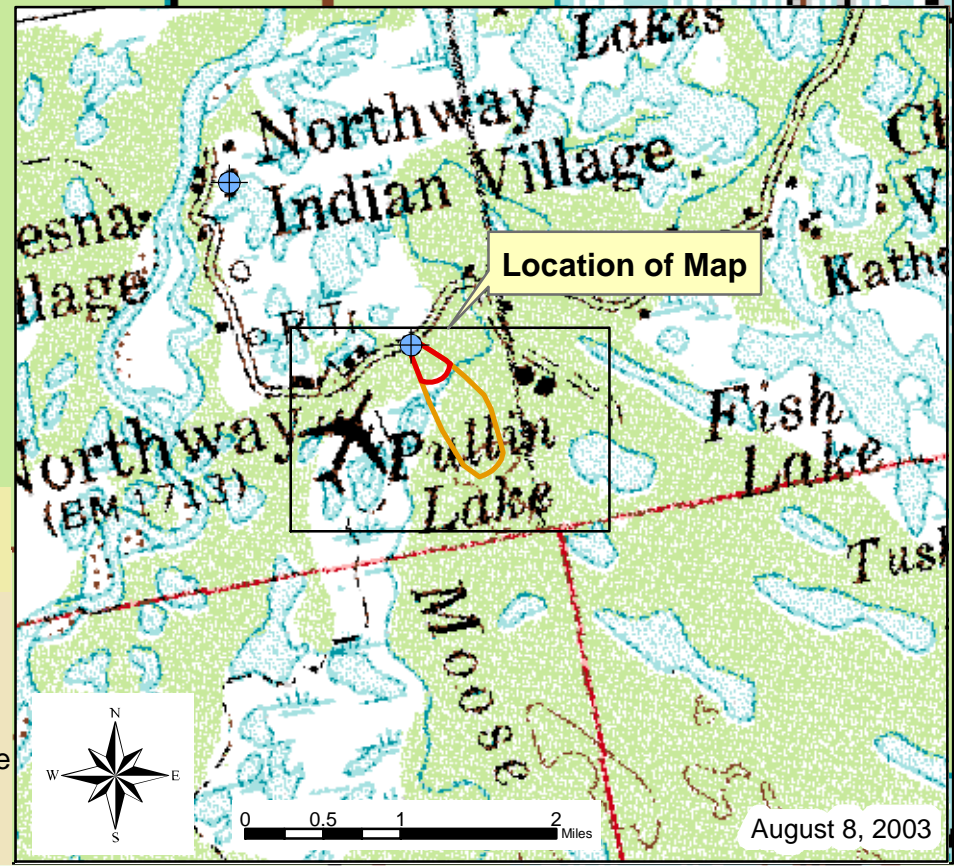
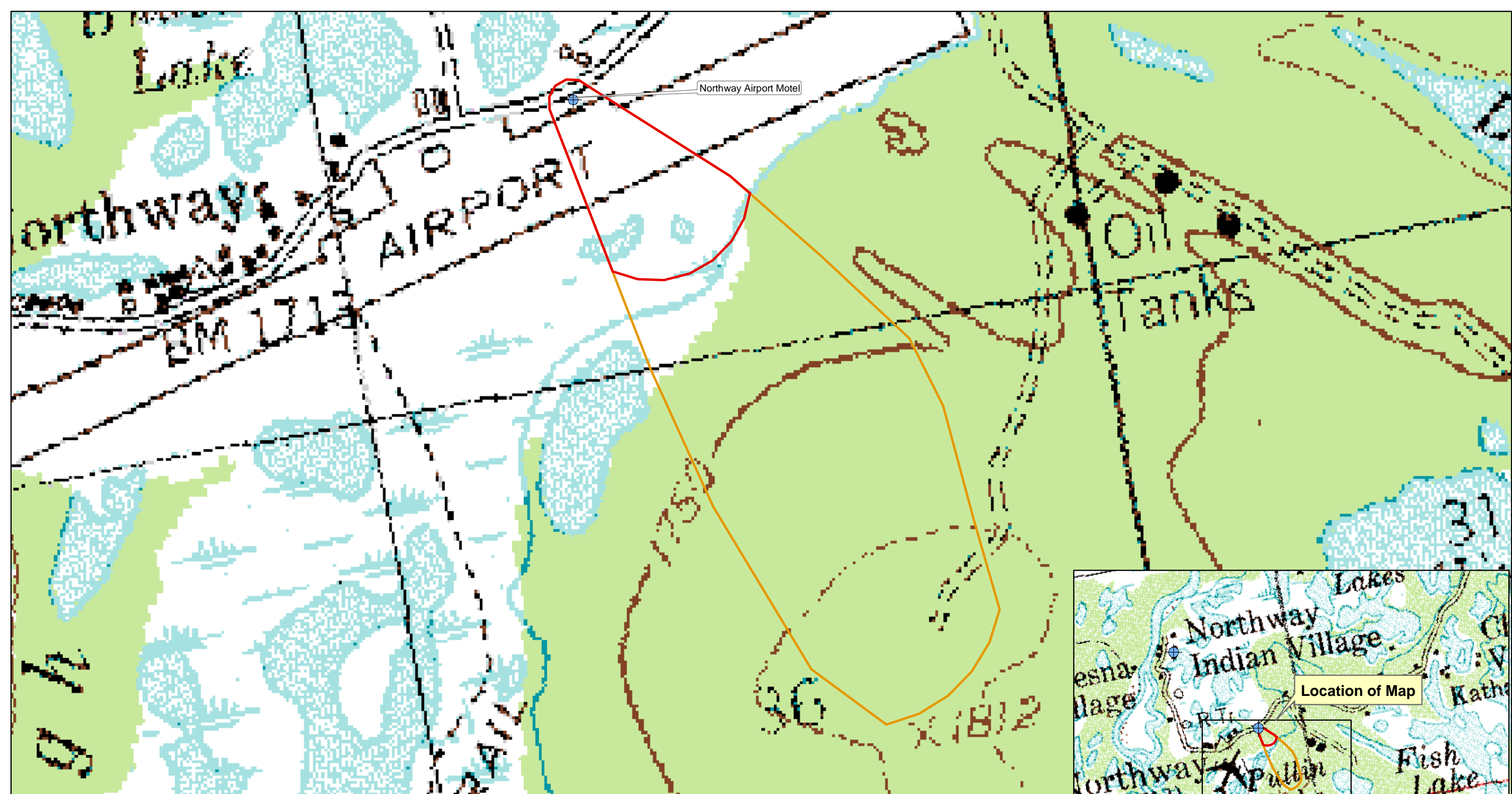
Recent sample data for the drinking water at Northway Airport Motel indicates that volatile organic chemicals have not been detected in the water. However, after combining the contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals with the natural susceptibility of the well, the overall vulnerability of the well to contamination by volatile organic chemicals is **Medium**.

REFERENCES

- Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development, Alaska Community Database, Detailed Community Information (2002). <http://www.dced.state.ak.us/mra/CF_BLOCK.cfm> (2003, September 1).
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Well Log Tracking System (2002). <<http://info.dec.state.ak.us/welts/Default.asp>> (2003, September 1)
- Alaska Geospatial Data Clearinghouse (2003). <<http://agdc.usgs.gov/data/datasets.html>> (2003, September 1)
- Freeze, R. Allen, and John A. Cherry, Groundwater. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall 1979.
- King, P.B., compiler, 1969, Tectonic map of North America: US Geological Survey Map (Scale 1:5,000,000) 2 sheets.
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (2002). <<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/mcl.html#mcls>> (2003, September 1)

APPENDIX A

Northway Airport Motel Drinking Water Protection Area Location Map (Map 1)



Map 1: Northway Airport Motel Drinking Water Protection Areas

PWSID: 380248.001



1:7,745

Data Sources:
Background image - USGS 1:63,000 mapping

Legend

- Public Drinking Water Systems
- DWPA Zone A**
 Several Months Travel Time
- DWPA Zone B**
 Less than 2 Years Travel Time
- DWPA Zone C**
 Less than 5 Years Travel Time
- DWPA Zone D**
 Less than 10 Years Travel Time

August 8, 2003

APPENDIX B

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Northway Airport Motel

(Tables 1-4)

Table 1**Contaminant Source Inventory for
Northway Airport Motel****PWSID 380248.001**

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Map Number	Comments
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	A	2	Northway Airport Motel Septic System
Tanks, heating oil, nonresidential (aboveground)	T14	T14-1	A	2	Northway Airport Motel Heating Oil Tank
Contaminated sites, DEC recognized, non-Superfund, non-RCRA	U04	U04-1	A	2	DEC Recognized Non-Superfund, Non-RCRA Site
Airports	X14	X14-1	A	2	Northway Airport
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	A	2	Road North of Northway Airport Motel
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-2	B	2	Road South of Northway Airport Motel

**Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for
Northway Airport Motel
Sources of Bacteria and Viruses**

PWSID 380248.001

Table 2

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Risk Ranking for Analysis	Map Number	Comments
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	A	High	2	Northway Airport Motel Septic System
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	A	Low	2	Road North of Northway Airport Motel
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-2	B	Low	2	Road South of Northway Airport Motel

**Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for
Northway Airport Motel
Sources of Nitrates/Nitrites**

PWSID 380248.001

Table 3

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Risk Ranking for Analysis	Map Number	Comments
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	A	High	2	Northway Airport Motel Septic System
Airports	X14	X14-1	A	Low	2	Northway Airport
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	A	Low	2	Road North of Northway Airport Motel
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-2	B	Low	2	Road South of Northway Airport Motel

**Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for
Northway Airport Motel
Sources of Volatile Organic Chemicals**

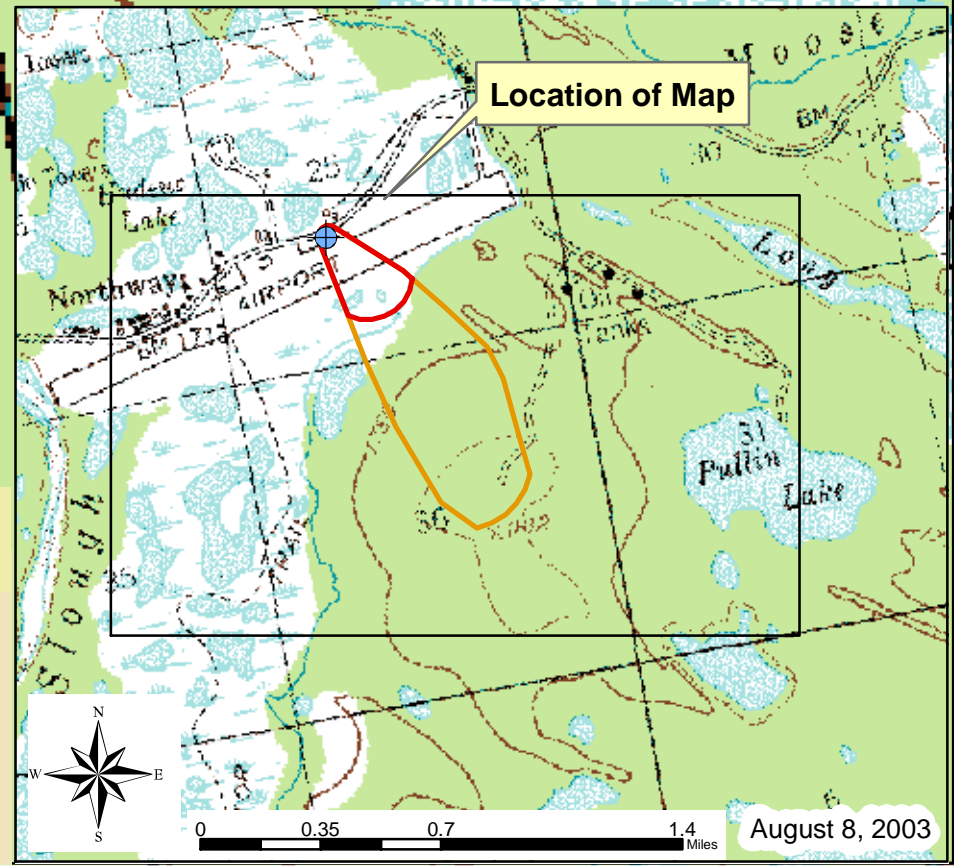
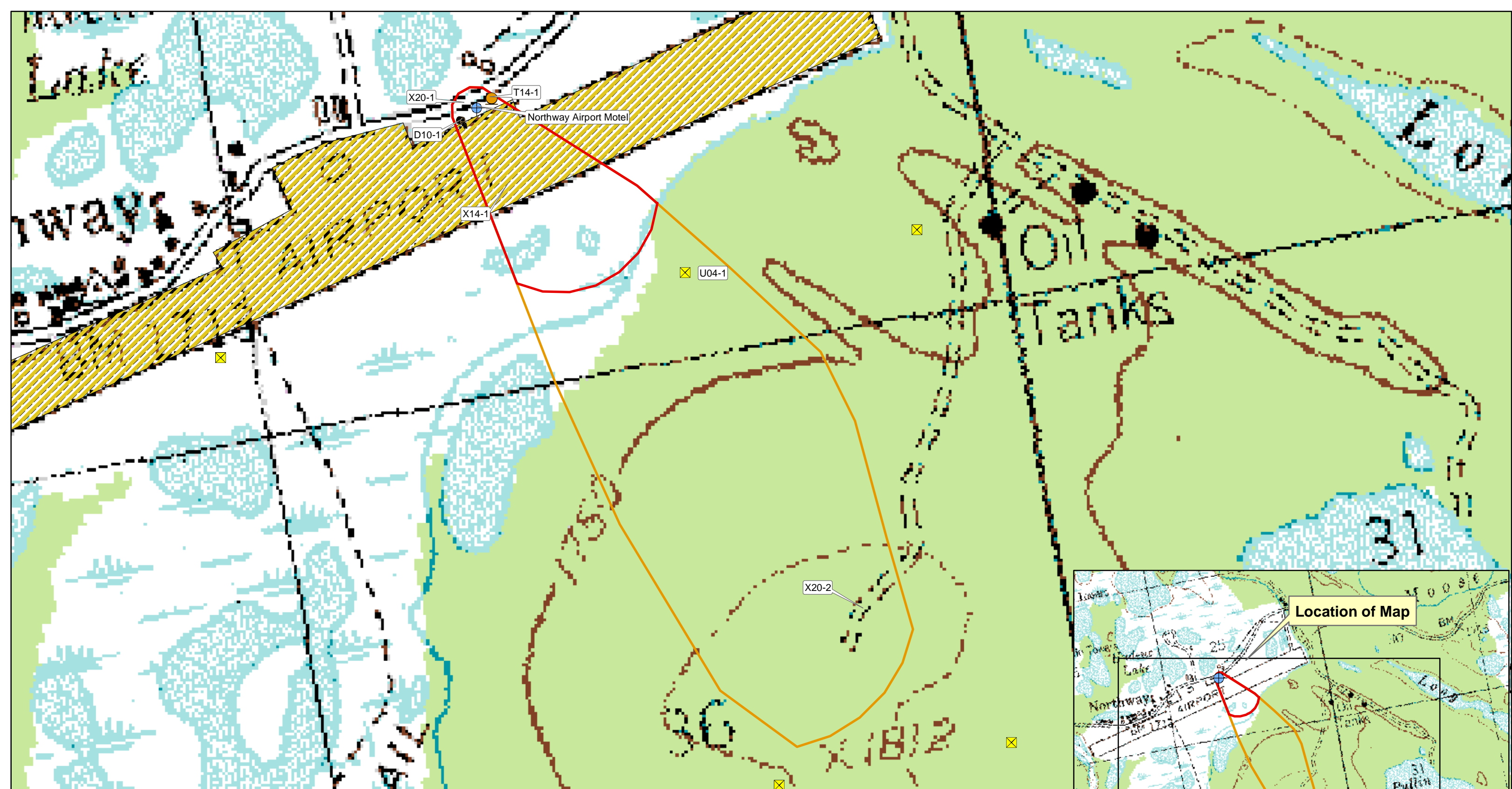
PWSID 380248.001

Table 4

Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Risk Ranking for Analysis	Map Number	Comments
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	A	Low	2	Northway Airport Motel Septic System
Tanks, heating oil, nonresidential (aboveground)	T14	T14-1	A	Low	2	Northway Airport Motel Heating Oil Tank
Airports	X14	X14-1	A	High	2	Northway Airport
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-1	A	Low	2	Road North of Northway Airport Motel
Highways and roads, paved (cement or asphalt)	X20	X20-2	B	Low	2	Road South of Northway Airport Motel

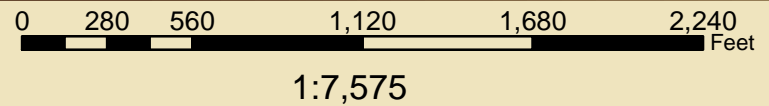
APPENDIX C

Northway Airport Motel Drinking Water Protection Area and Potential and Existing Contaminant Sources (Map 2)



Map 2: Drinking Water Protection Areas for Northway Airport Motel and Potential and Existing Sources of Contamination

PWSID: 380248.001



Data Sources:
Background image - USGS 1:63,000 mapping

Legend

- Public Drinking Water Systems
- Large Capacity Septic System (D10)
- Nonresidential Heating Oil Tank (T14)
- DEC Recognized Contaminated Site (U04)
- alaska_contam_poly**
- Northway Airport (X14)
- DWPA Zone A**
- Several Months Travel Time
- DWPA Zone B**
- Less than 2 Years Travel Time
- DWPA Zone C**
- Less than 5 Years Travel Time
- DWPA Zone D**
- Less than 10 Years Travel Time

August 8, 2003

APPENDIX D

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

Chart 1. Susceptibility of the wellhead - Northway Airport Motel

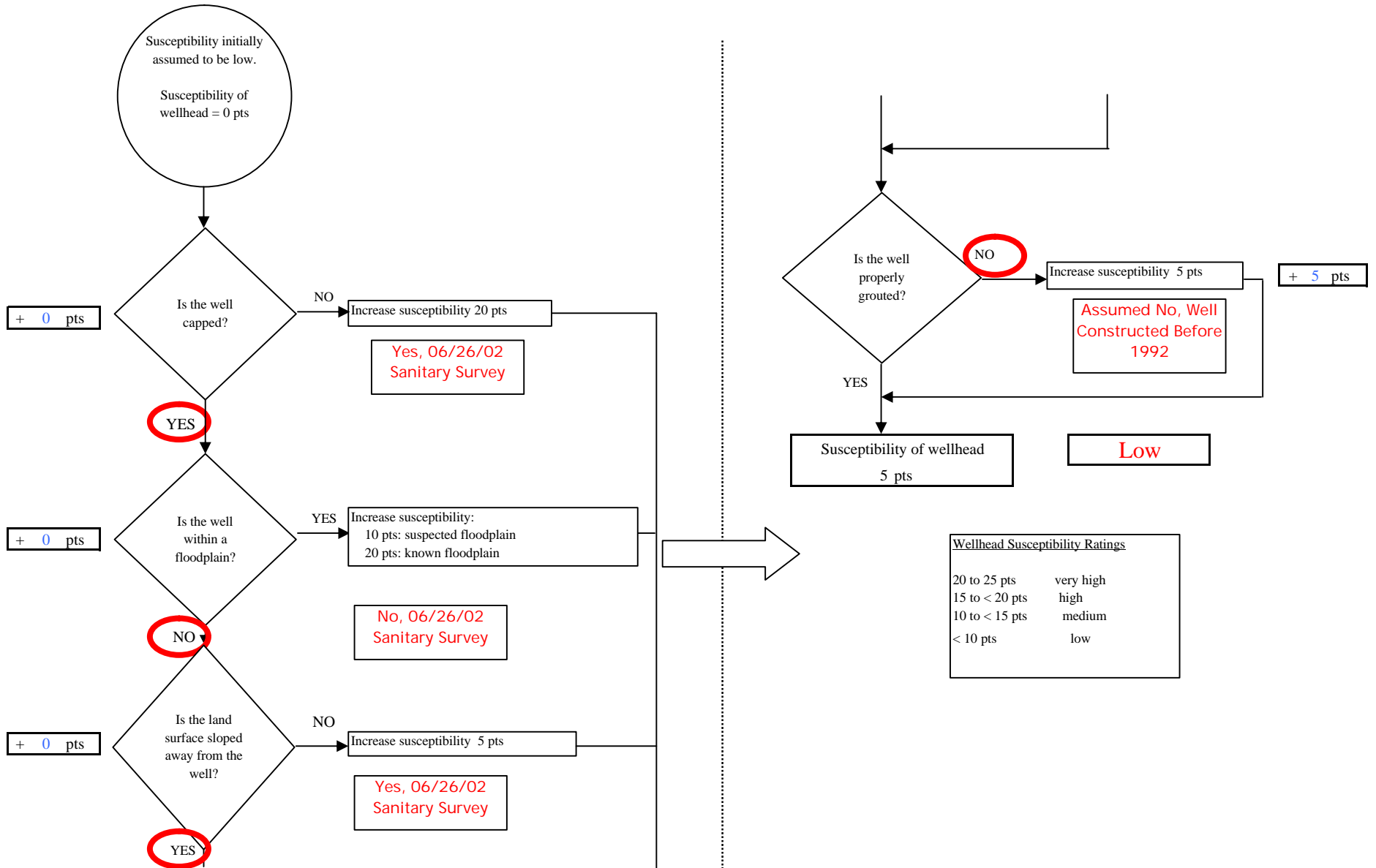


Chart 2. Susceptibility of the aquifer - Northway Airport Motel

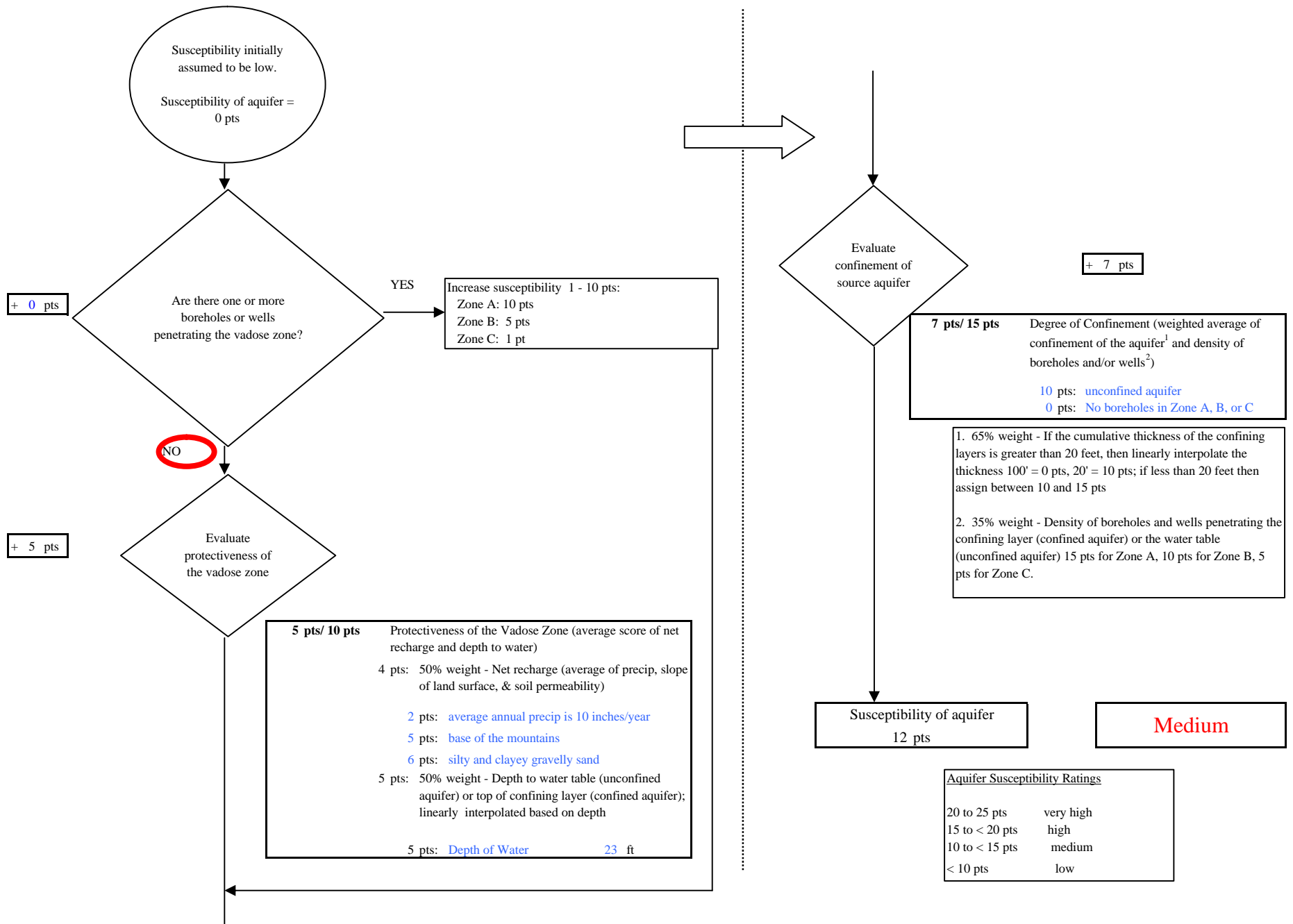
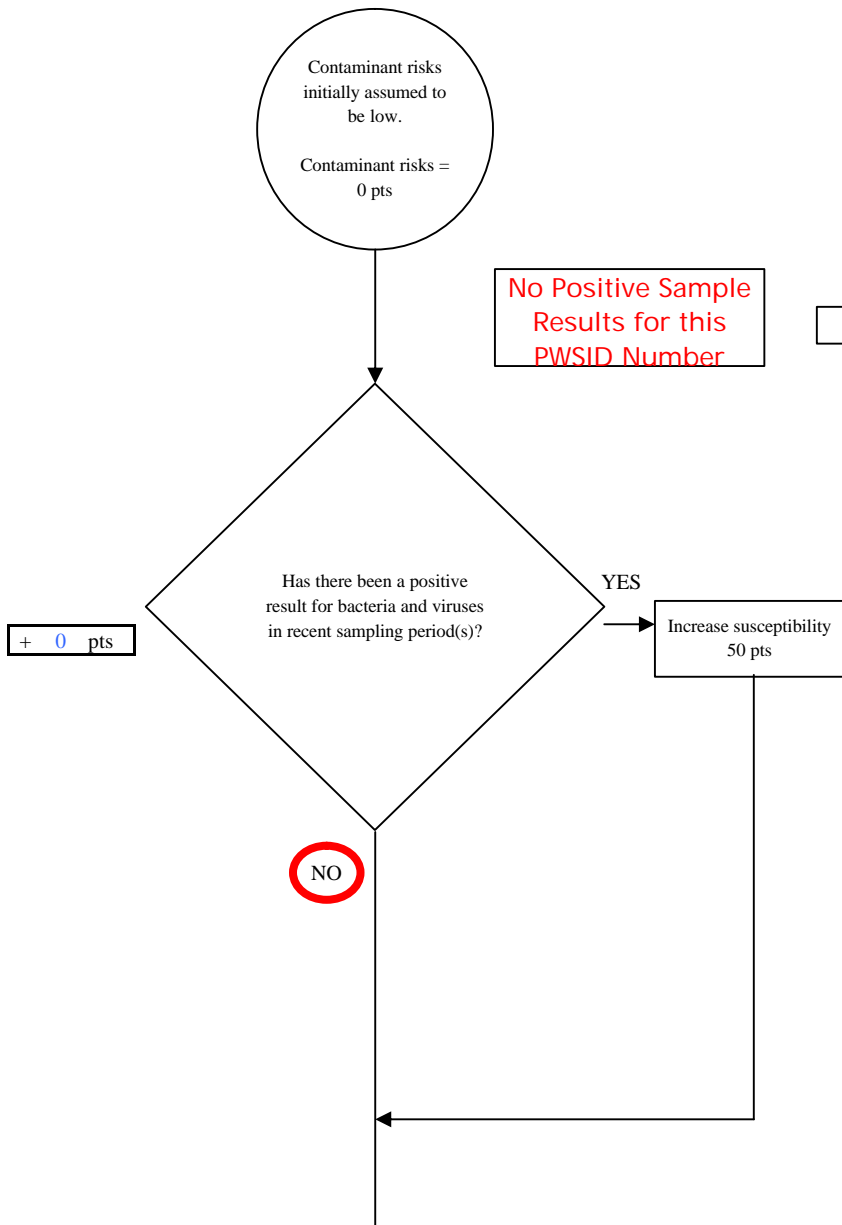
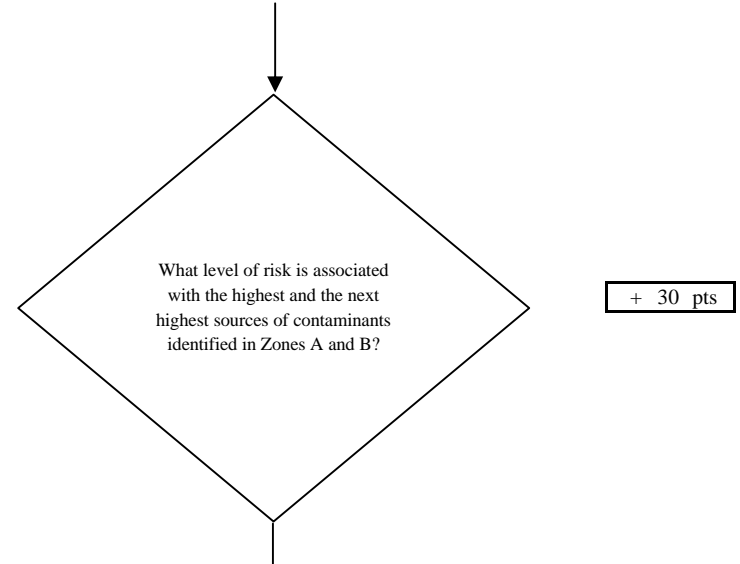
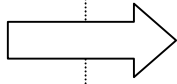


Chart 3. Contaminant risks for Northway Airport Motel - Bacteria & Viruses



No Positive Sample Results for this PWSID Number



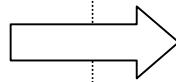
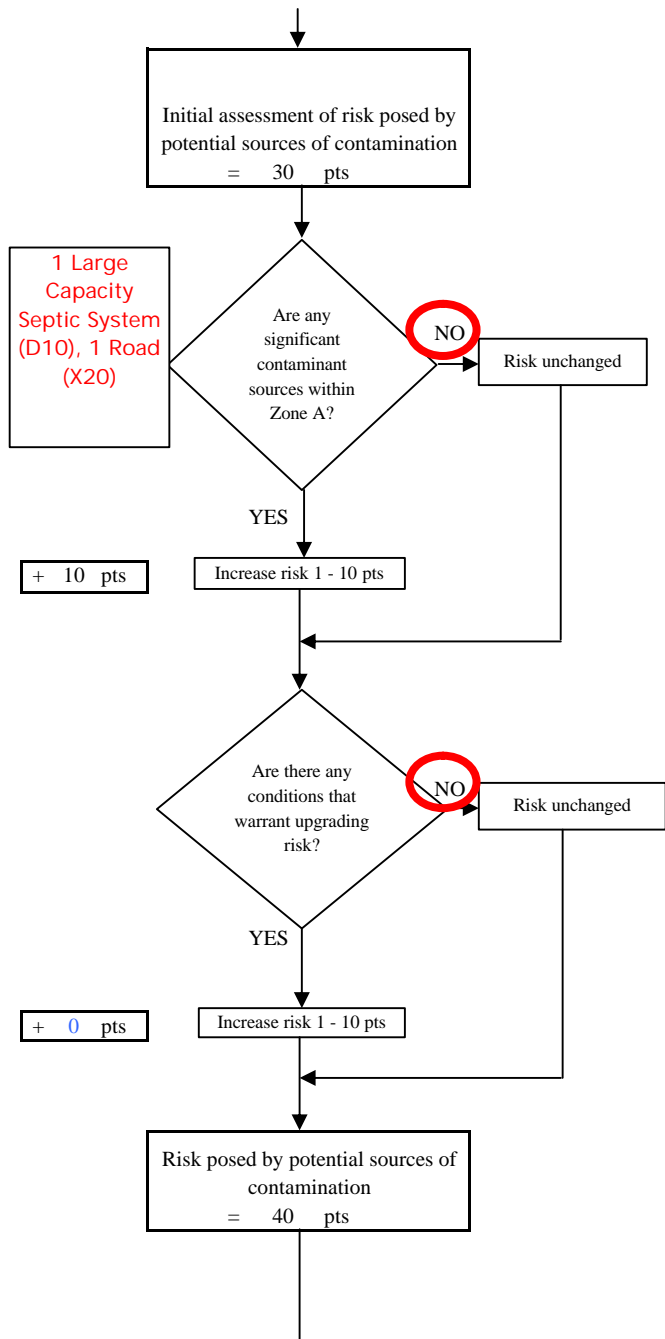
Risk Rankings for Contaminant Sources Identified in Zones A and B			
	Zone A	Zone B	Total
Very High(s)	0	0	0
High(s)	1	0	1
Medium(s)	0	0	0
Low(s)	1	1	2

	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 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 3. Contaminant risks for Northway Airport Motel - Bacteria & Viruses



Contaminant Risk Ratings	
40 to 50 pts	very high
30 to < 40 pts	high
20 to < 30 pts	medium
< 20 pts	low

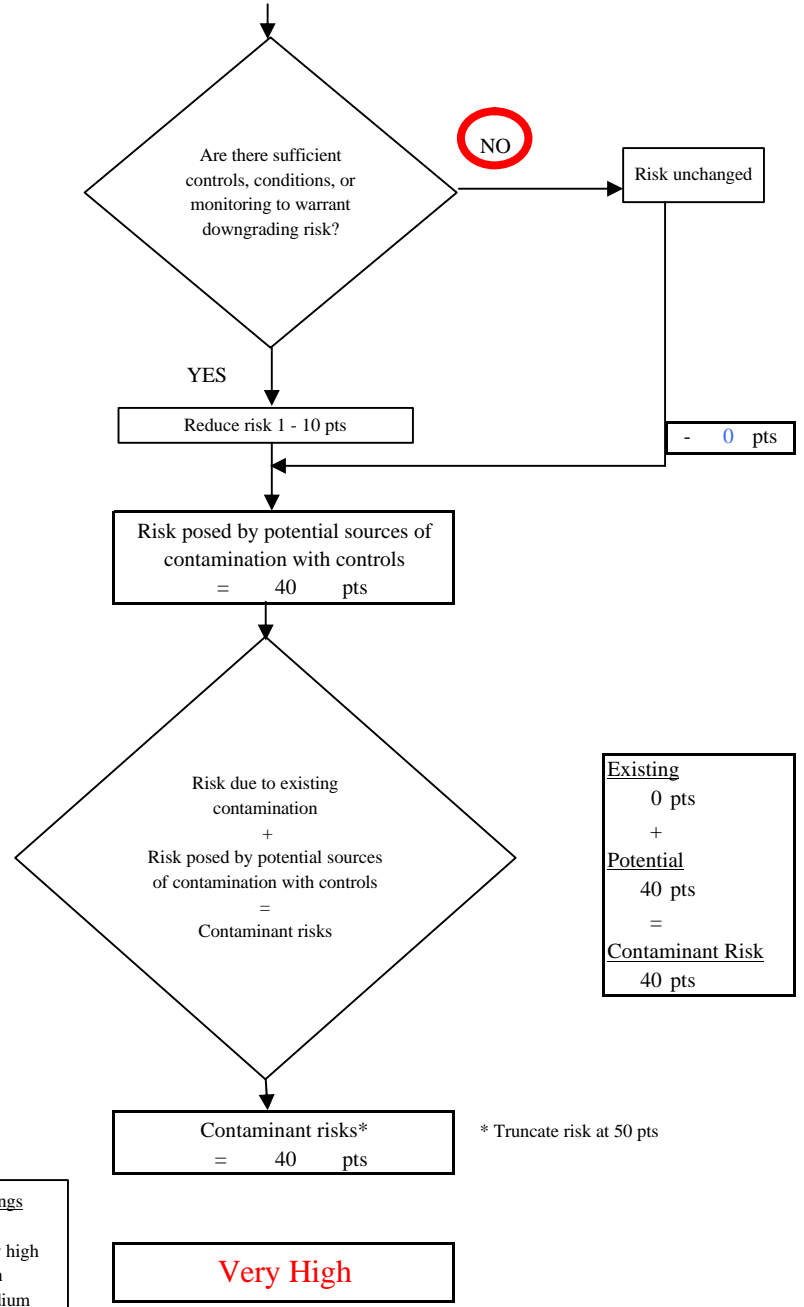


Chart 4. Vulnerability analysis for Northway Airport Motel - Bacteria & Viruses

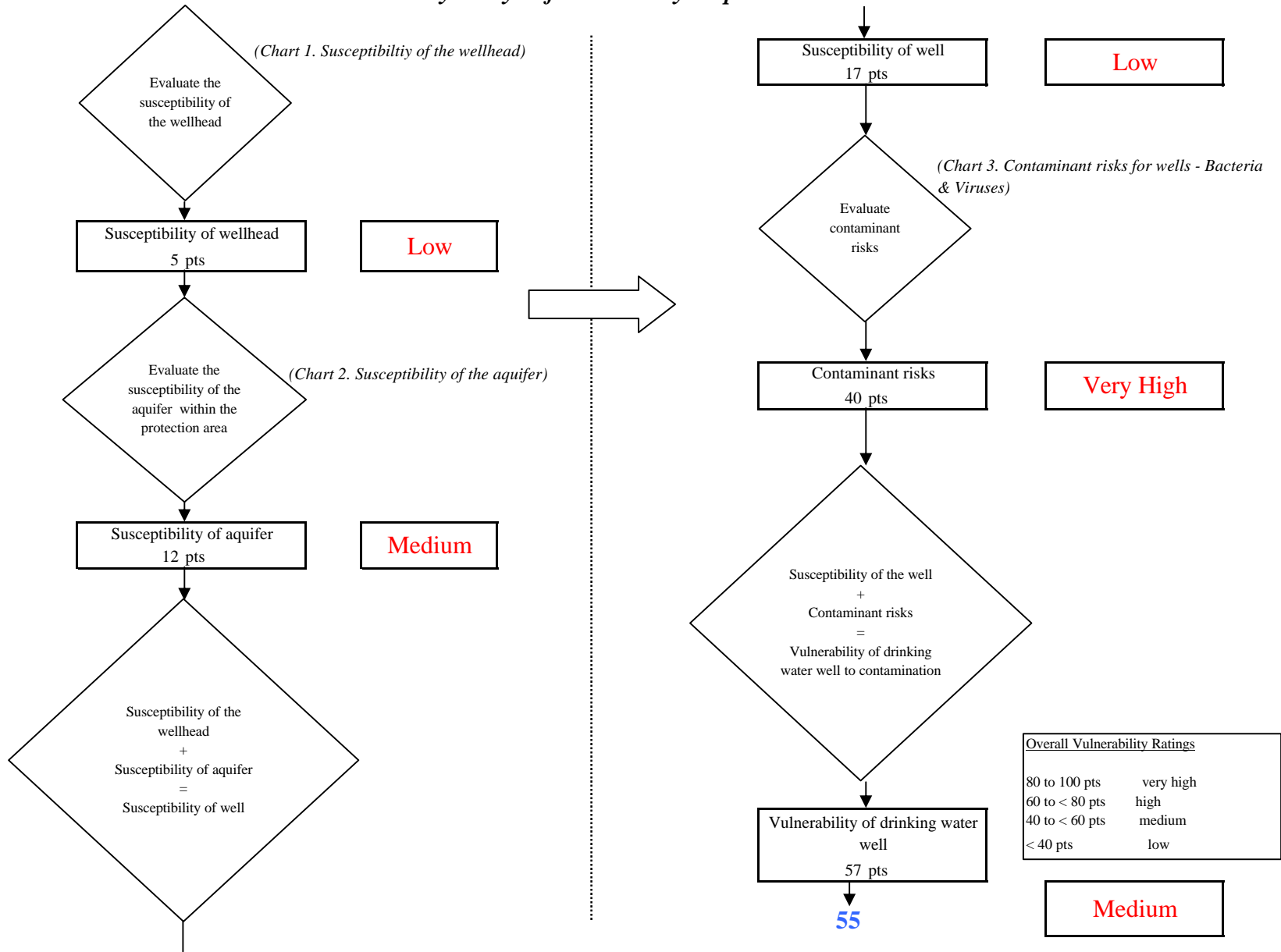


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Northway Airport Motel - Nitrates and Nitrites

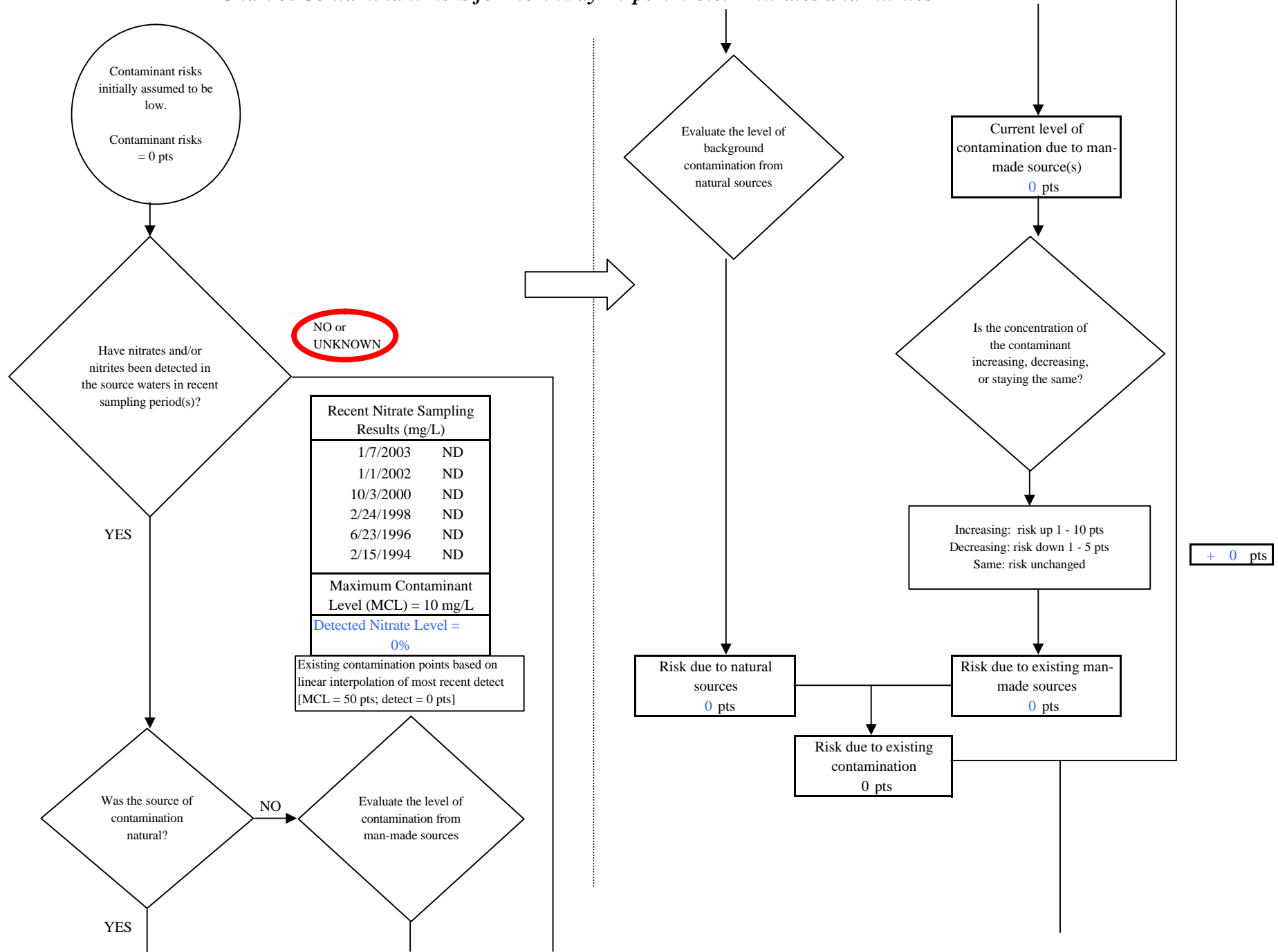


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Northway Airport Motel - Nitrates and Nitrites

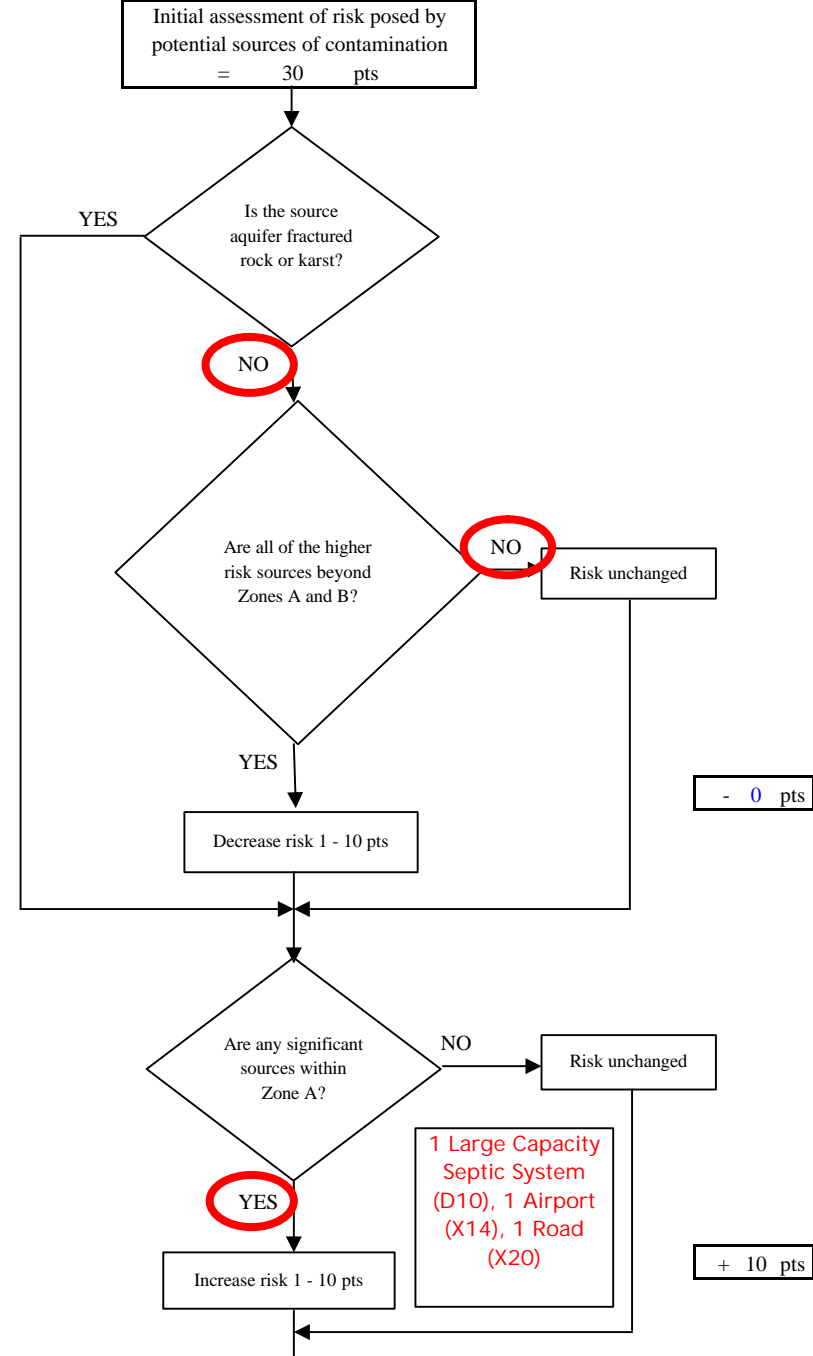
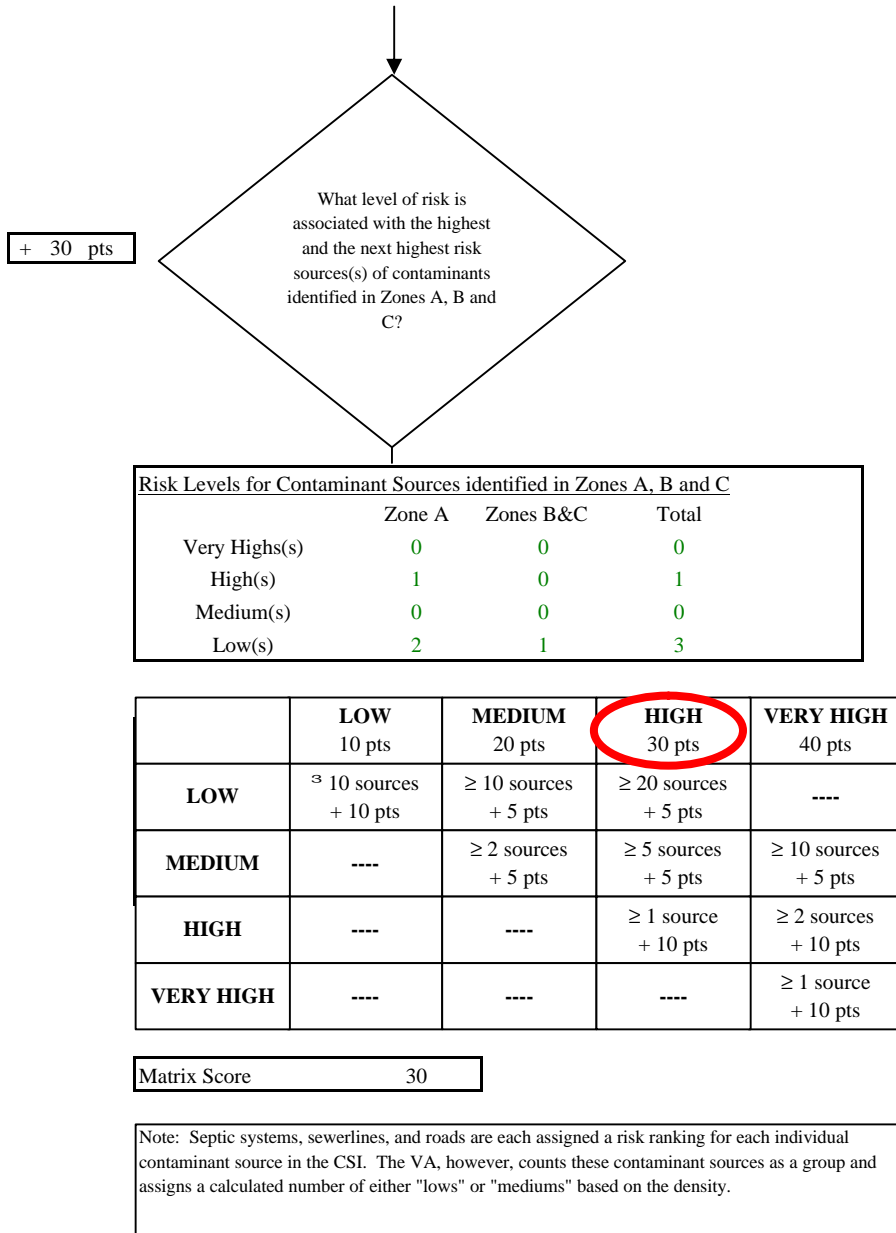


Chart 5. Contaminant risks for Northway Airport Motel - Nitrates and Nitrites

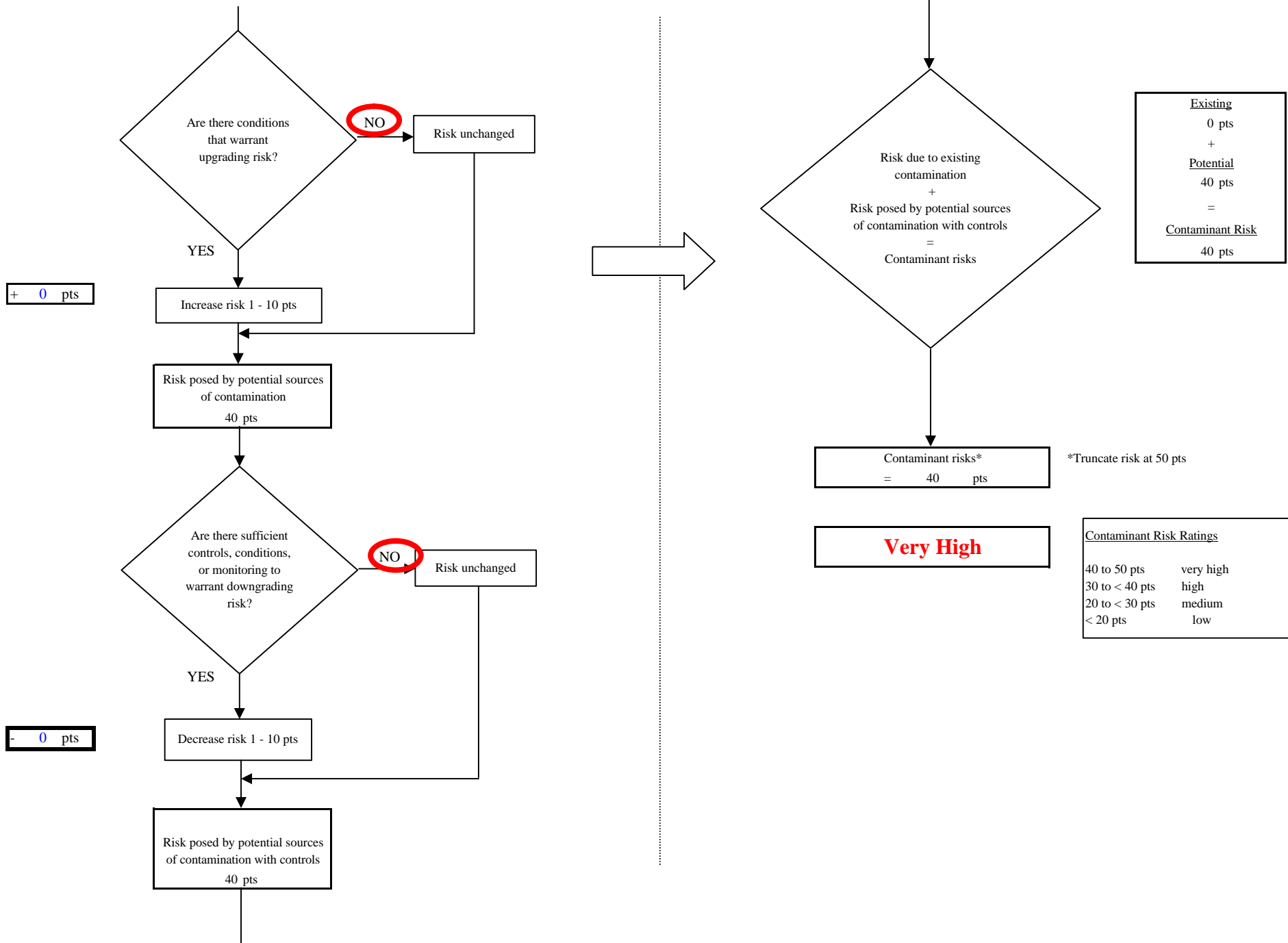


Chart 6. Vulnerability analysis for Northway Airport Motel - Nitrates and Nitrites

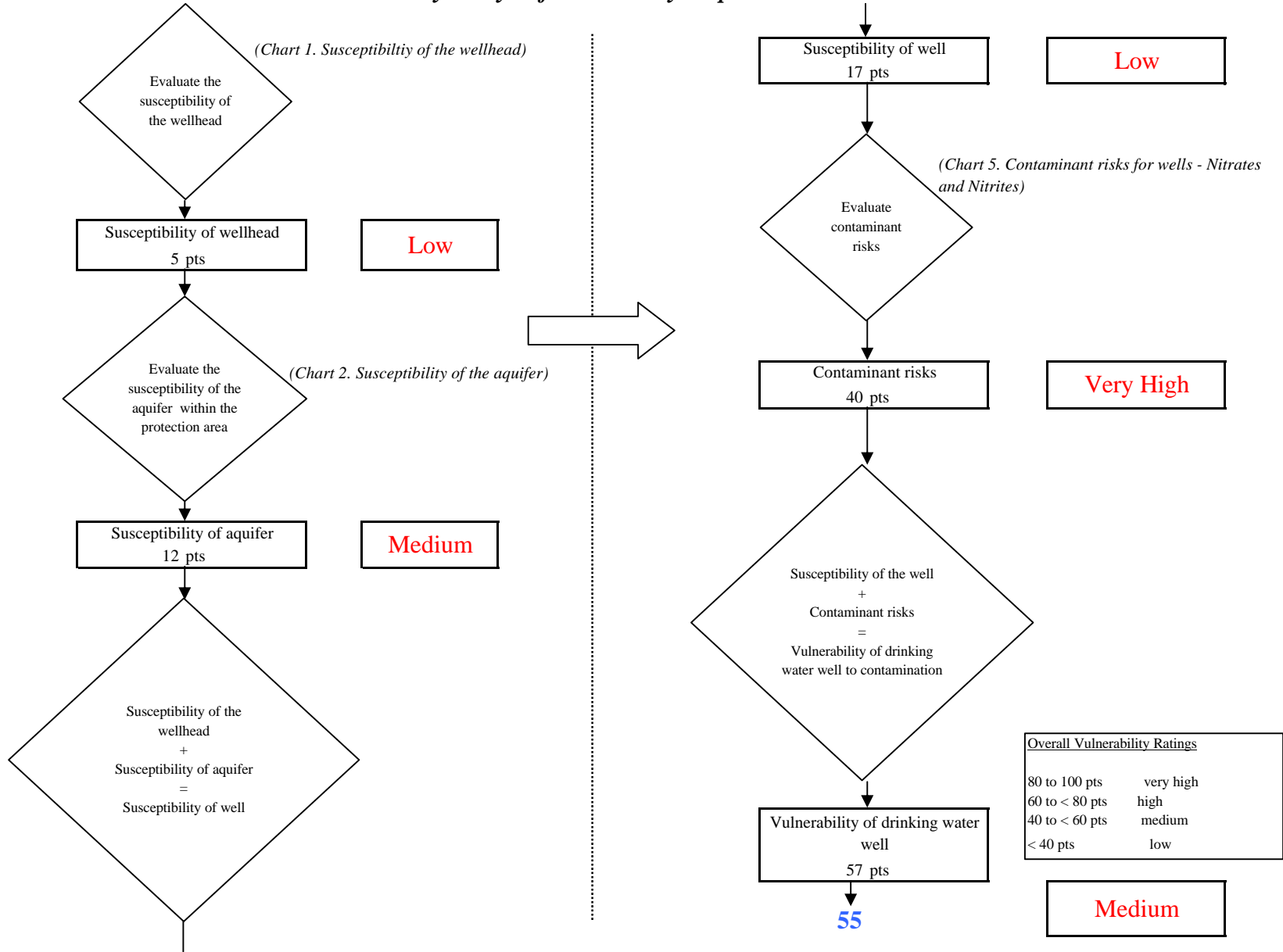


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Northway Airport Motel - Volatile Organic Chemicals

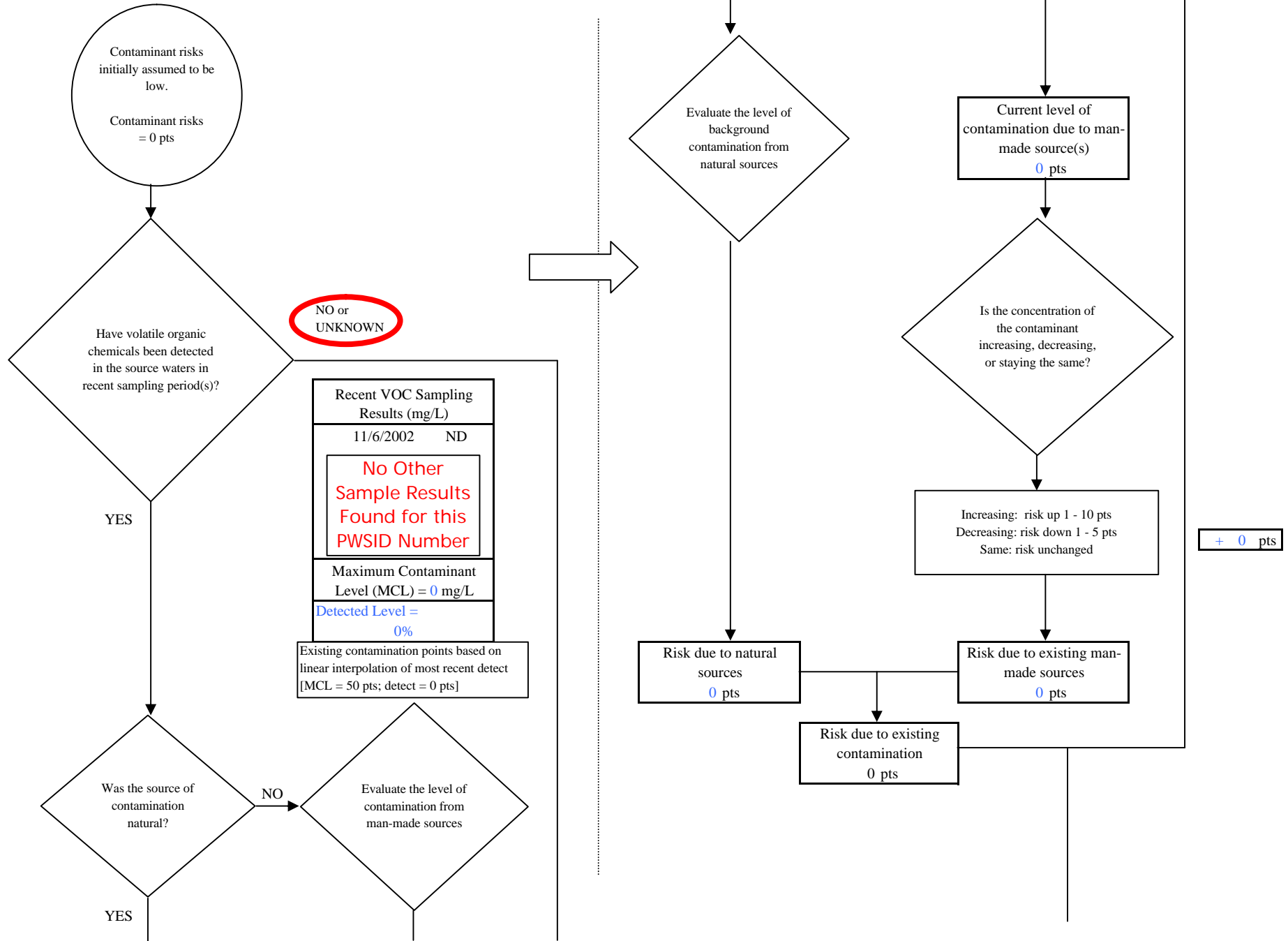


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Northway Airport Motel - Volatile Organic Chemicals

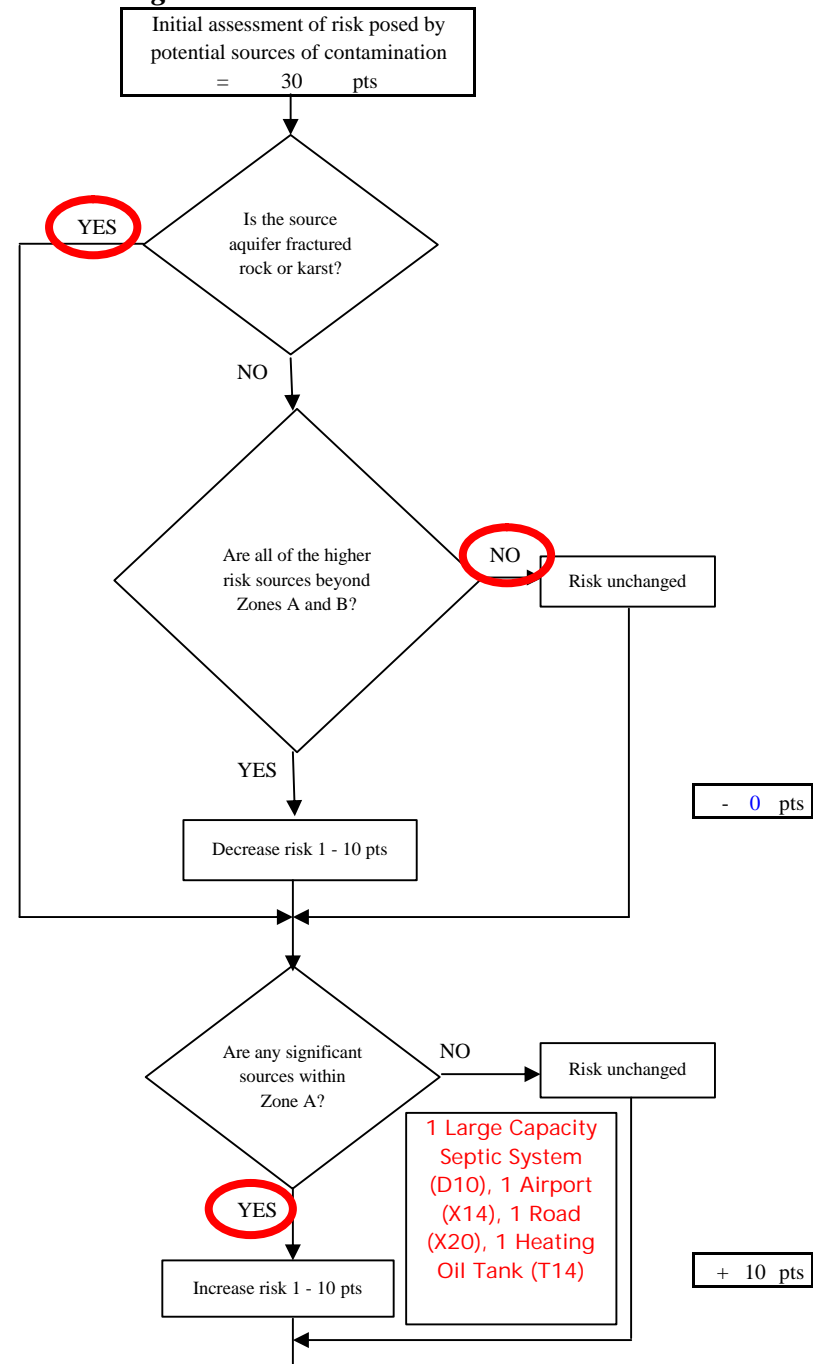
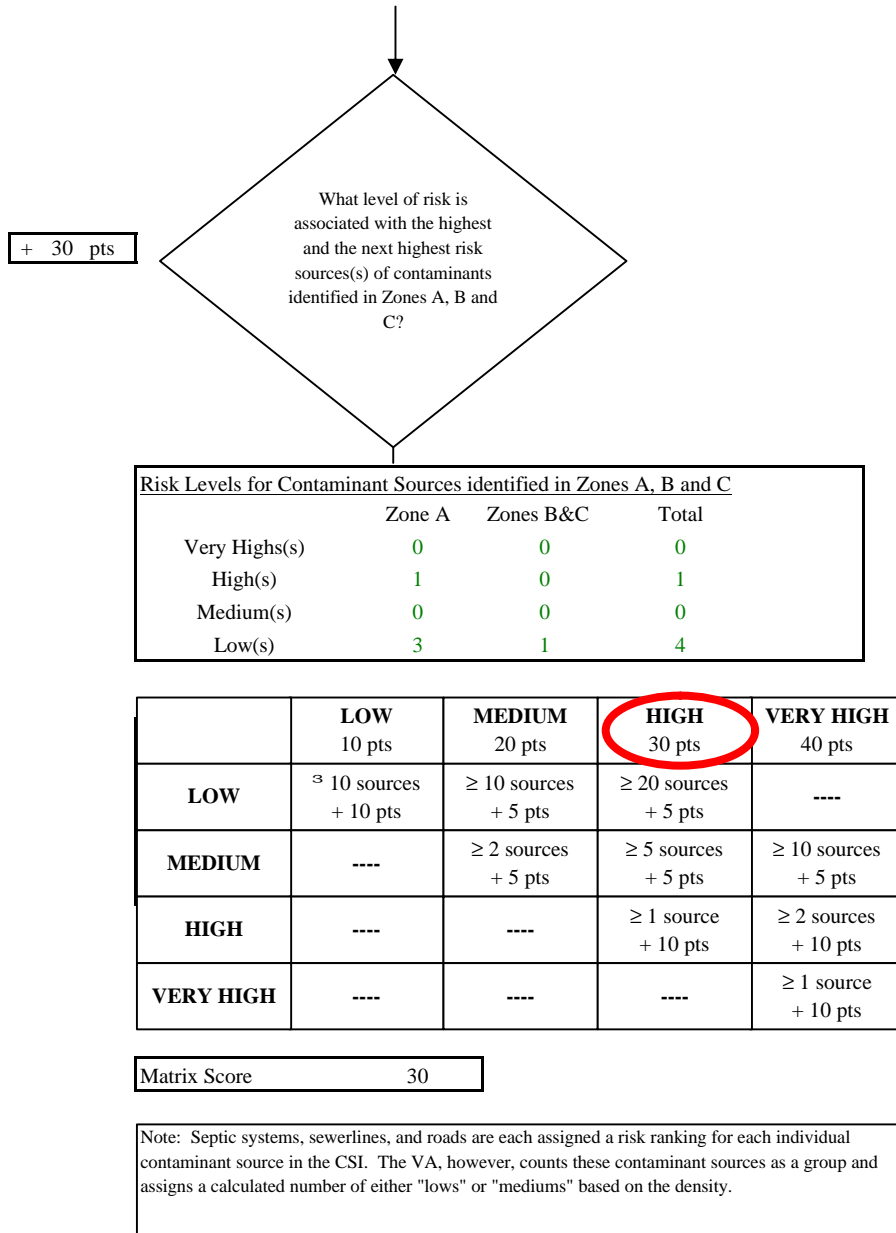


Chart 7. Contaminant risks for Northway Airport Motel - Volatile Organic Chemicals

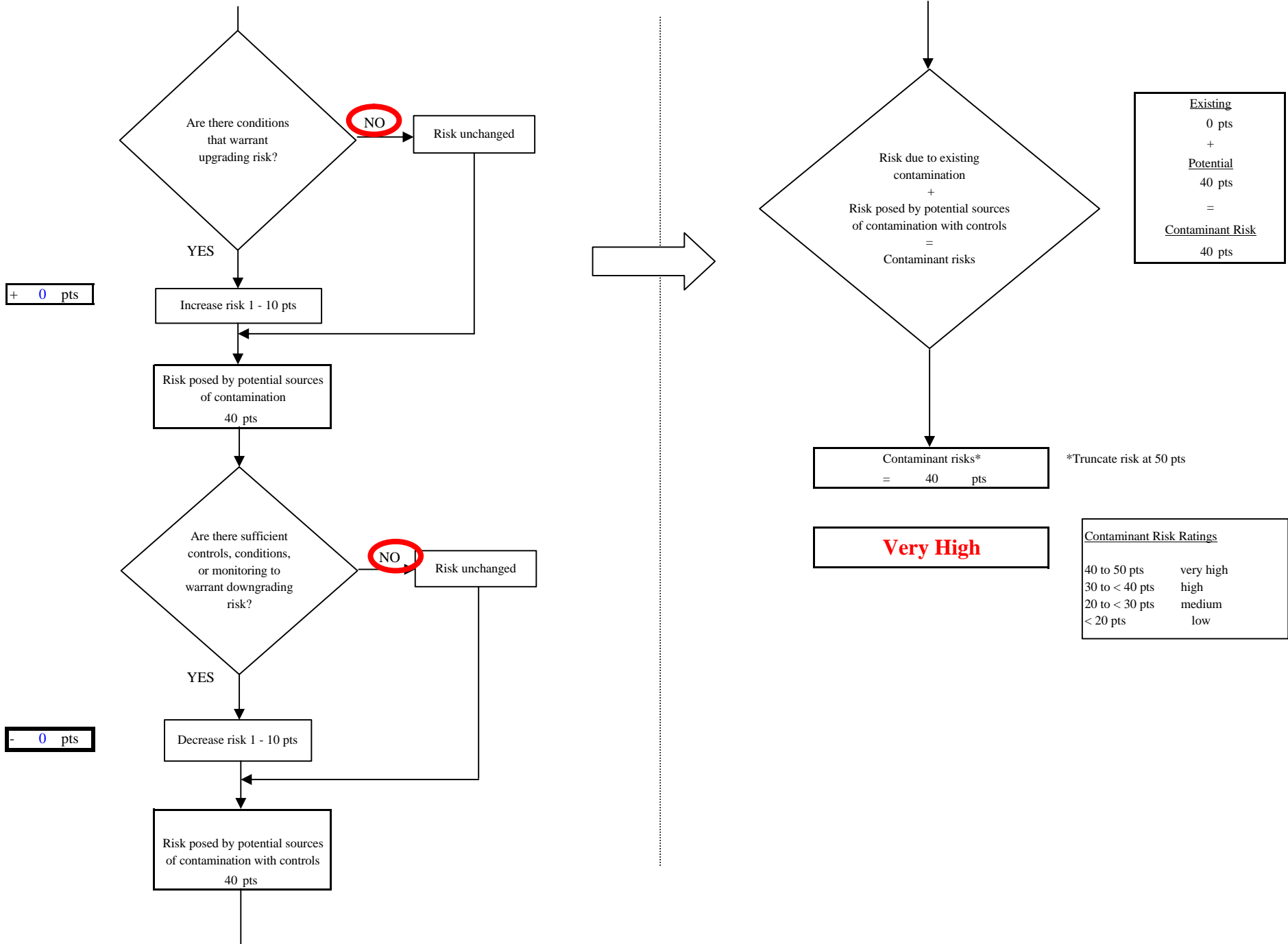


Chart 8. Vulnerability analysis for Northway Airport Motel - Volatile Organic Chemicals

