



Source Water Assessment

A Hydrogeologic Susceptibility and
Vulnerability Assessment for
Tolsona Lake Resort
Drinking Water System,
Glennallen, Alaska
Tolsona Lake Resort # 291368

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT 257
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

AUGUST 2002

Source Water Assessment for Tolsona Lake Resort Drinking Water System, Glennallen, Alaska Tolsona Lake Resort # 291368

By Shannon & Wilson, Inc.

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM REPORT 257

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 Tolsona Lake Resort Source of Public Drinking Water, Glennallen, Alaska

By Shannon & Wilson, Inc.

Drinking Water Protection Program Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tolsona Lake Resort is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system consisting of one surface water intake, located at Mile 170 of the Glenn Highway, approximately 20 miles west of Glennallen, Alaska. Identified potential and current sources of contaminants for Tolsona Lake Resort public drinking water source include: large-capacity septic system 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 Tolsona Lake Resort received a vulnerability rating of **Medium** for volatile organic chemicals, **High** for bacteria and viruses, and **Very High** for nitrates and nitrites.

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. Shannon & Wilson has been contracted to perform these assessments under the supervision of ADEC.

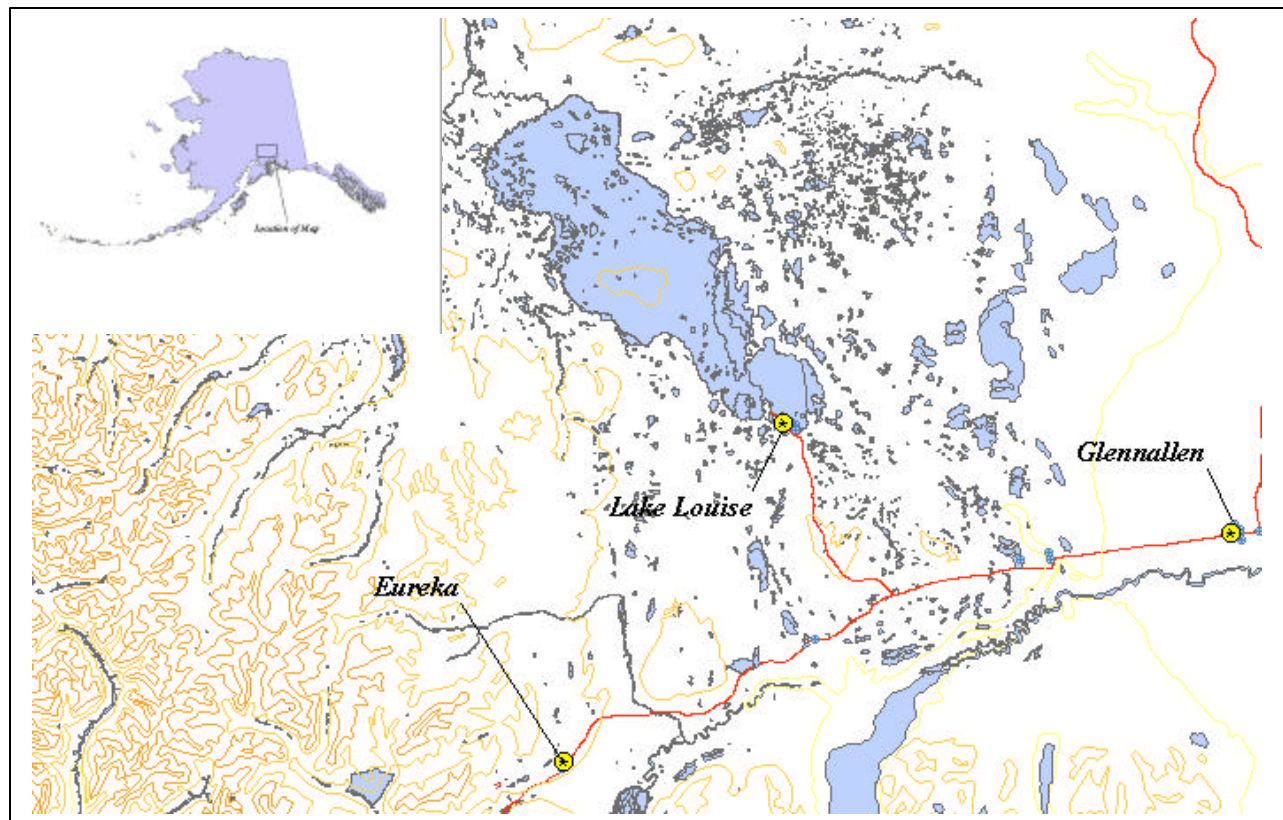


Figure 1. Index map showing the location of the Western Copper River Basin.

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 WESTERN COPPER RIVER BASIN

Location

The western portion of the Copper River Basin encompasses the headwaters of the Nelchina, Little Nelchina, Tazlina and Gulkana Rivers and generally includes Lake Louise. The area is located west of the community of Glennallen, as shown in Figure 1. While Lake Louise is located in the Matanuska-Susitna (Mat-Su) Borough, other portions of the Copper River Basin are not located within the Mat-Su Borough.

A large lake occupied the Copper River Basin before the Copper River cut an outlet through the Chugach Mountains and entered the Gulf of Alaska east of Cordova. The former lake and glaciers that reached the lake margins, coupled with recent alluvial forces, have shaped the landforms of the Copper River Basin. Landforms common in the western portion of the Copper River Basin include gentle undulating terrain and low ridges, terraces, and numerous lakes and streams.

Precipitation

Glennallen averages about 12 inches of precipitation per year.

Topography and Drainage

The area topography varies from about 3,000 feet at Tahnetta Pass (separating the Matanuska and Copper River drainage basins) to 2,000 feet at Tolsona Creek, due west of Glennallen. Drainages along the Glenn Highway in this area generally flow south into Tazlina Lake or Tazlina River and then into the Copper River.

Groundwater

Although the quality can vary significantly in a short distance, groundwater supplies are generally abundant in the area. Many homes and businesses in the area rely on individual wells for their water supply. Most of these wells are shallow with depths of less than 100 feet to 200 feet. Static water levels in many of these wells are less than 15 feet below the surface. The coarse, alluvial, sandy gravel in the floodplains of the areas streams and rivers provides a large aquifer even in the winter when infiltration is low.

Geology and Soils

The unconsolidated soils in the western Copper River Basin include fine-grained lacustrine deposits (silts and clays deposited in a lake depositional environment), fine to coarse-grained soils deposited at the margins of the glaciers, and reworked sands and gravels along the streams and rivers. Much of the soils in the area provide good sources of sand, gravel.

TOLSONA LAKE RESORT PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SYSTEM

Tolsona Lake Resort is a Class B (transient/non-community) water system. The system consists of one surface water intake south end of Tolsona Lake, at approximately Mile 170 of the Glenn Highway.

The surface water intake was initially put into operation in 1963. The most recent Sanitary Survey (7/27/98) indicates the intake was adequately constructed. An adequately constructed intake may provide protection against debris and contaminants from entering the system. The surface water source that the system draws from is less than 1 square mile.

This system operates year-round and serves 8 residents and more than 60 non-residents through one service connection.

TOLSONA LAKE RESORT 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 lake. These pathways are determined by looking at the characteristics of the soil, lake, surrounding area, and the intake.

The most probable area for contamination to reach the drinking water system is the area that contributes water to the surface water body that water is being drawn from. 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 system, this area will serve as the focus for voluntary protection efforts.

The size and shape of the DWPAs were established based on aerial distances from the surface water body, and the watershed that recharges the surface water body. Additional methods were also used to take into account any uncertainties in surface water flow and topographic characteristics to arrive at a meaningful

DWPA (Please refer to the Guidance Manual for Class B Public Water Systems for additional information).

The DWPA's established for surface water systems by the ADEC are separated into three zones. These zones correspond to different distances from the surface water body, and the watershed that recharges the surface water body. The following is a summary of the three DWPA zones and their definitions:

Table 1. Definition of Zones

Zone	Definition
A	1000 Feet From the Surface Water Body
B	1 Mile From the Surface Water Body
C	The Entire Watershed

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 Tolsona Lake Resort DWPA. This inventory was completed through a search of agency records and other publicly available information. Potential sources of contamination to the drinking water system 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; and
- Volatile organic chemicals.

Inventoried potential sources of contamination within Zones A through Zone C were associated with residential and commercial type activities. The sources are 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 intake.

VULNERABILITY OF TOLSONA LAKE RESORT 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 intake and the water source.

Susceptibility of the Surface Water Source
(0 – 50 Points)

The surface water intake for Tolsona Lake Resort is completed in Tolsona Lake. Because the lake is recharged by surface water and precipitation, contaminants at the surface have the potential to adversely impact this water. Table 2 shows the Overall Susceptibility score and rating for Tolsona Lake Resort.

Table 2. Natural Susceptibility - Susceptibility of the Surface Water Source to Contamination

	Score	Rating
Natural Susceptibility	42	Very High

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.

Table 3. Contaminant Risks

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	30	High
Nitrates and/or Nitrites	40	Very High
Volatile Organic Chemicals	12	Low

Appendix D contains seven 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 Surface Water Source’ to contamination by looking at the construction of the intake and its surrounding area and naturally-occurring attributes of the water source and influences on the groundwater system that might lead to contamination. Chart 2 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. Chart 3 contains the ‘Vulnerability Analysis for Bacteria and Viruses.’ Charts 4 through 7 contain the Contaminant Risks and Vulnerability Analyses for nitrates and nitrites and volatile organic chemicals, respectively.

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 of Tolsona Lake Resort to Contamination by Category

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	70	High
Nitrates and Nitrites	80	Very High
Volatile Organic Chemicals	55	Medium

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.

The large-capacity septic system and roads create a risk increase for the bacteria and viruses, nitrates and nitrites, and volatile organic compounds.

Only a small amount of bacteria and viruses are required to endanger public health. The sanitary survey indicates physical and chemical treatment and monitoring are performed. Sample results for bacteria and viruses have not been filed for the system at Tolsona Lake Resort.

Nitrates and/or nitrites are found in natural background concentration at this site, as elsewhere throughout Alaska. 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, adopted from the U.S. Geological Survey (Wang, et al., 2000).

Sampling history for Tolsona Lake Resort indicates that nitrate samples are not on file (see Chart 5 - Contaminant Risks for Nitrates and/or Nitrites in Appendix D). The Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for nitrates/nitrites is 10 mg/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.

The large-capacity septic system and roads located in Zone A form the greatest risk for volatile organic chemicals.

SUMMARY

A *Source Water Assessment* has been completed for the sources of public drinking water serving Tolsona Lake Resort. The overall vulnerability of this source to contamination is **Medium** for volatile organic chemicals, **High** for bacteria and viruses, and **Very High** for nitrates and nitrites. 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 Tolsona Lake Resort 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 Tolsona Lake Resort public drinking water source.

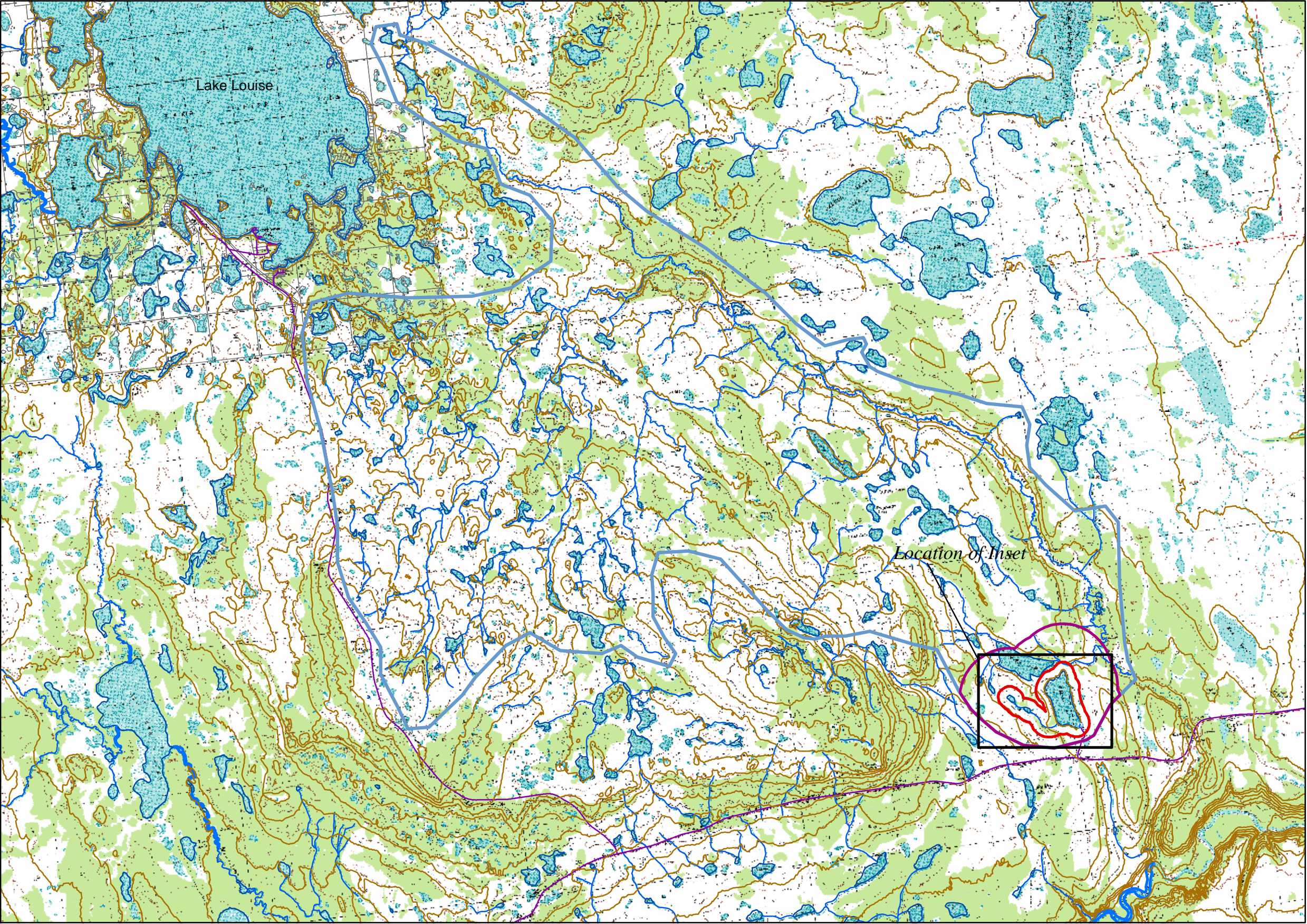
REFERENCES CITED

- Wang, B., Strelakos, P.M., and Jokela, J.B., 2000, Nitrate source indicators in ground water of the scimitar subdivision, Peters Creek Area, Anchorage, Alaska: US Geological Survey Water-Resources Investigations Report 00-4137.
- Weather Underground, June 18, 2002, Web extension to the *Western Regional Climate Center* [WWW document]. URL <http://www.wunderground.com>

APPENDIX A

Tolsona Lake Resort Drinking Water Protection Area (Map 1)

Drinking Water Protection Areas for Tolsona Lake Resort



Tolsona Lake Resort Intake

MSB Roads

25 Meter Contours

Smaller Rivers

Main Rivers

Lakes

Zone A Protection Area

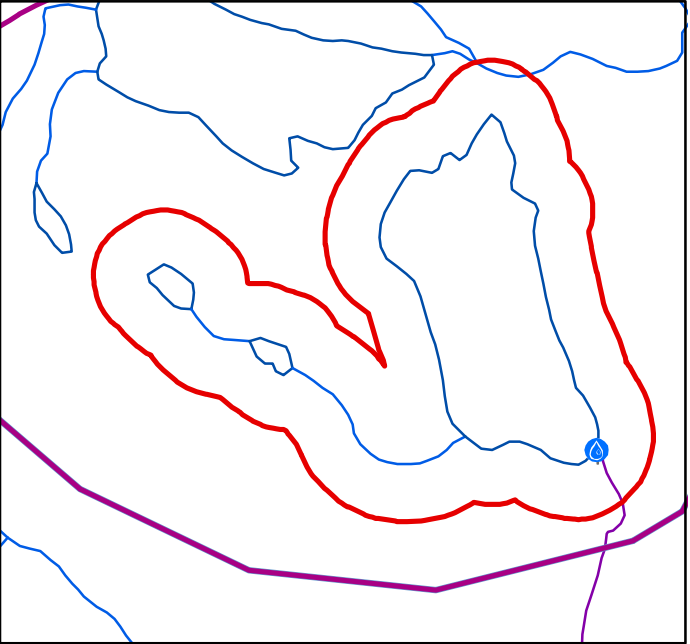
1000 Feet from Surface Water Body

Zone B Protection Area

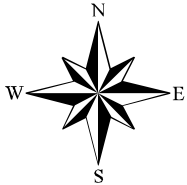
1 Mile from Surface Water Body

Zone C Protection Area

Entire Watershed



PWSID 291368.001



Map 1

APPENDIX B

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for Tolsona Lake Resort (Tables 1-4)

Table 1

**Contaminant Source Inventory for
Tolsona Lake Resort**

PWSID 291368.001

<i>Contaminant Source Type</i>	<i>Contaminant Source ID</i>	<i>CS ID tag</i>	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	A	South of Tolsona Lake Resort	2	
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-1	A	Access Road 1	2	

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for

PWSID 291368.001

Tolsona Lake Resort

Sources of Bacteria and Viruses

<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>Overall Rank after Analysis</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	A	High	1	South of Tolsona Lake Resort	2	
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-1	A	Low	2	Access Road 1	2	

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for

PWSID 291368.001

Table 3

Tolsona Lake Resort

Sources of Nitrates/Nitrites

<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>Overall Rank after Analysis</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	A	High	1	South of Tolsona Lake Resort	2	
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-1	A	Low	2	Access Road 1	2	

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Ranking for

PWSID 291368.001

Table 4

Tolsona Lake Resort

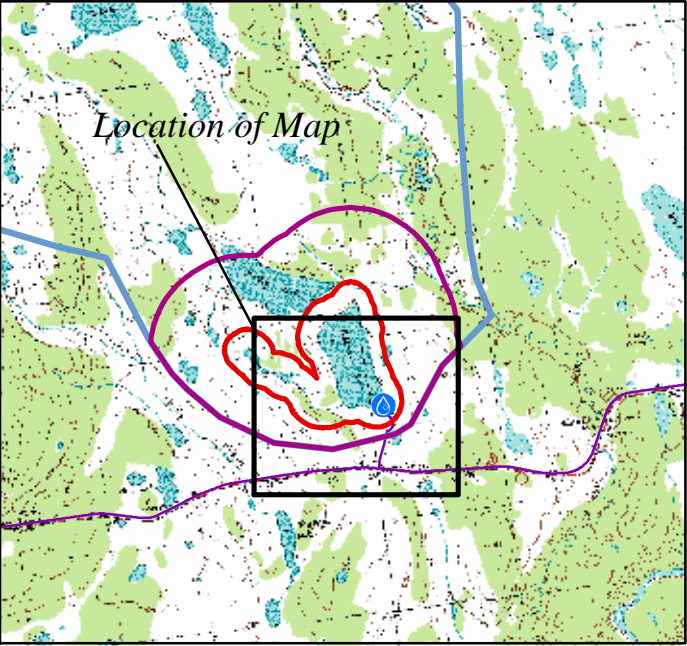
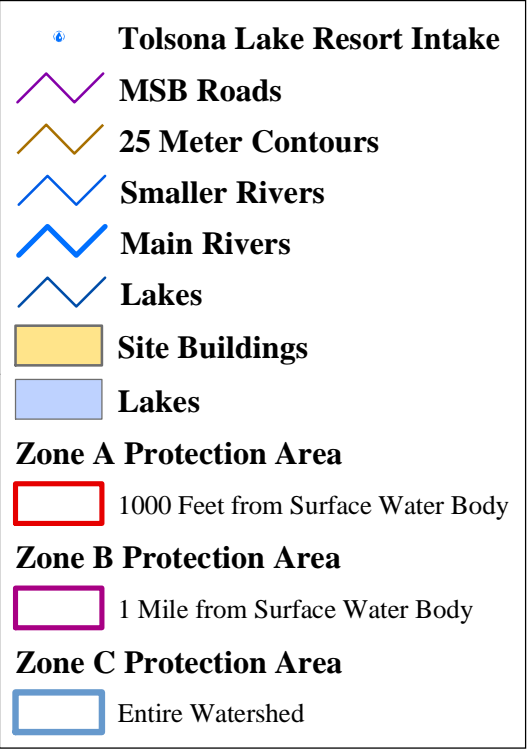
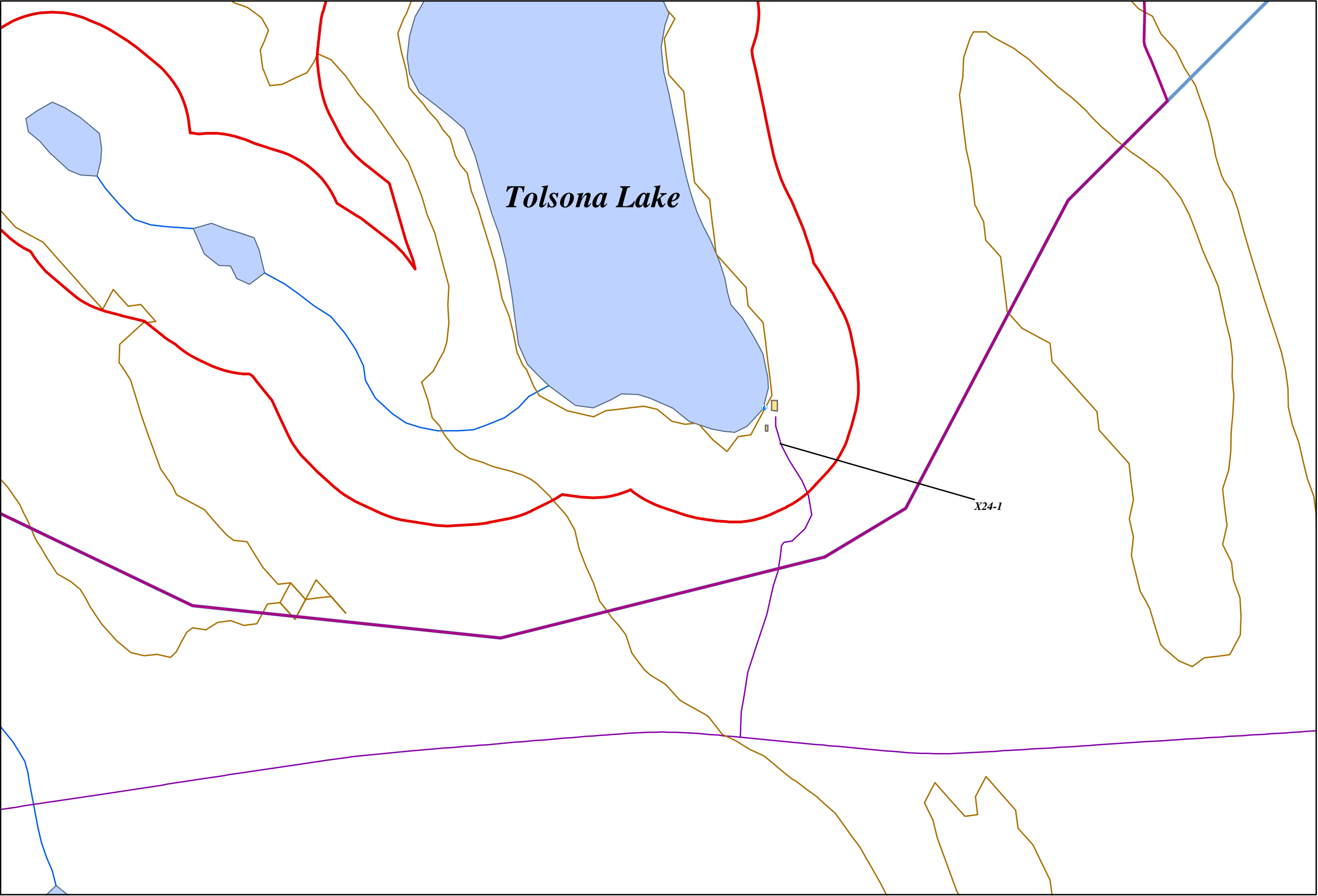
Sources of Volatile Organic Chemicals

<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>Overall Rank after Analysis</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Map Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Injection wells (Class V) Large-Capacity Septic System (Drainfield Disposal Method)	D10	D10-1	A	Low	1	South of Tolsona Lake Resort	2	
Highways and roads, dirt/gravel	X24	X24-1	A	Low	2	Access Road 1	2	

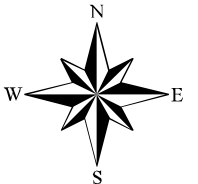
APPENDIX C

Tolsona Lake Resort Drinking Water Protection Area and Potential and Existing Contaminant Sources (Maps 2-3)

Drinking Water Protection Areas for Tolsona Lake Resort and Potential and Existing Sources of Contamination

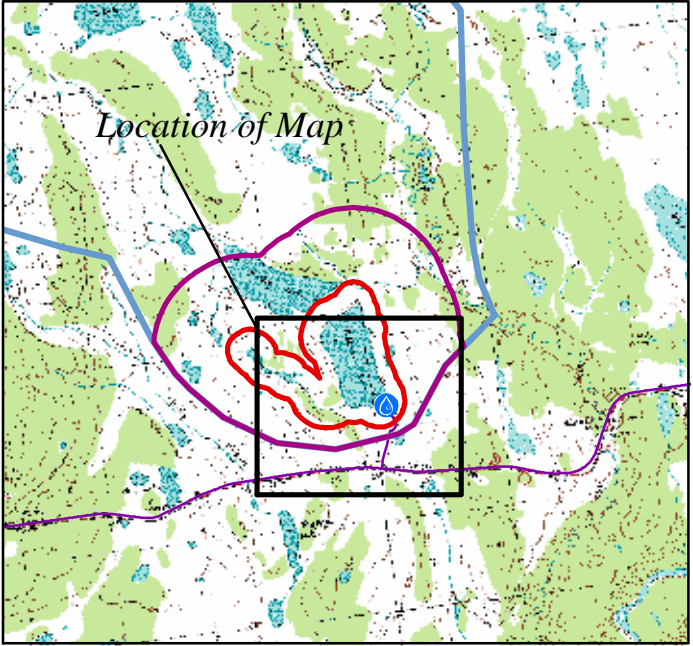
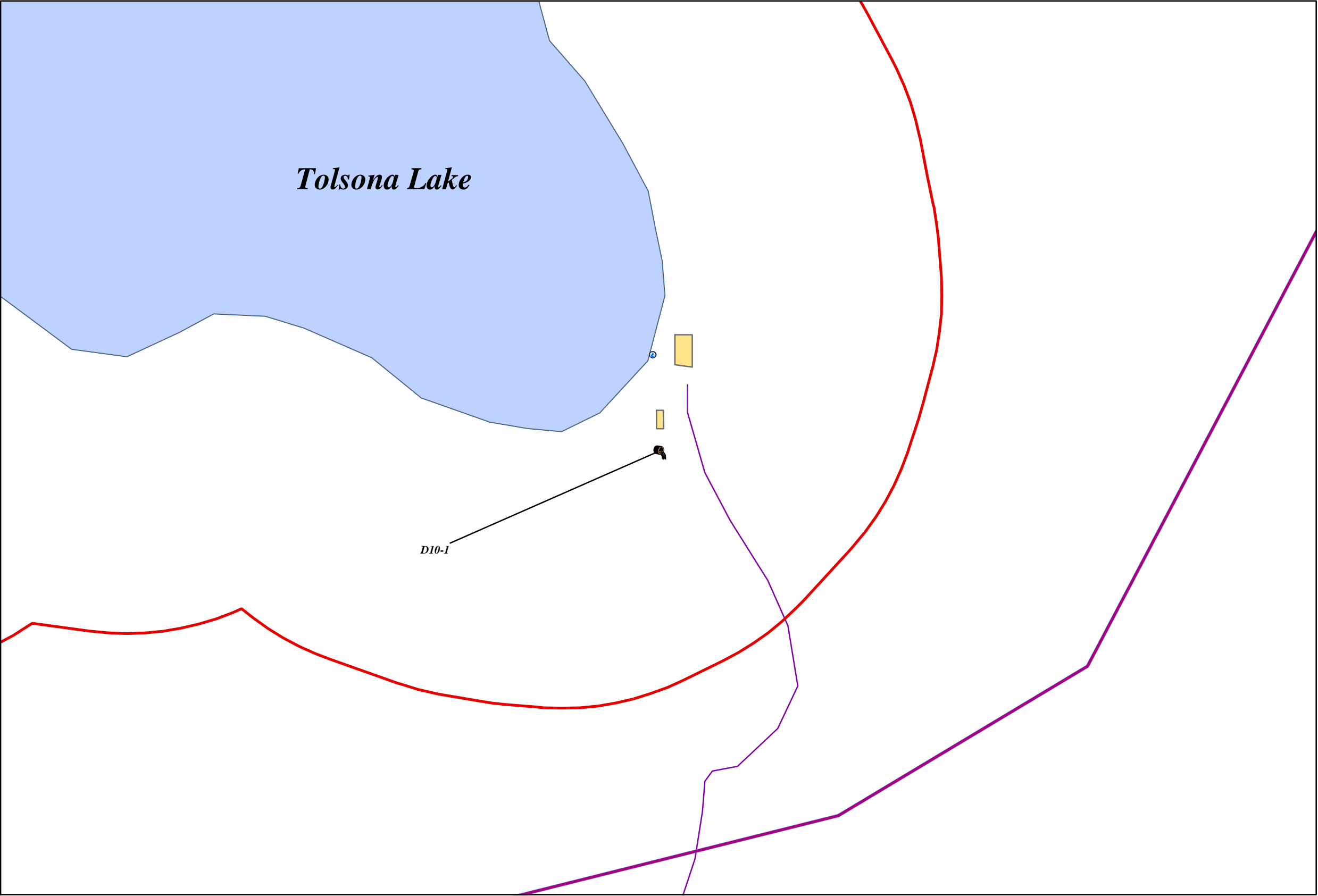


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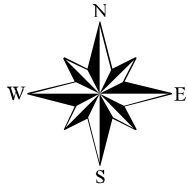


Map 2

Drinking Water Protection Areas for Tolsona Lake Resort and Potential and Existing Sources of Contamination



PWSID 291368.001



Map 3

APPENDIX D

Vulnerability Analysis for Tolsona Lake Resort Public Drinking Water Source (Charts 1-7)

Chart 1. Susceptibility of the Surface Water Source - Tolsona Lake Resort

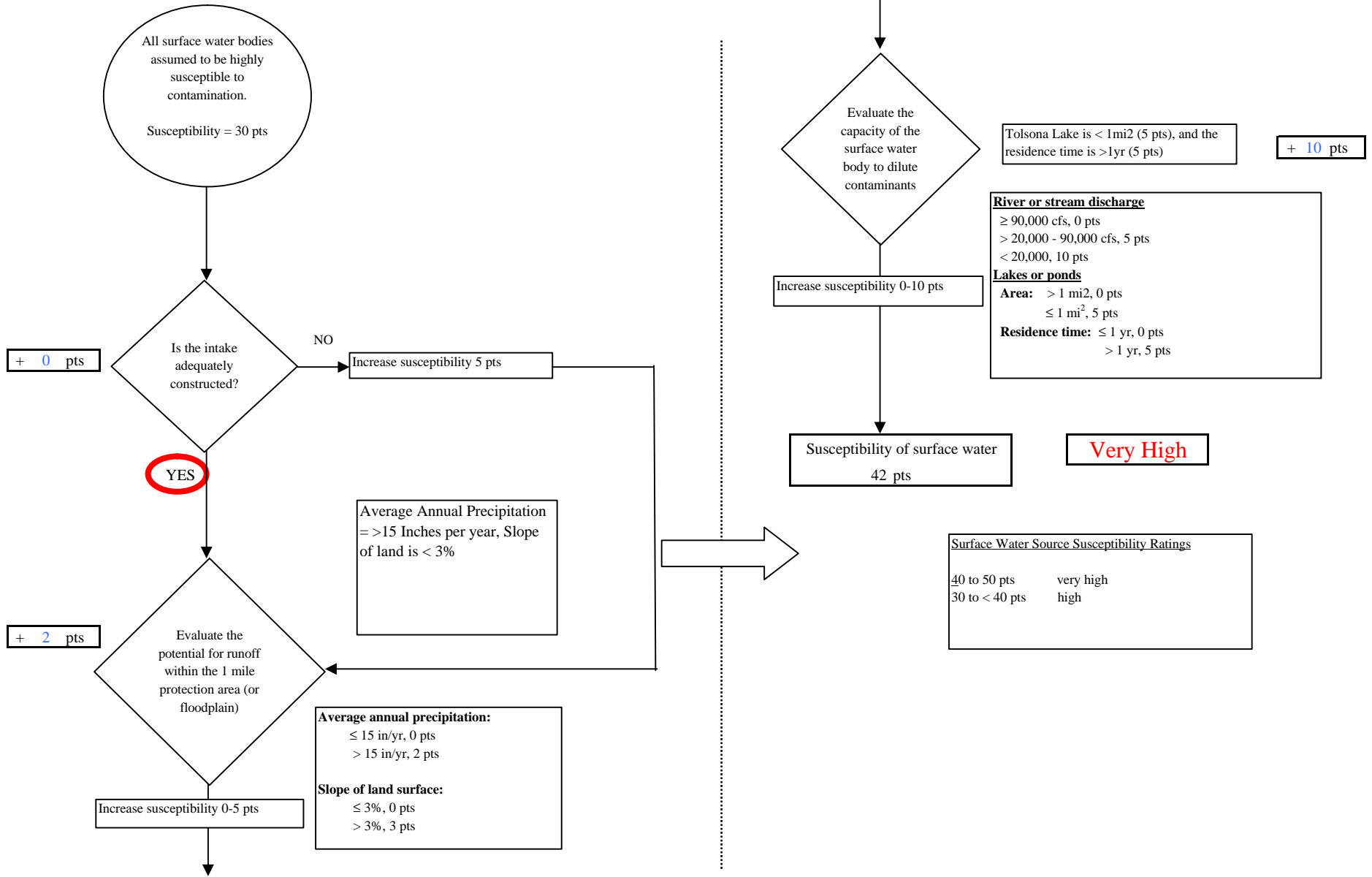


Chart 2. Contaminant Risks for Tolsona Lake Resort - Bacteria & Viruses

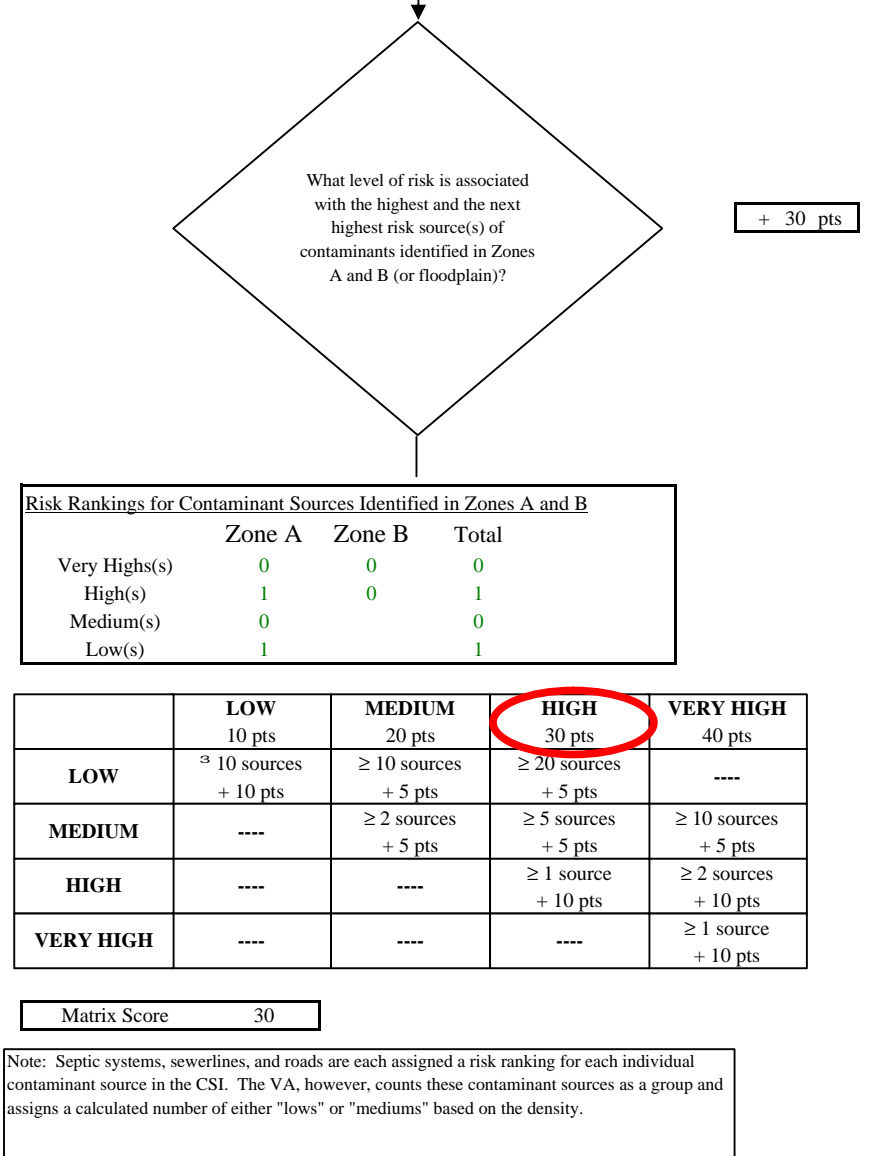
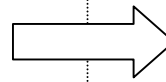
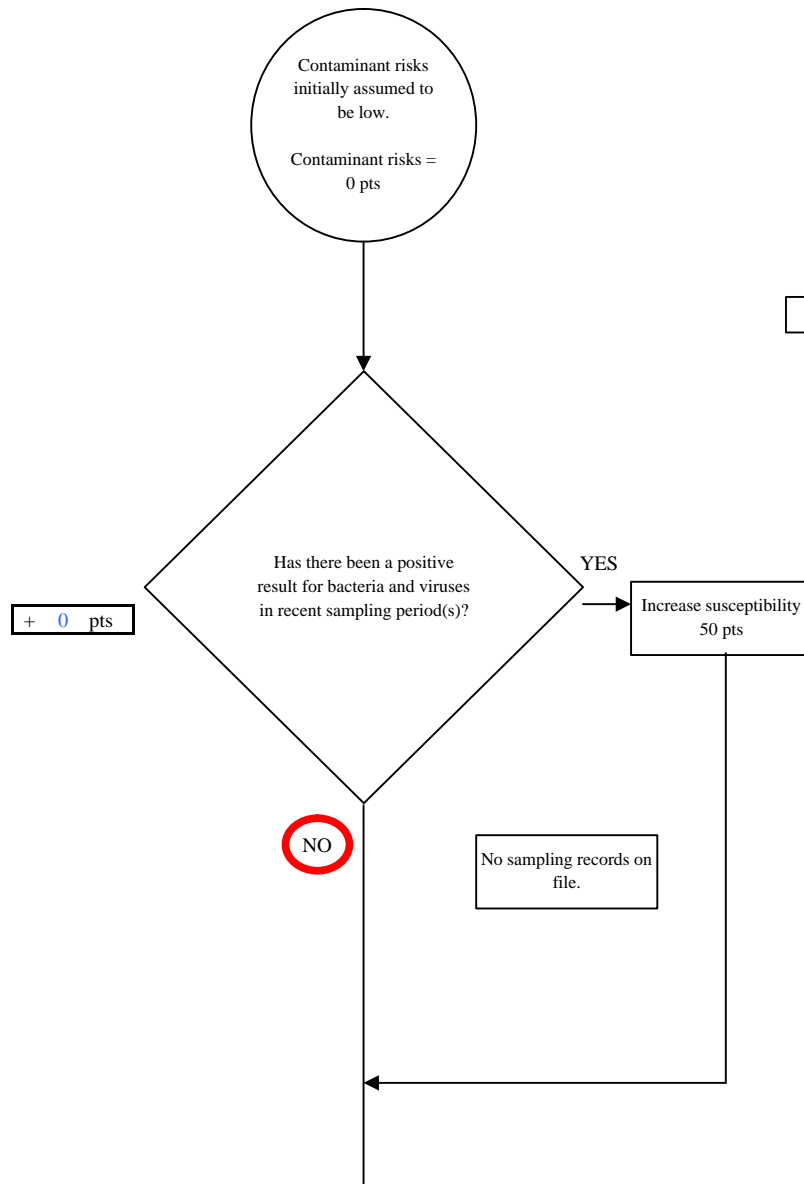


Chart 2. Contaminant Risks for Tolsona Lake Resort - Bacteria & Viruses

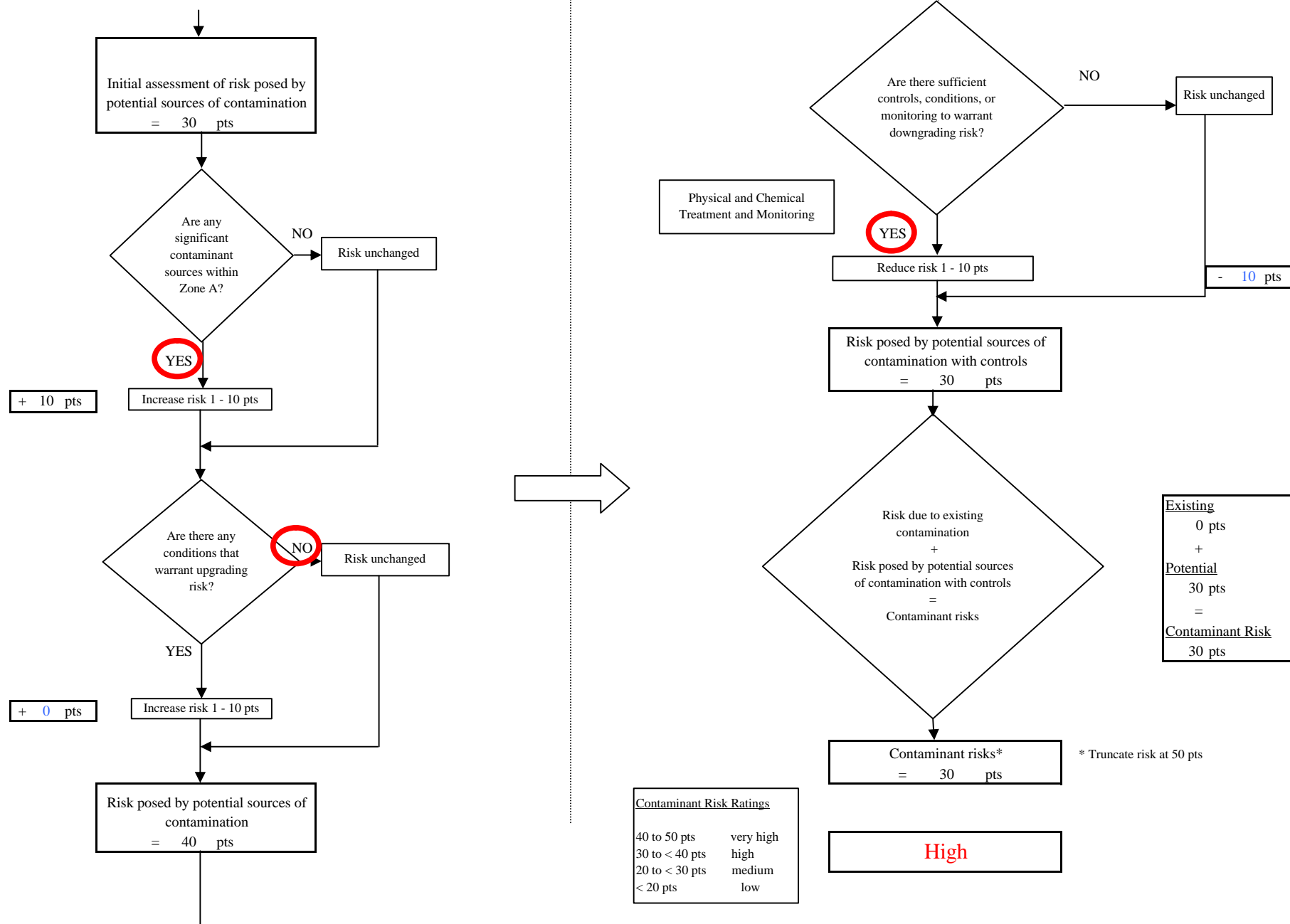


Chart 3. Vulnerability Analysis for Tolsona Lake Resort - Bacteria & Viruses

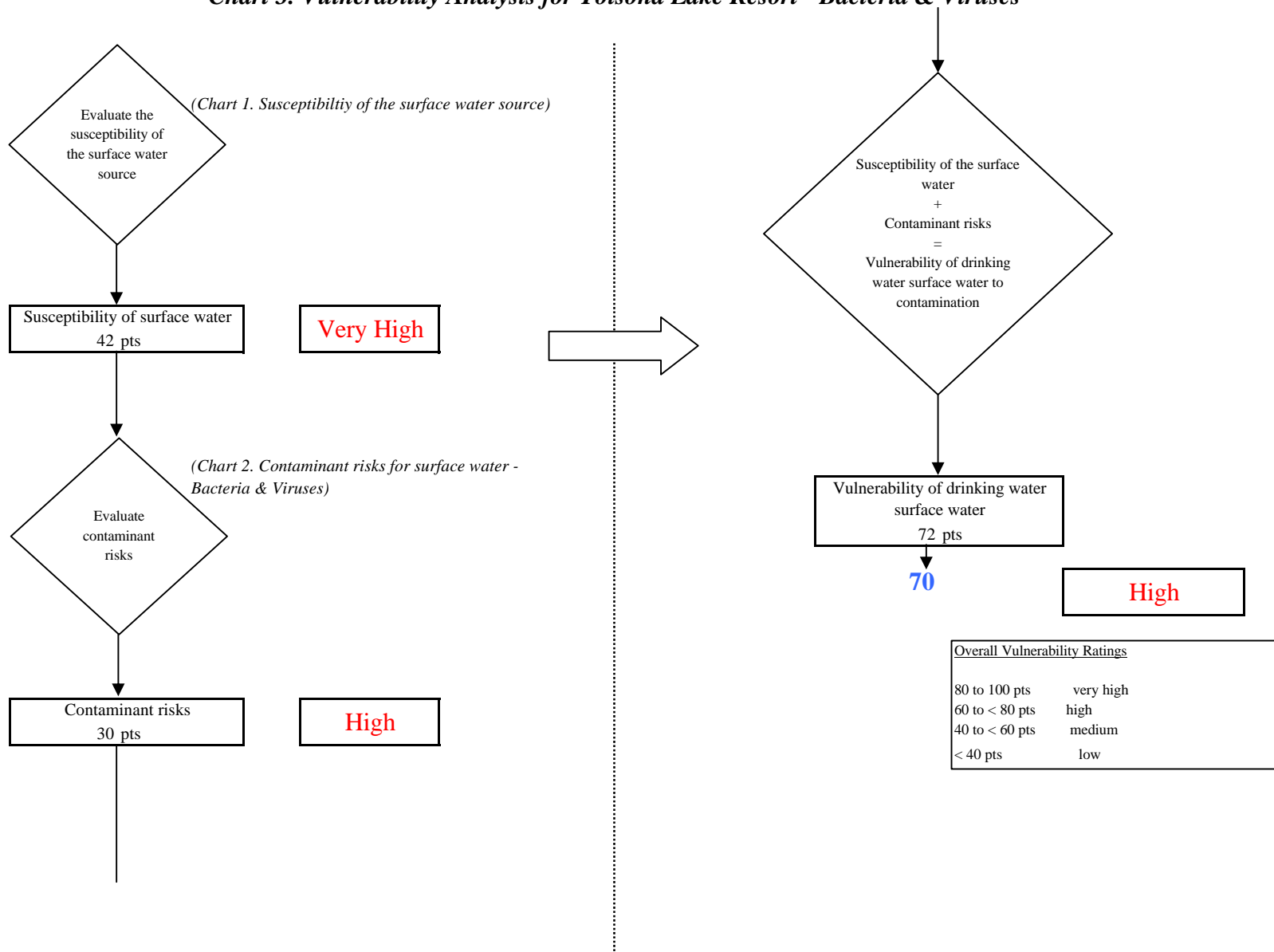


Chart 4. Contaminant Risks for Tolsona Lake Resort - Nitrates and Nitrites

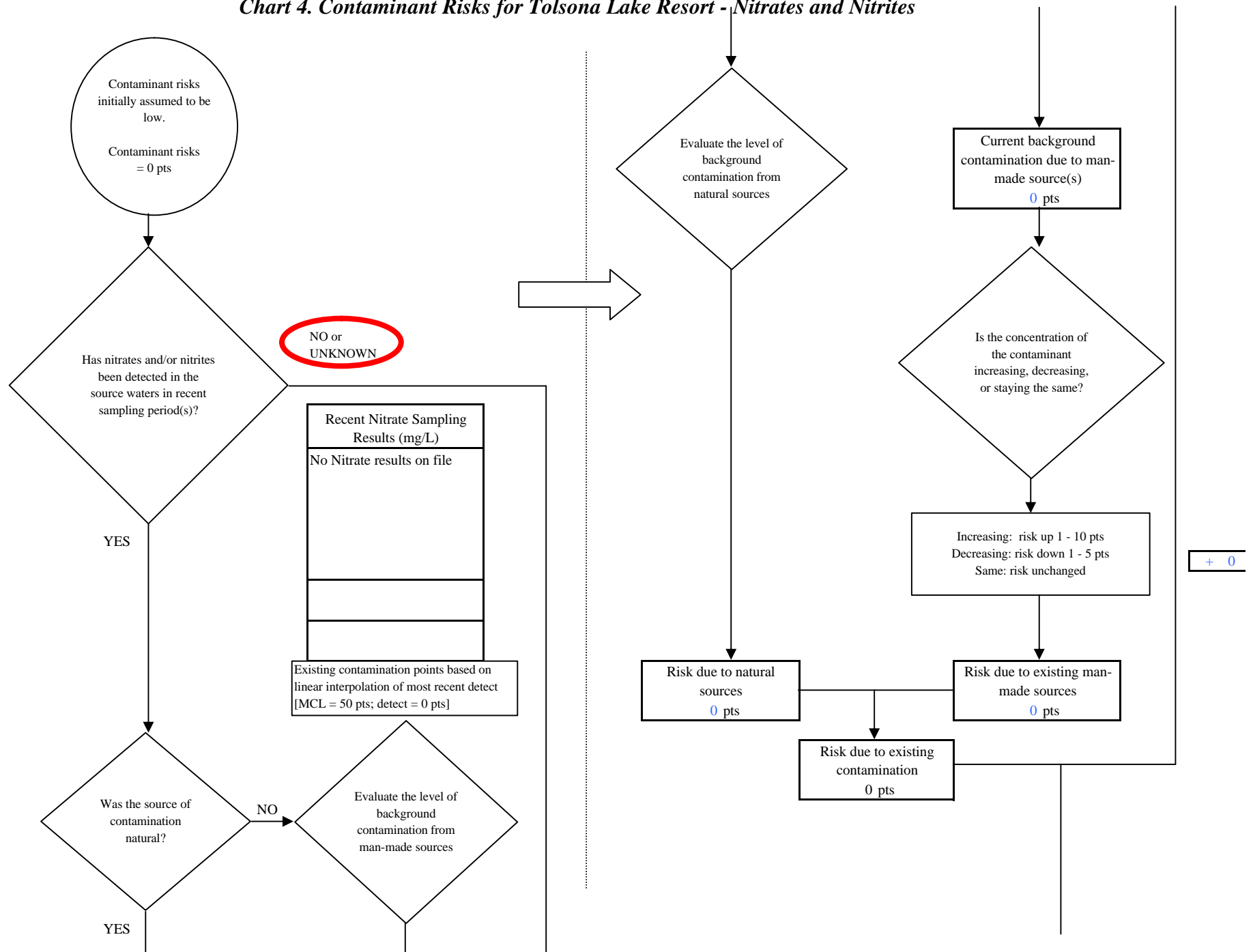


Chart 4. Contaminant Risks for Tolsona Lake Resort - Nitrates and Nitrites

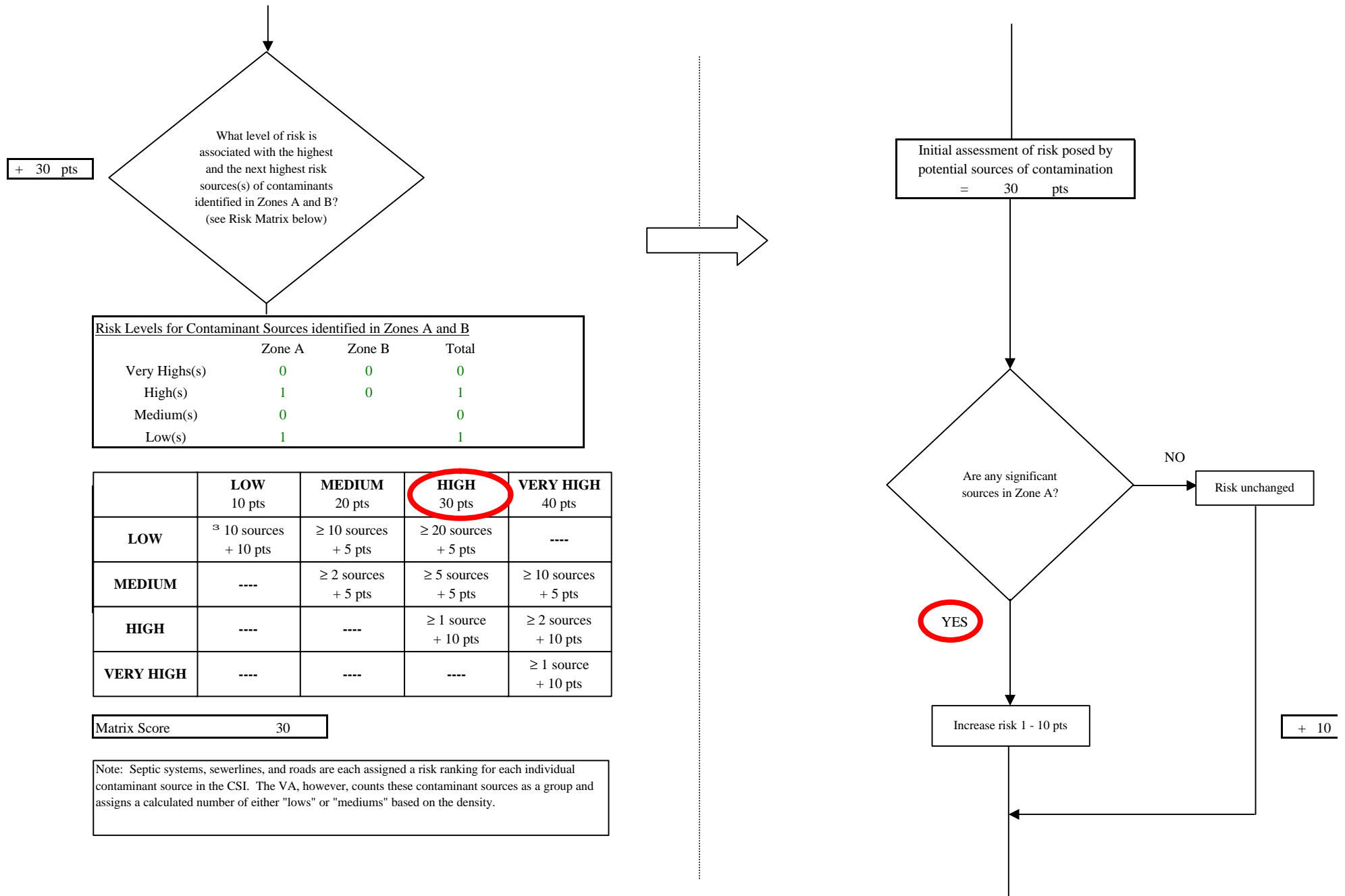


Chart 4. Contaminant Risks for Tolsona Lake Resort - Nitrates and Nitrites

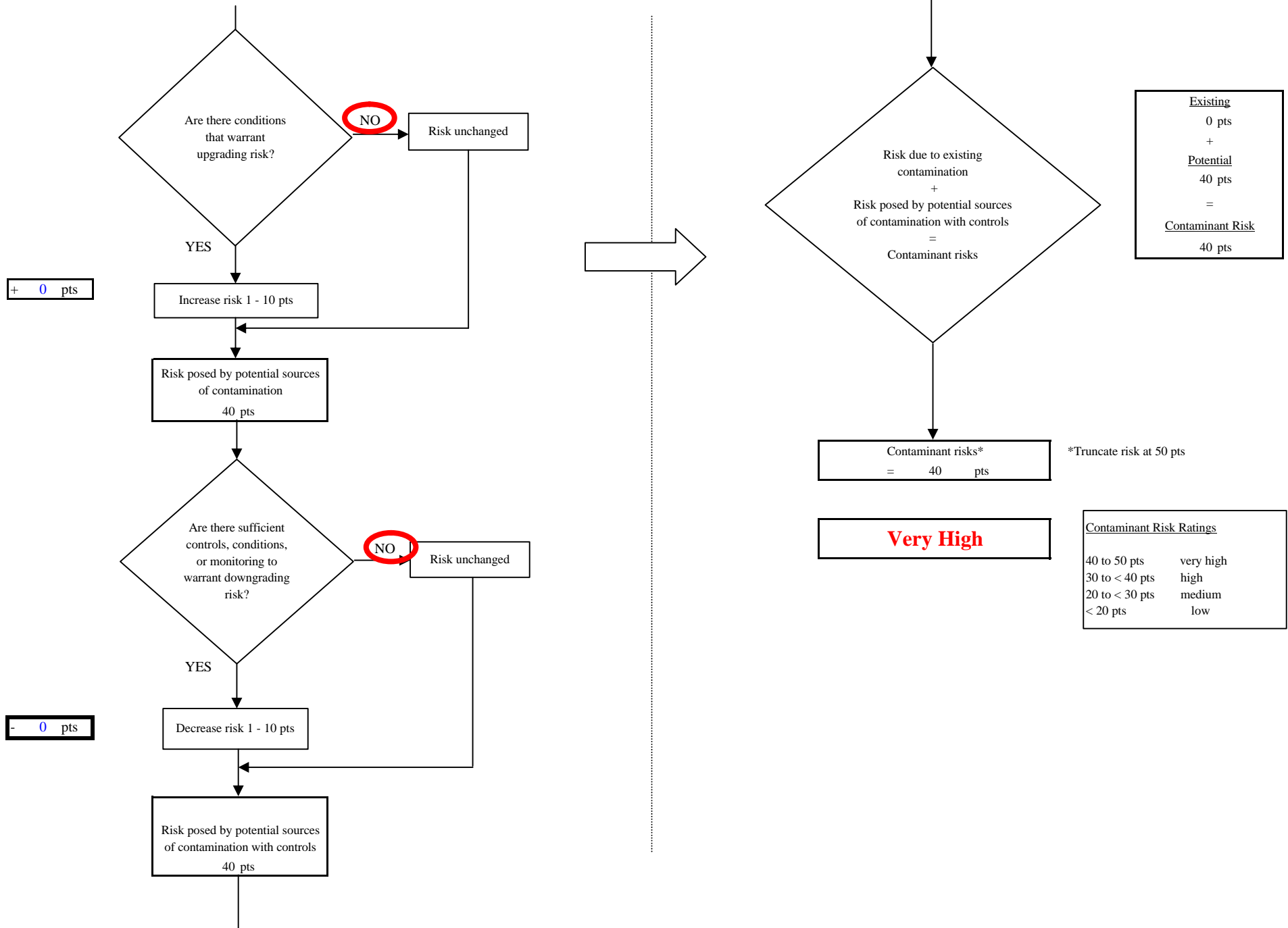


Chart 5. Vulnerability Analysis for Tolsona Lake Resort - Nitrates and Nitrites

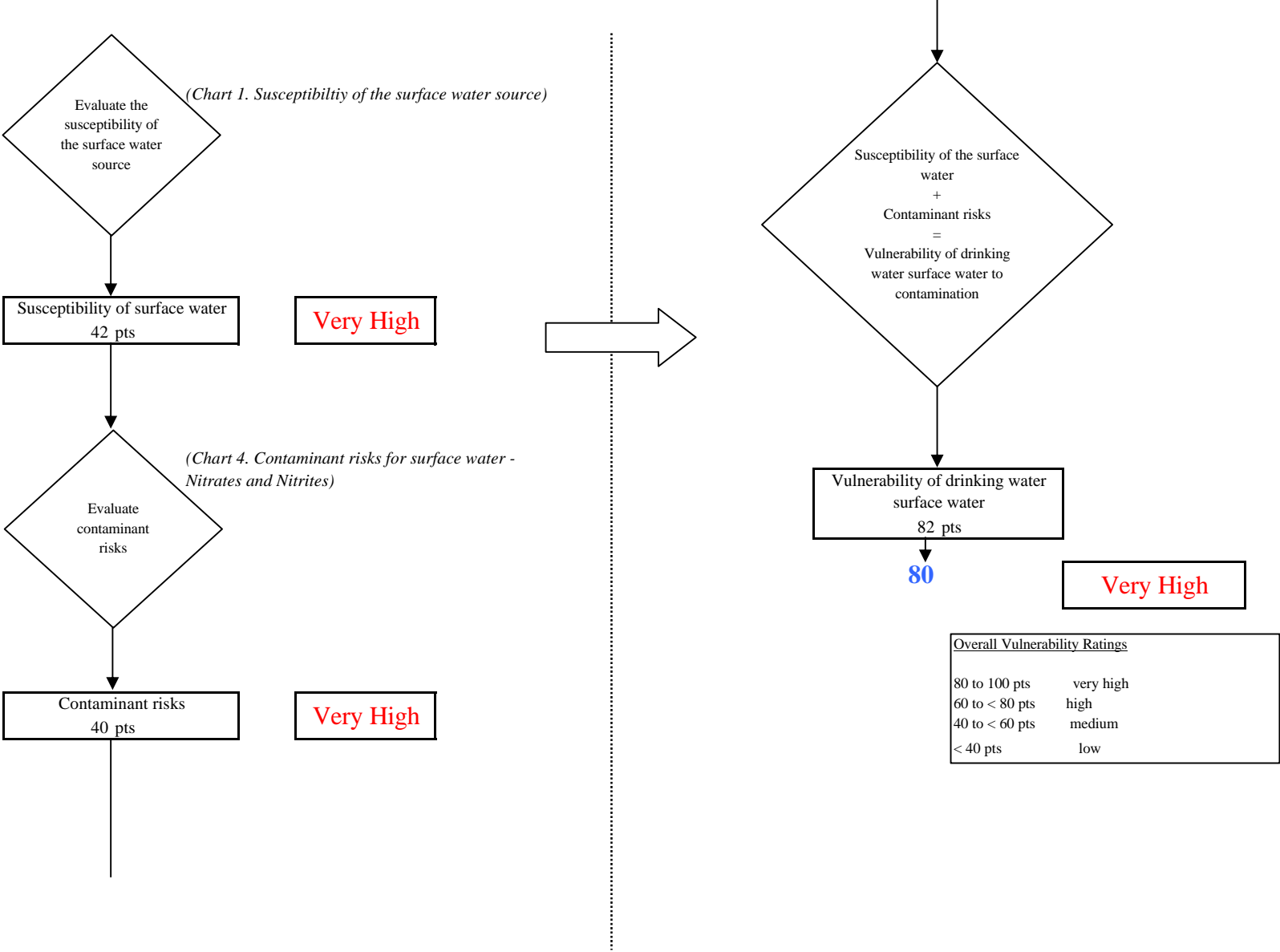


Chart 6. Contaminant Risks for Tolsona Lake Resort - Volatile Organic Chemicals

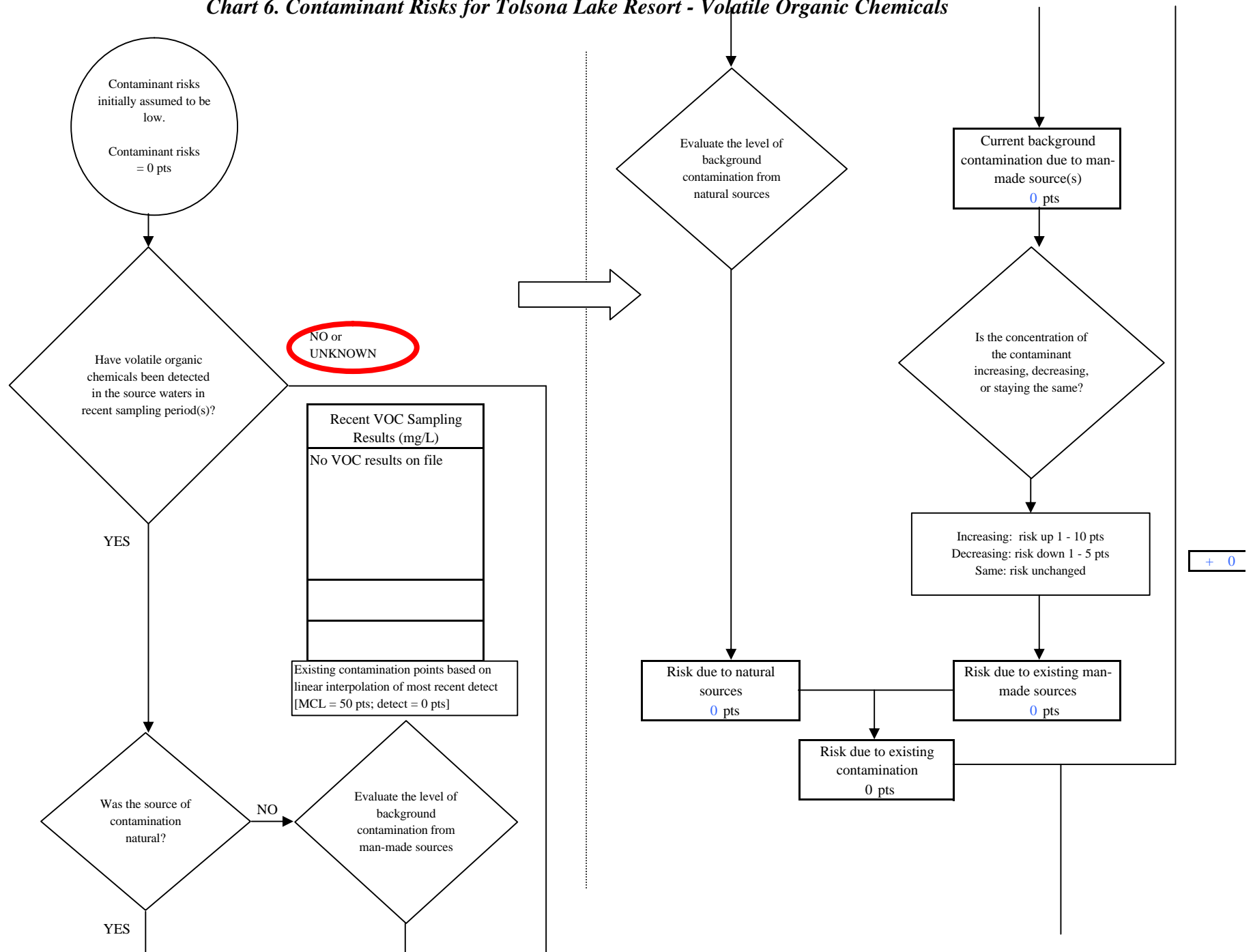


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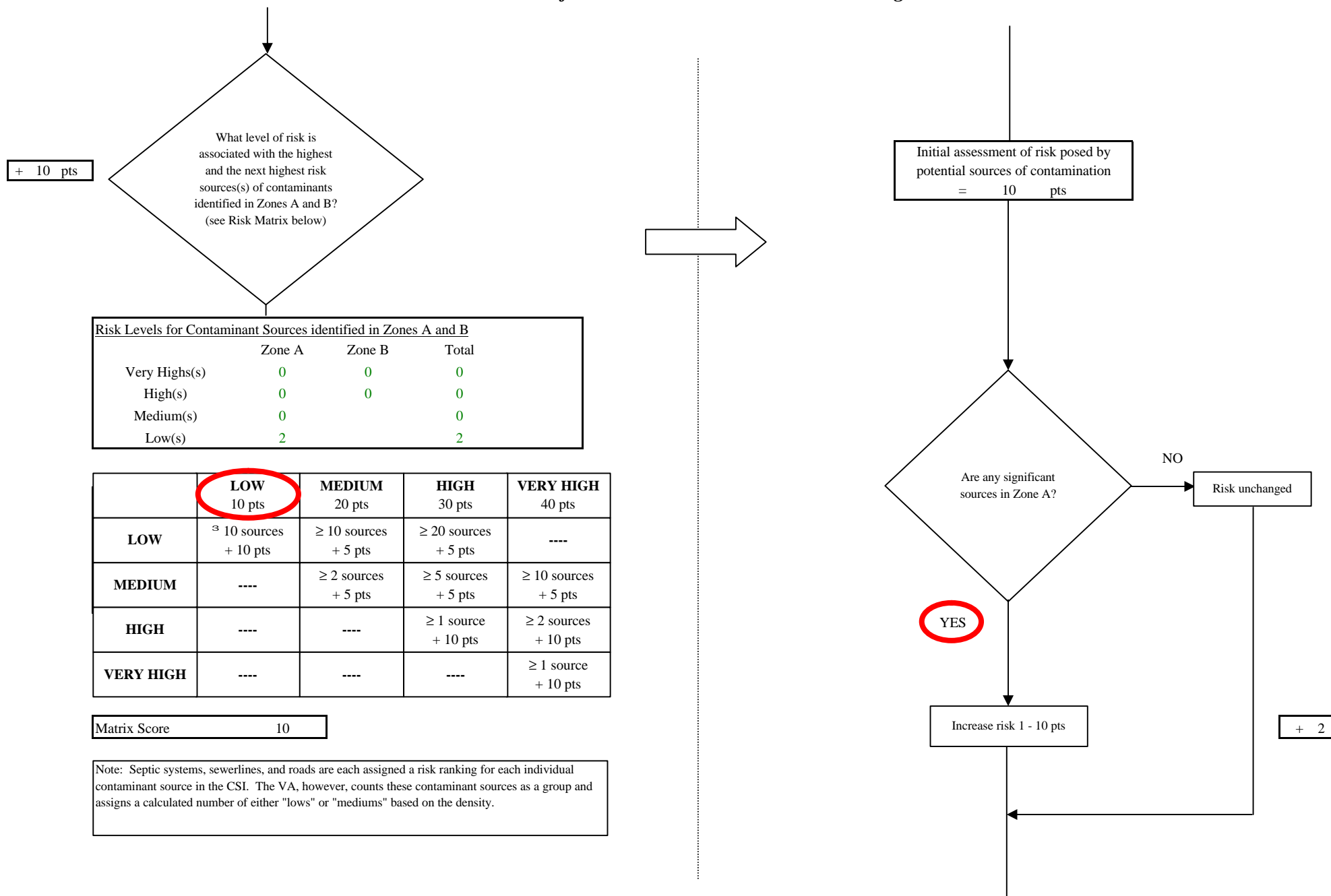


Chart 6. Contaminant Risks for Tolsona Lake Resort - Volatile Organic Chemicals

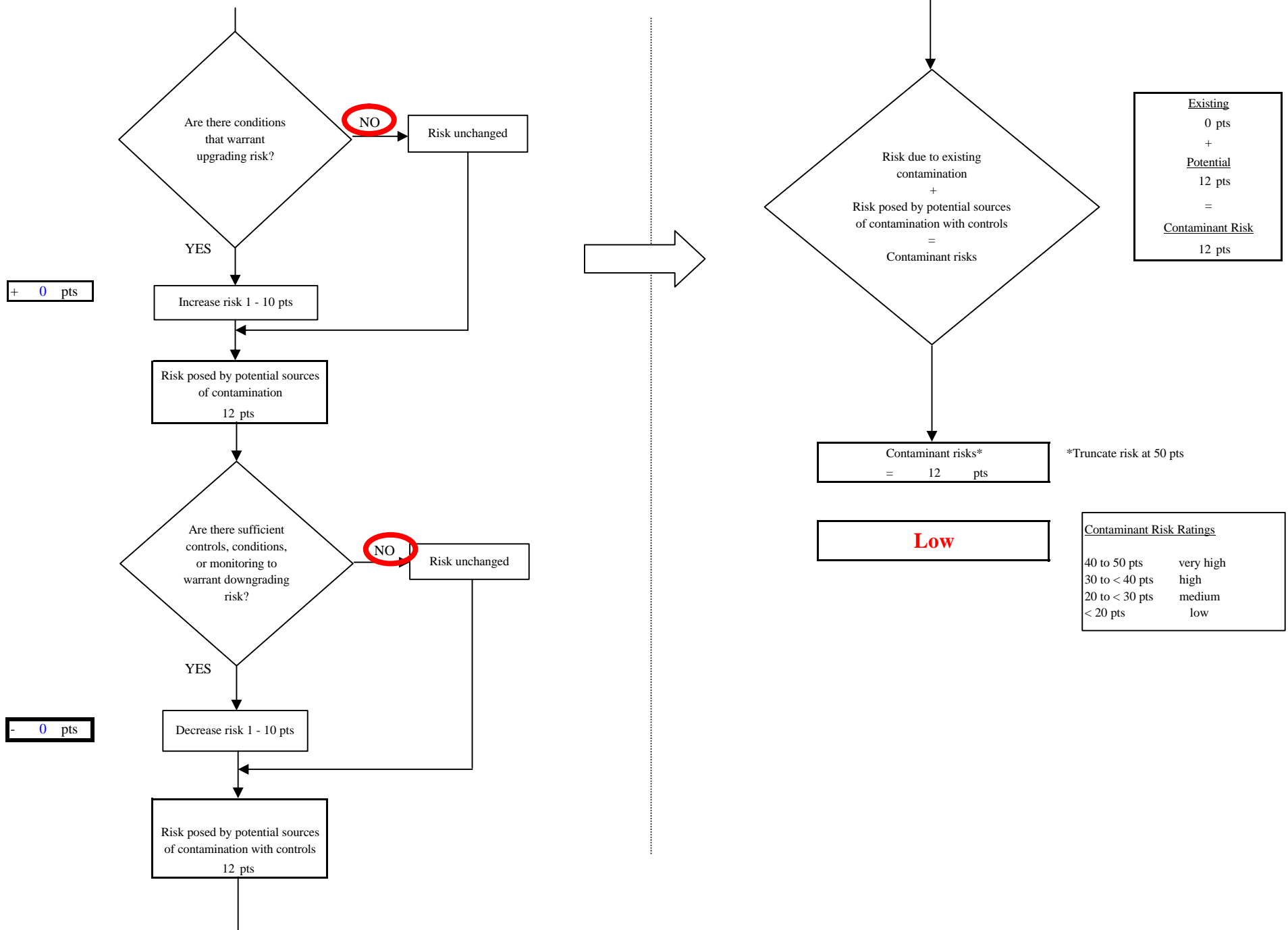


Chart 7. Vulnerability Analysis for Tolsona Lake Resort - Volatile Organic Chemicals

