



Source Water Assessment

A Hydrogeologic Susceptibility and
Vulnerability Assessment for
Kongiganak Water System

Kongiganak, Alaska

PWSID #271025.001

January 2004

Drinking Water Protection Program Report #1114

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

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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 (EPA), the 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 that 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 the Kongiganak Water System, Kongiganak, Alaska

Drinking Water Protection Program Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The public water system for Kongiganak, Alaska, is a Class A surface water system that obtains water from the northwest shore of Airport Lake located 150 yards east of the village airport. The water is treated, filtered, chlorinated, and stored in a storage tank at the village washeteria. The volume of the tank is approximately 583,000 gallons.

The Kongiganak protection area is approximately five-hundredths of a square mile in size and has received a susceptibility rating of **High**. *A rating of High to Very High is typical for all systems with surface water intakes.* Potential and existing sources of the following contaminants were evaluated for the Source Water Assessment: bacteria and viruses, nitrates and/or nitrites, heavy metals, cyanide, and other inorganic chemicals, synthetic organic chemicals, volatile organic chemicals, and other organic chemicals. No contaminant risks sources were identified in the protection area for this public water system.

This evaluation included all available water sampling data submitted to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) by the system operator. As stated previously, the samples were collected from post-treated water. Vulnerability ratings for the water system have been determined by combining the susceptibility of the surface water source with the contaminant risks. The system received a vulnerability rating of **Low** for all six of the contaminant categories: bacteria and viruses, nitrates and/or nitrites, volatile organic chemicals, heavy metals, cyanide, and other inorganic chemicals, synthetic organic chemicals, and other organic chemicals.

This assessment can be used as a foundation for local voluntary protection efforts as well as a basis for the continuous efforts on the part of the community of Kongiganak to protect public health.

DRINKING WATER SYSTEM AND AREA OVERVIEW

Kongiganak (Sec. 10, T003S, R086W, Seward Meridian) is located on the west shore of Kuskokwim Bay just west of the mouth of the Kuskokwim River. This Yup'ik Eskimo community is located approximately 70 miles southwest of Bethel and 450 miles west of Anchorage on the lower Yukon-Kuskokwim (Y-K) delta. The community of Kongiganak has a population of 368. Kongiganak's average annual precipitation is 22 inches, including approximately 43 inches of annual snowfall. Summer temperatures range from 41 to 57°F and winter temperatures range from 6 to 24°F.

The public water system is a Class A surface water system that operates year-round and obtains water from the northwest shore of Airport Lake just north of the village. The lake water is treated for particulate matter using coagulation. Then the water is filtered, chlorinated, and finally stored in a 583,000-gallon tank at the washeteria.

The Kongiganak Village Council operates the water system and individuals haul water from the washeteria to their households. The residents use honeybuckets for sewage disposal (ADCED, 2003).

Puvurna Power Company provides electricity to the community and school. The facility is privately owned and operated. It is fueled by diesel. The Kongiganak Village Council provides honeybucket disposal services and operates the local landfill. (ADCED, 2003)

Information acquired from a January 1999 sanitary survey for the public water system indicated that the surface water intake is adequately constructed. Average production for the system is estimated to be approximately 2,000 gallons per day.

Kongiganak is located on the Yukon-Kuskokwim (Y-K) Delta. The Y-K Delta is located on the southwest coast of Alaska and primarily consists of lowlands formed by the deposition of fluvial sediment from the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers.

The Y-K Delta topography is relatively flat and approximately 40% to 50% of the delta surface is wet (Alaska Geographic Society). The lower delta area generally receives about 20 inches of precipitation annually. Areas of both discontinuous and continuous permafrost are present on the Y-K Delta. Permafrost is often present within 10 feet of ground surface and varies in thickness from 15 feet to 600 feet thick (R&M, 1979b). Thaw bulbs generally persist around areas of standing and flowing water.

DRINKING WATER PROTECTION AREA

Identifying the pathways most likely for surface contamination to reach water intake areas is the first step in determining the water system's risk. These pathways are initially determined by looking at the drainage area contributing overland water flow to a surface water source intake. The entire drainage area is also known as the "drinking water protection area." Please refer to pages 10-11 of the "Guidance Manual for Class A Public Water Systems" for additional information.

The protection area established for surface water sources by the ADEC is usually separated into three zones. These zones correspond to the overland-flow distance that water travels to get to the source. The ADEC Drinking Water Protection Program's Technical Advisory Committee developed guidelines for derivation of these zones in 1998. The following is a summary of the three protection area zones:

Table 1. Definition of Zones

Zone	Definition
A	Areas within 1000-ft of lakes or streams
B	Areas within 1-mile of lakes or streams
C	The watershed boundary

The protection area for the Kongiganak water intake includes each of these Zones (See Map A 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 Kongiganak protection area. This inventory was completed through a search of agency records and other publicly available information. There is a wide array of potential contamination sources to surface water. These contaminants are found within agricultural, residential,

commercial, and industrial areas, but can also occur within areas that have little or no development.

For Class A public water system assessments, six categories of drinking water contaminants were inventoried. They include:

- Bacteria and viruses;
- Nitrates and/or nitrites;
- Volatile organic chemicals;
- Heavy metals, cyanide, and other inorganic chemicals;
- Synthetic Organic Chemicals; and
- Other Organic Chemicals.

No potential contaminant sources were identified in the Kongiganak protection area as displayed on Map C of Appendix C and in Table 1 of Appendix B.

RANKING OF CONTAMINANT RISKS

Once potential and existing sources of contamination have been identified, they are assigned a ranking according to what category and level of risk they represent. Ranking of contaminant risks for "potential" or "existing" sources of contamination is a function of the toxicity and the volume of specific contaminants associated with that source. Rankings include:

- Low;
- Medium;
- High; and
- Very High.

The time-of-travel for contaminants within the water is dependent on the physical and chemical characteristics of each contaminant. Bacteria and Viruses are only inventoried in Zone A because of their short life span. Only "Very High" and "High" rankings are inventoried within Zones B and C due to the probability of contaminant dilution by the time the contaminants reach the water intake.

As stated earlier, no potential contaminant sources were identified within the drinking water protection area for this public water system (Table 1 of Appendix B). Due to the lack of potential contaminant sources, no additional Tables were included in Appendix B detailing potential contaminant sources for each of the six categories of drinking water contaminants.

VULNERABILITY OF THE DRINKING WATER SYSTEM

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

- Surface Water Susceptibility and
- Contaminant risks.

Appendix D contains 13 charts, which together form the ‘Vulnerability Analysis’ for the public drinking water Source Water Assessment. Chart 1 analyzes the ‘Susceptibility of the Surface Water Source’ to contamination by looking at the climate, terrain, and intake location. 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 intake area. Chart 3 contains the ‘Vulnerability Analysis for Bacteria and Viruses,’ which is a composite score of the Vulnerability Analysis and the overall Susceptibility. Charts 4 through 13 repeat the Contaminant Risks and Vulnerability Analyses for nitrates and nitrites, volatile organic chemicals, heavy metals, cyanide, and other inorganic chemicals, synthetic organic chemicals, and other organic chemicals, respectively.

A score for the Surface Water Susceptibility of the source is reached by considering the properties of the water intake and the surrounding area. The derivation of this information is presented below and the data for this source is shown in Chart 1 of Appendix D.

Susceptibility of the Surface Water Source – always considered to be “high” (30 points)

+

Adequate Construction of the Intake (0 – 5 Points)

+

Runoff Potential Within Zone B (0 – 5 Points)

+

Dilution Capacity of the Surface Water (0 – 10 Points)

=

Natural Susceptibility
(0 – 50 Points)

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

Surface Water Source Susceptibility Ratings

40 to 50 pts	Very High
30 to < 40 pts	High

Table 2. Susceptibility of the Water Source

	Score	Rating
Minimum Allowable Susceptibility	30	
Intake Construction Adequate	0	
Runoff Potential	2	
Dilution Capacity	5	
Overall Susceptibility	37	High

For contaminants, risks to a drinking water source depend on the type, number or density, and distribution of the contaminant sources. The Contaminant Risk score has been derived from an examination of existing, and historical contamination sources that have been detected in the protection area 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 the 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. Kongiganak Contaminant Risks

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	0	Low
Nitrates and/or Nitrites	1	Low
Volatile Organic Chemicals	0	Low
Heavy Metals, Cyanide, and Other Inorganic Chemicals	0	Low
Synthetic Organic Chemicals	0	Low
Other Organic Chemicals	0	Low

Finally, an overall vulnerability score is assigned for each contaminant type by combining each of the contaminant risk scores with the susceptibility score:

Susceptibility of the Surface Water Source
(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 and ratings for each of the six categories of drinking water contaminants. Note: scores are rounded off to the nearest five.

Table 4. Kongiganak Overall Vulnerability

Category	Score	Rating
Bacteria and Viruses	35	Low
Nitrates and Nitrites	35	Low
Volatile Organic Chemicals	35	Low
Heavy Metals, Cyanide, and Other Inorganic Chemicals	35	Low
Synthetic Organic Chemicals	35	Low
Other Organic Chemicals	35	Low

Bacteria and Viruses

The contaminant risk for bacteria and viruses is **Low**. No contaminant risks sources for bacteria and viruses were identified in the protection area for this public water system.

Coliforms (a bacteria) are found naturally in the environment and although they aren't necessarily a health threat, they are an indicator of other potentially harmful bacteria in the water, more specifically, fecal coliforms and E. coli, which only come from human and animal fecal waste. Harmful bacteria can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms (EPA, 2003). Positive samples increase the overall vulnerability of the drinking water source, indicating that the source is susceptible to bacteria and virus contamination. Typically, coliform detection in raw

water samples collected from surface water sources is normal. (See Chart 2 – Contaminant Risks for Bacteria and Viruses in Appendix D).

One positive bacteria count was detected in 2000 and 2001 however, the follow-up samples were negative. Sampling conducted in 2002 and 2003 showed no detection of bacteria.

After combining the contaminant risk for bacteria and viruses with the natural susceptibility of the source, the overall vulnerability of the source to bacteria and virus contamination remains **Low**.

Nitrates and Nitrites

The contaminant risk for nitrates and nitrites is **Low** (See Chart 4 - Contaminant Risks for Nitrates and/or Nitrites in Appendix D). No contaminant risks sources for nitrates were identified in the protection area for this public water system. Nitrates are very mobile, moving at approximately the same rate as water.

The Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for nitrates is 10 milligrams per liter (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 (EPA, 2003).

Sampling history for the water source indicates that low concentrations of nitrates (below the MCL) were detected in recent sampling events, but did not exceed the MCL. The low nitrate concentration is likely attributed to natural sources.

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

Volatile Organic Chemicals

The contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals is **Low** (See Chart 6 – Contaminant Risks for Volatile Organic Chemicals in Appendix D). No contaminant sources for volatile organic chemicals were identified in the protection area for this public water system.

Detectable concentrations of trihalomethanes were reported in sampling events for this public water system. The MCL for total trihalomethanes is 0.08 mg/L. Two of the reported trihalomethane concentrations were reported above the MCL in 1996 and 1999, however, the most recent samples have not exceeded the MCL. Trihalomethanes are considered byproducts of the water treatment process and are not

from the source waters. Since the reported concentration of trihalomethanes in the most recent sampling did not exceed the applicable MCLs, no risk points were retained.

After combining the contaminant risk for volatile organic chemicals with the natural susceptibility of the source, the overall vulnerability of the source to contamination remains **Low**.

Heavy Metals, Cyanide, and Other Inorganic Chemicals

The contaminant risk for heavy metals is **Low**. No contaminant risks sources for heavy metals, cyanide, and other inorganic chemicals were identified in the protection area for this public water system.

Based on review of recent sampling records for this public water system, moderate levels of copper and thallium have been detected. Copper and thallium have been detected in recent sampling history, but have not exceeded their respective MCLs of 1.3 mg/L and 0.002 mg/L (see Chart 8 – Contaminant Risks for Heavy Metals, Cyanide, and Other Inorganic Chemicals in Appendix D).

The reported concentrations of copper and thallium in recent sampling events are not likely to be representative of source water conditions. These two analytes are likely attributed to either the water treatment process or water distribution network; therefore, no risk points were assigned based on the presence of these analytes.

After combining the contaminant risk for heavy metals with the natural susceptibility of the source, the overall vulnerability of the source remains **Low**.

Synthetic Organic Chemicals

The contaminant risk for synthetic organic chemicals is **Low**. No contaminant sources for synthetic organic

chemicals were identified in the protection area for this public water system.

Review of historical sampling data found no recent sampling results for synthetic organic chemical contaminants.

After combining the contaminant risk with the natural susceptibility of the source, the overall vulnerability to synthetic organic chemicals of the source remains **Low** (See Chart 11 – Contaminant Risks for Synthetic Organic Chemicals in Appendix D).

Other Organic Chemicals

The contaminant risk for other organic chemicals is **Low**. No contaminant risks sources for other organic chemicals were identified in the protection area.

Review of the historical sampling data found no recent sampling results for other organic chemicals.

After combining the contaminant risk with the natural susceptibility of the source, the overall vulnerability to other organic chemicals of the source remains **Low** (See Chart 13 – Contaminant Risks for Other Organic Chemicals in Appendix D).

Using the Source Water Assessment

This assessment of contaminant risks can be used as a foundation for local voluntary protection efforts as well as a basis for the continuous efforts on the part of the community of Kongiganak 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 the drinking water source.

REFERENCES

Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development (ADCED), 2003 [WWW document]. URL: http://www.dced.state.ak.us/cbd/commdb/CF_COMDB.htm

Alaska Geographic Society, 1979, The Yukon Kuskokwim Delta. Alaska Geographic, v. 6, no. 1, 95 p.

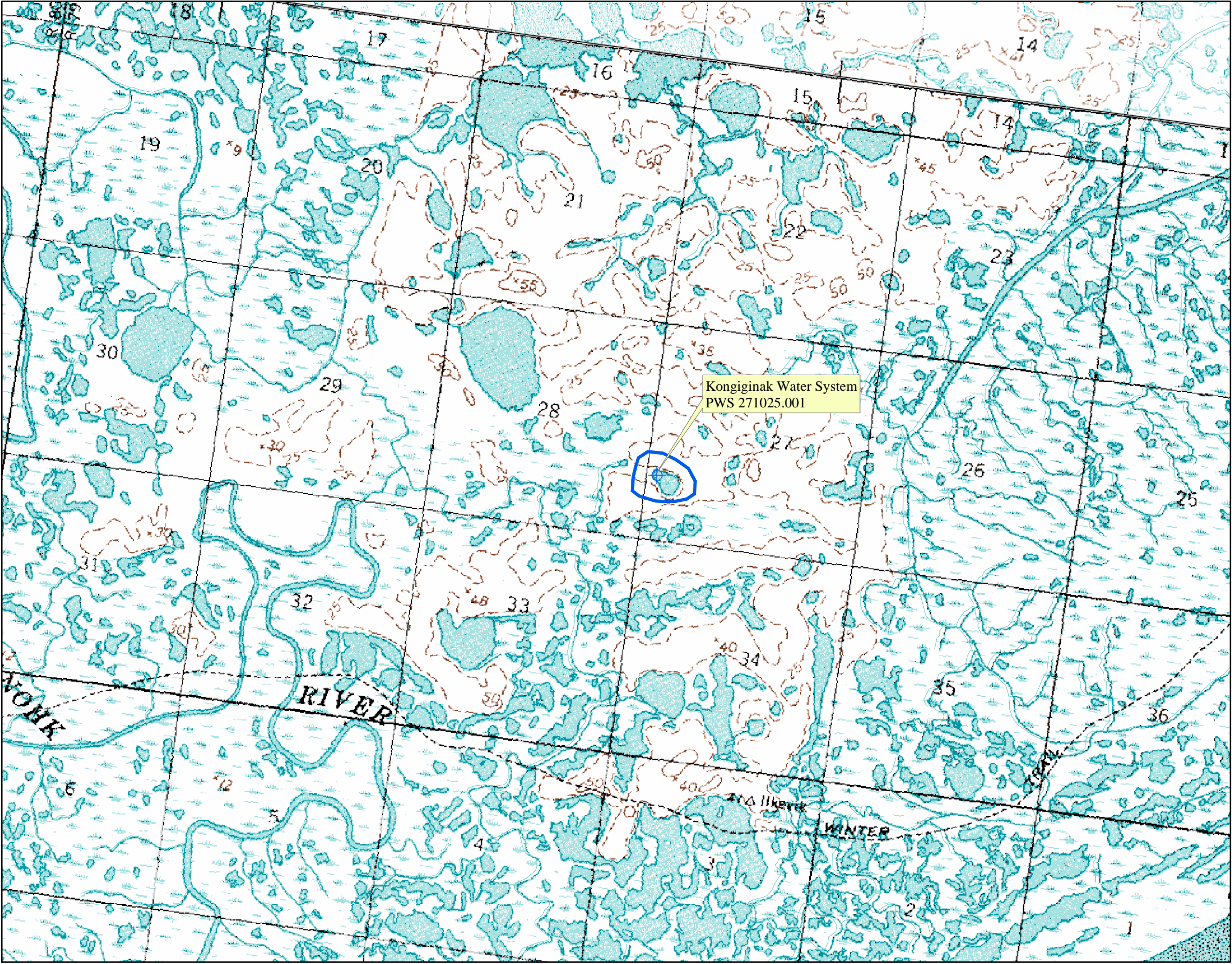
R&M Consultants, Inc., 1979b, Lower Kuskokwim School District School Site Investigation for Tununak, Alaska.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2003 [WWW document]. URL: <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/mcl.html>.

APPENDIX A

Drinking Water Protection Area Location Map (Map A)

Public Water System for PWS #271025.001 Kongiganak Water System



LEGEND

Public Water System

Surface Water Protection Zones

Zone C – Watershed Boundary

Hydrography/Physical

- Parcels
- Stream
- Lake or Pond
- Contours (approx. 50 ft. or as indicated)

Transportation

- Primary Route (Class 1)
- Secondary Route (Class 2)
- Road (Class 3)
- Road (Class 4)
- Road (Class 5, Four-wheel drive)
- Road Ferry Crossing

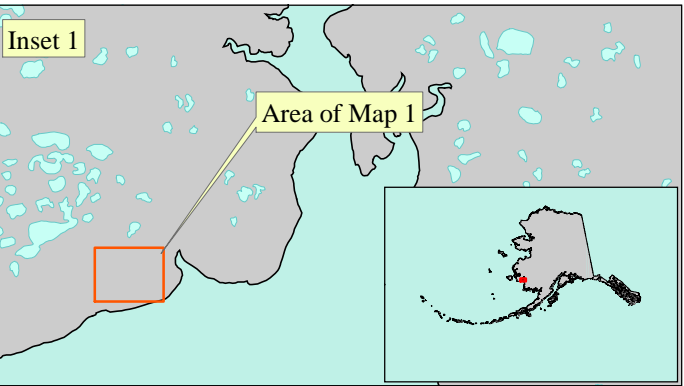
Data Sources:
Contaminant Sources, Public Water System Wells, Contours
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)

Critical Facilities
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

All other data
United States Geological Survey (USGS)

Drinking Water Protection Areas based on ADEC published document:
"Alaska Drinking Water Protection Program - Guidance Manual for
Class A Public Water Systems"

URS Corporation does not guarantee the accuracy or validity of the data provided.



APPENDIX B

Contaminant Source Inventory and Risk Rankings (Table 1)

Table 1

**Contaminant Source Inventory for
Kongiganak Water System**

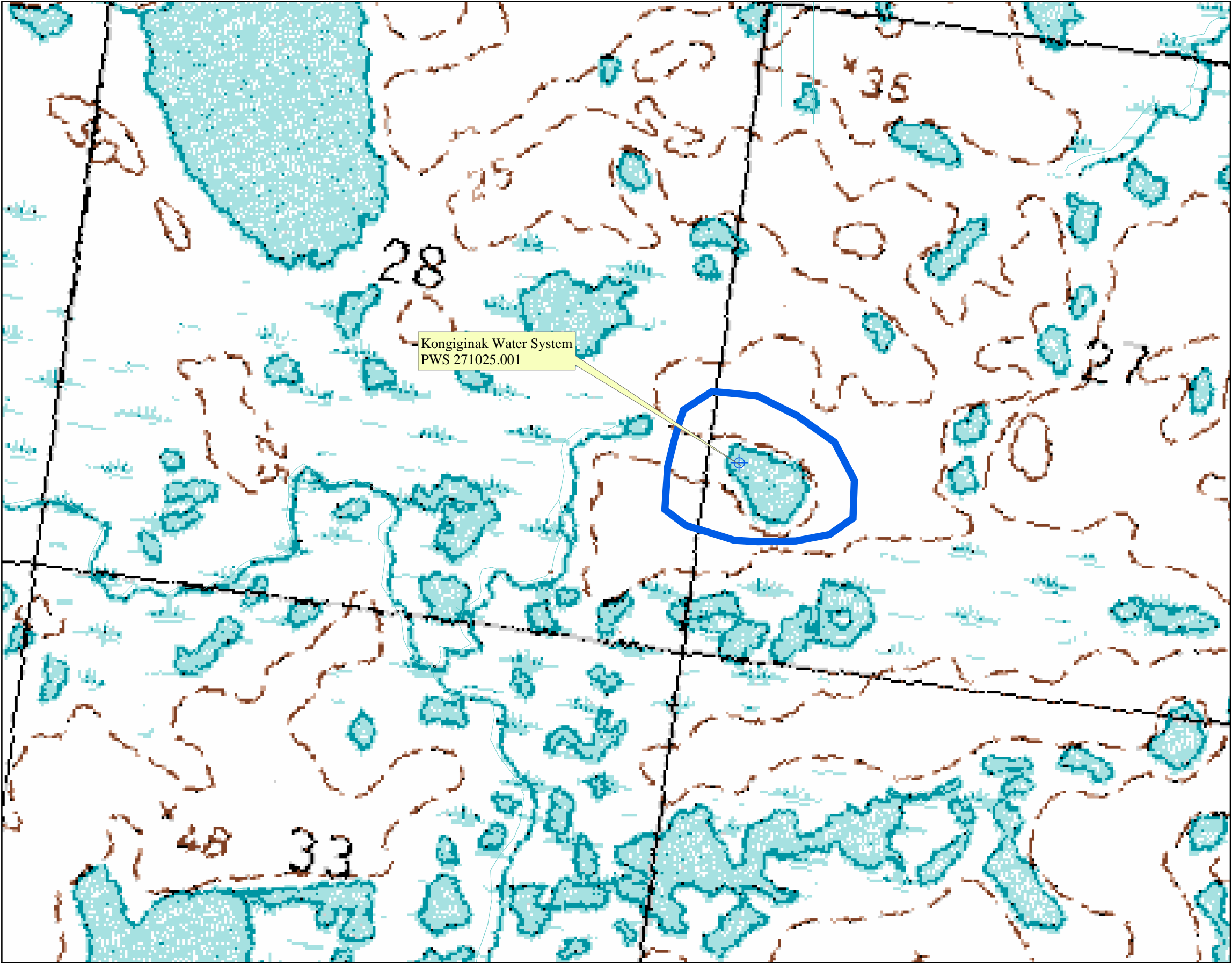
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Contaminant Source Type	Contaminant Source ID	CS ID tag	Zone	Map Number	Comments
Water supply wells	W09	W09-01	A	C	Surface water intake

APPENDIX C

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

Public Water System for PWS #271025.001 Kongiganak Water System
Showing Potential and Existing Sources of Contamination



LEGEND

Public Water System

Surface Water Protection Zones

Zone C – Watershed Boundary

Hydrography/Physical

Parcels
Stream
Lake or Pond
Contours (approx. 50 ft. or as indicated)

Transportation

Primary Route (Class 1)
Secondary Route (Class 2)
Road (Class 3)
Road (Class 4)
Road (Class 5, Four-wheel drive)
Road Ferry Crossing

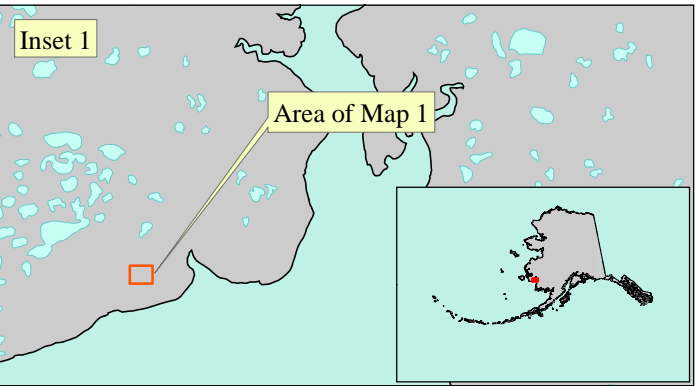
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Class A Public Water Systems"

URS Corporation does not guarantee the accuracy or validity of the data provided.



0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles

APPENDIX D

Vulnerability Analysis and Contaminant Risks (Charts 1-13)

Chart 1. Susceptibility of the Surface Water Source - Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001)

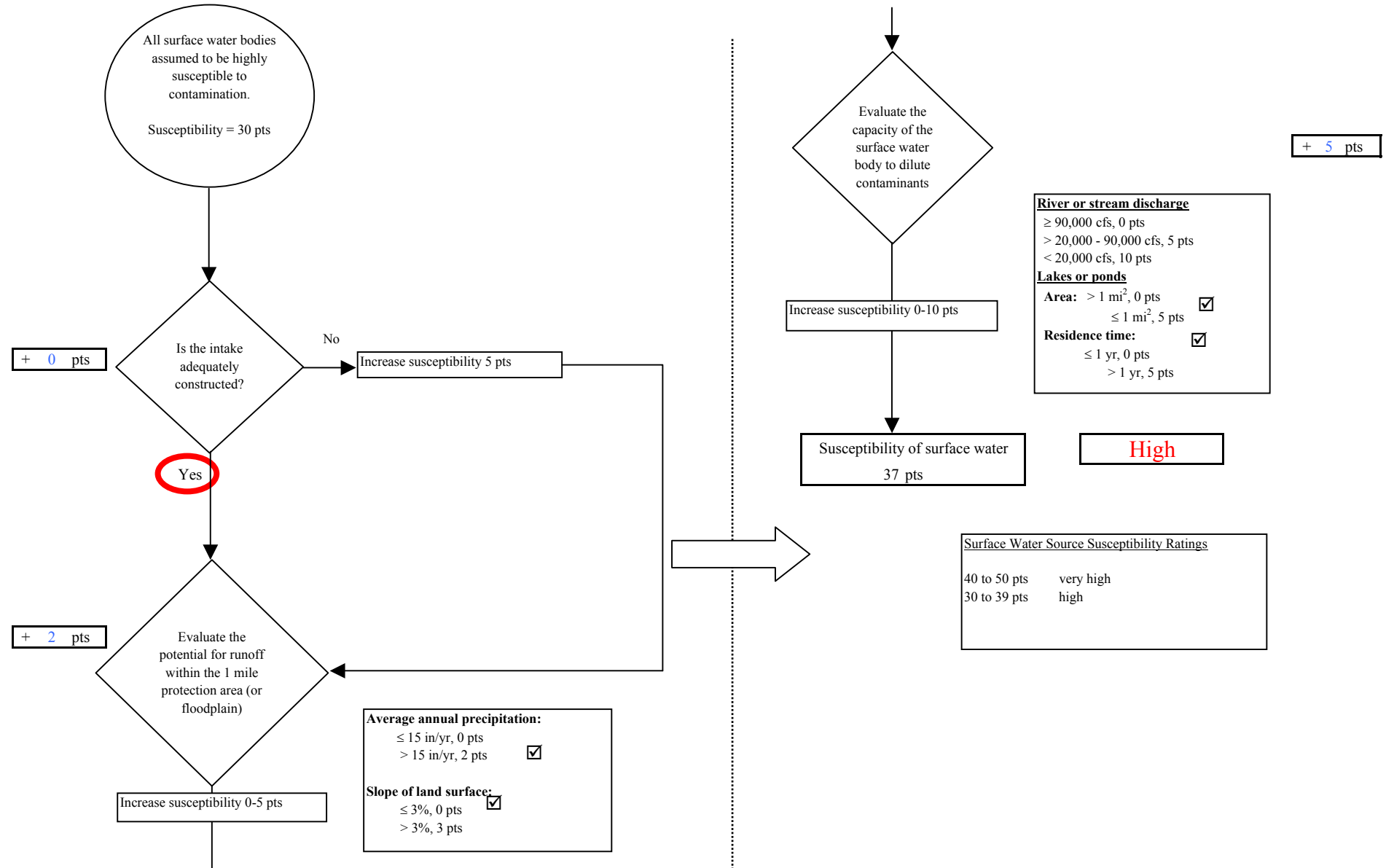


Chart 2. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Bacteria & Viruses

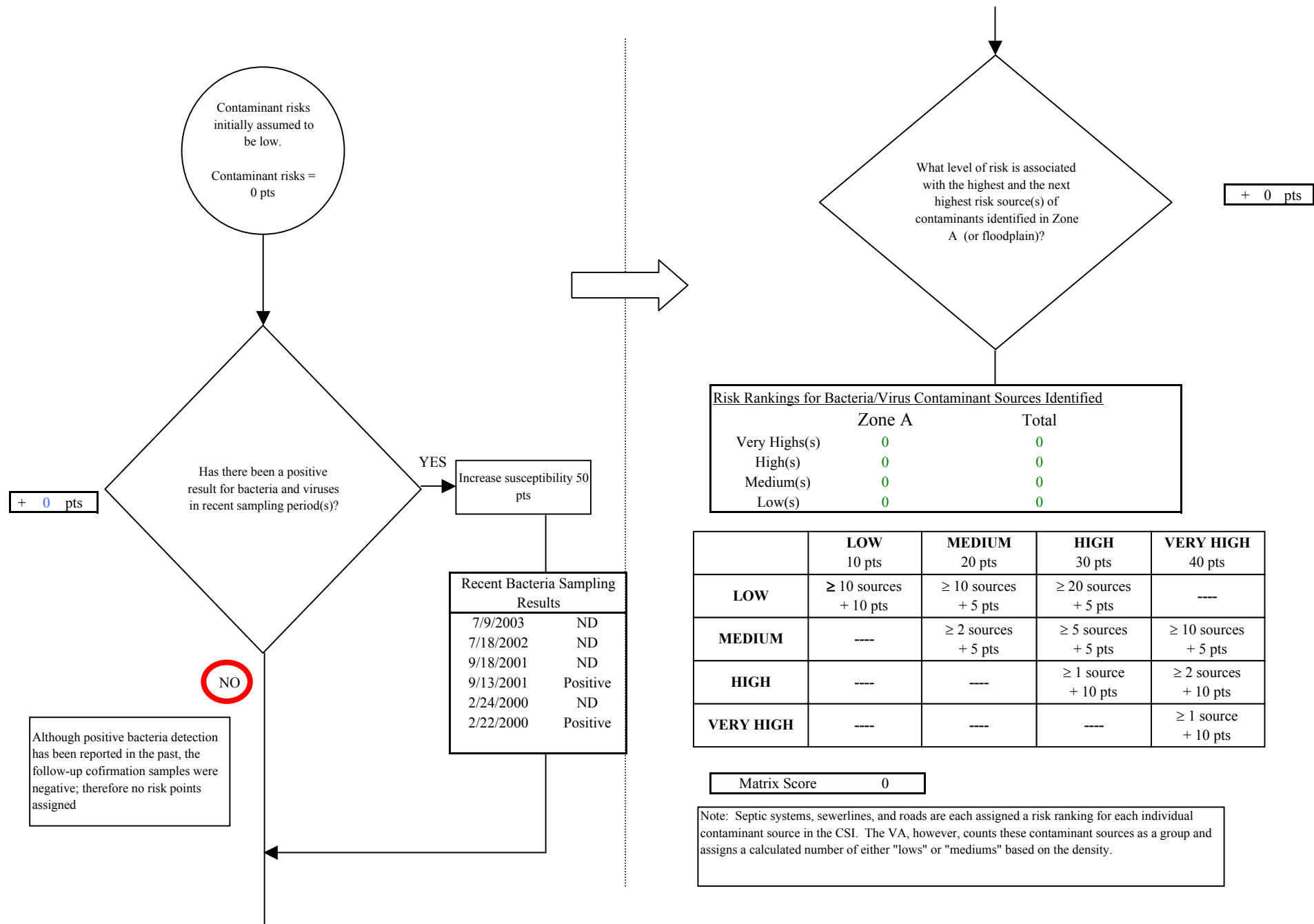


Chart 2. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Bacteria & Viruses

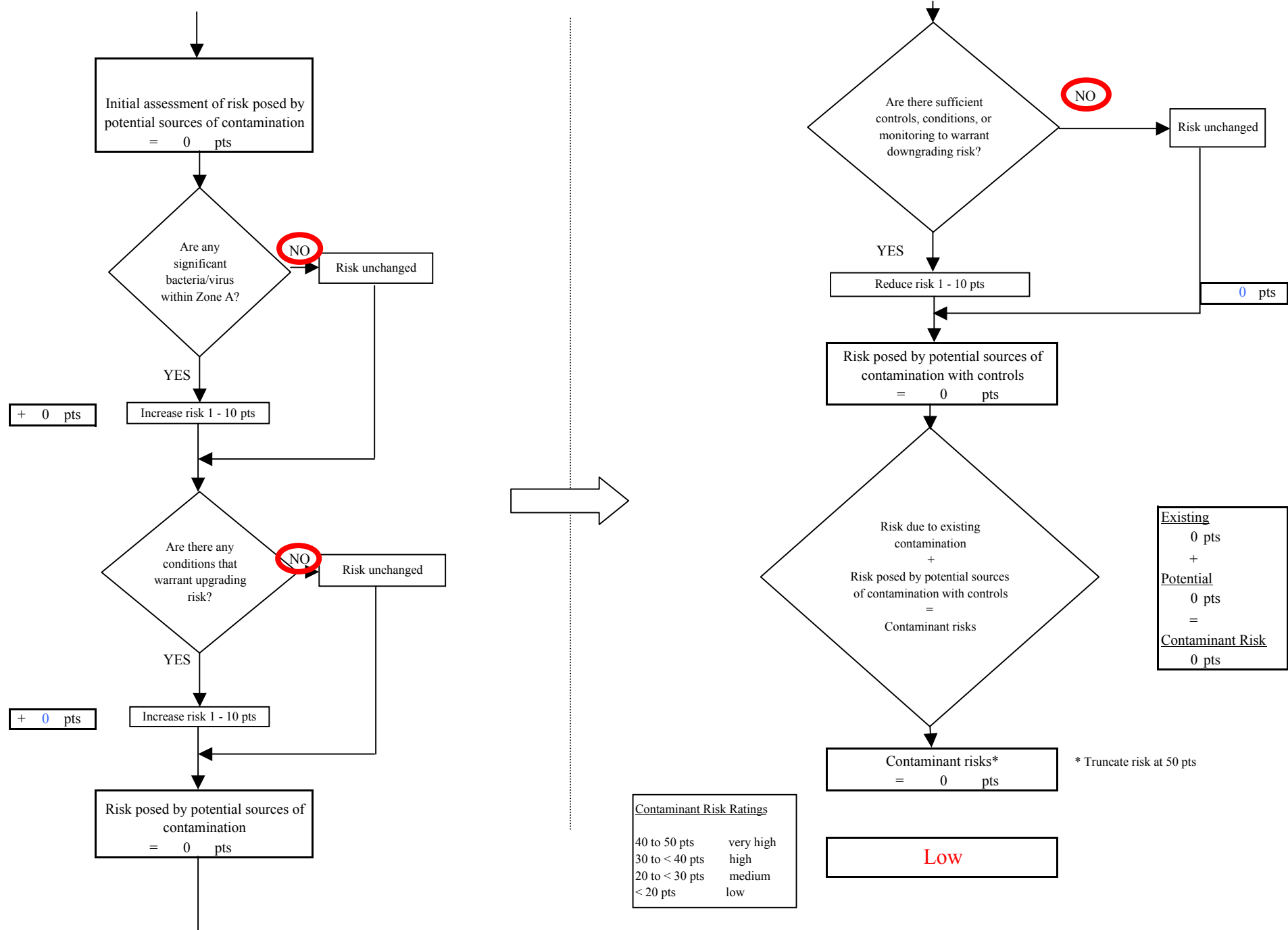


Chart 3. Vulnerability analysis for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Bacteria & Viruses

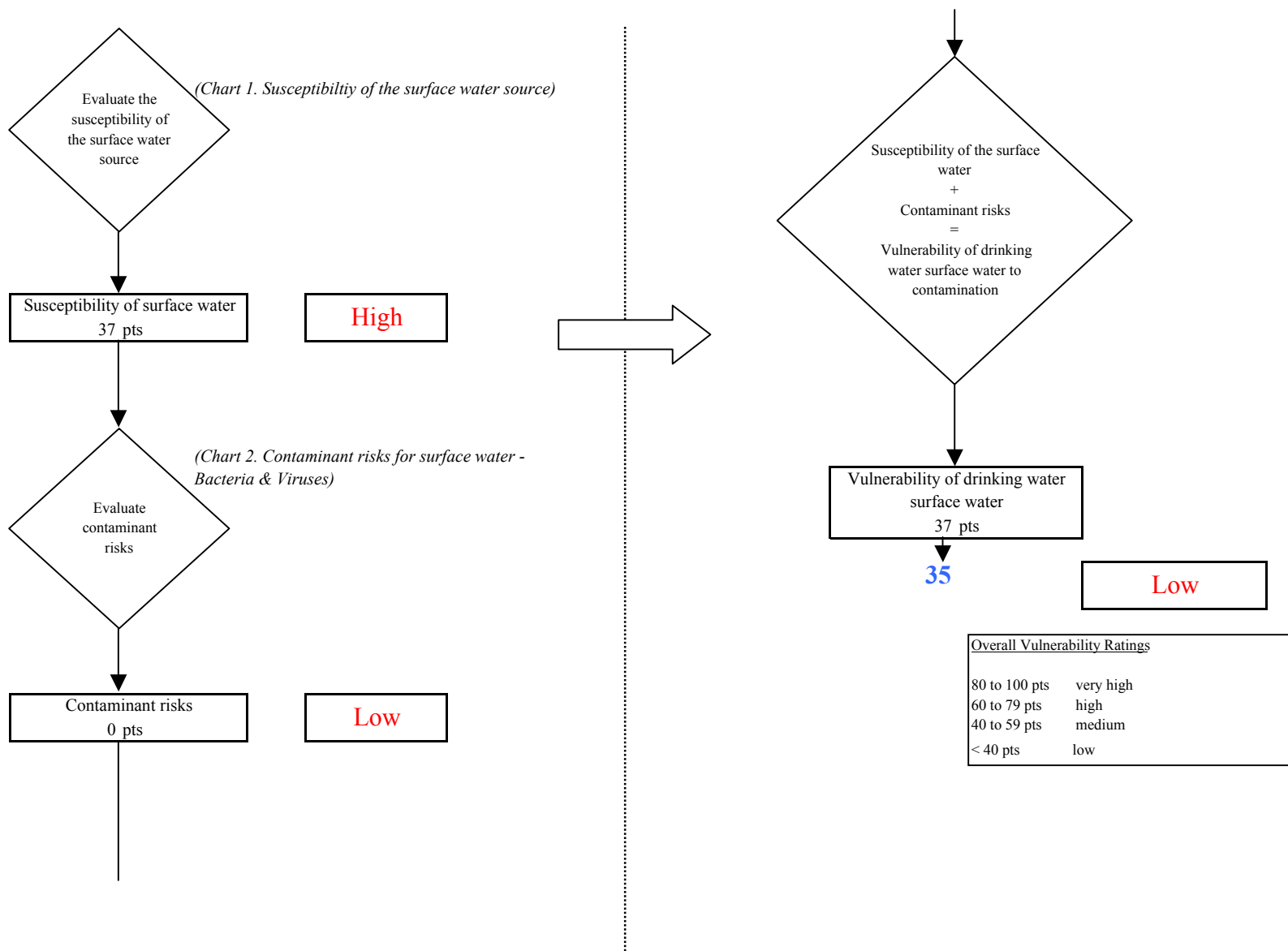


Chart 4. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Nitrates and Nitrites

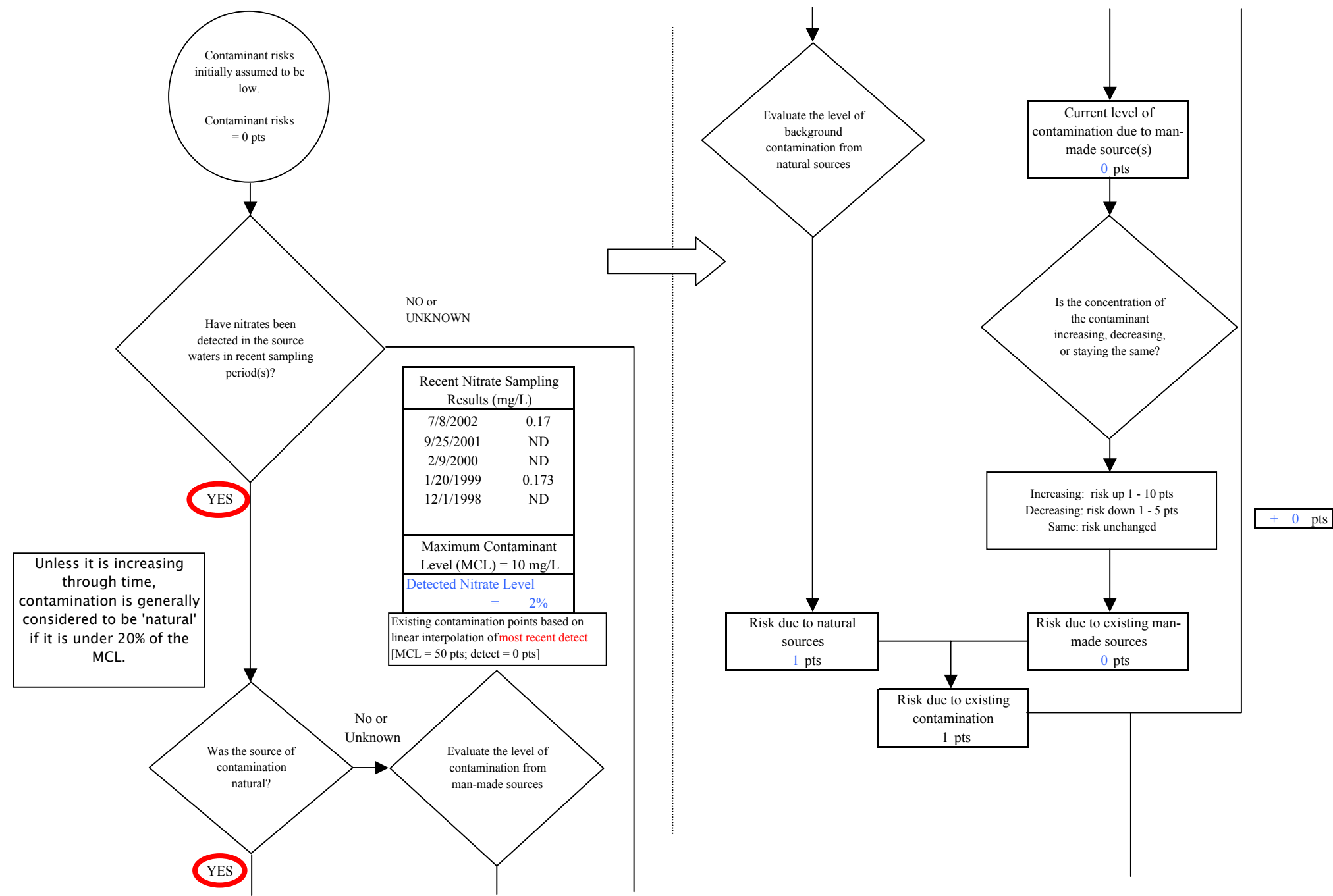


Chart 4. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Nitrates and Nitrites

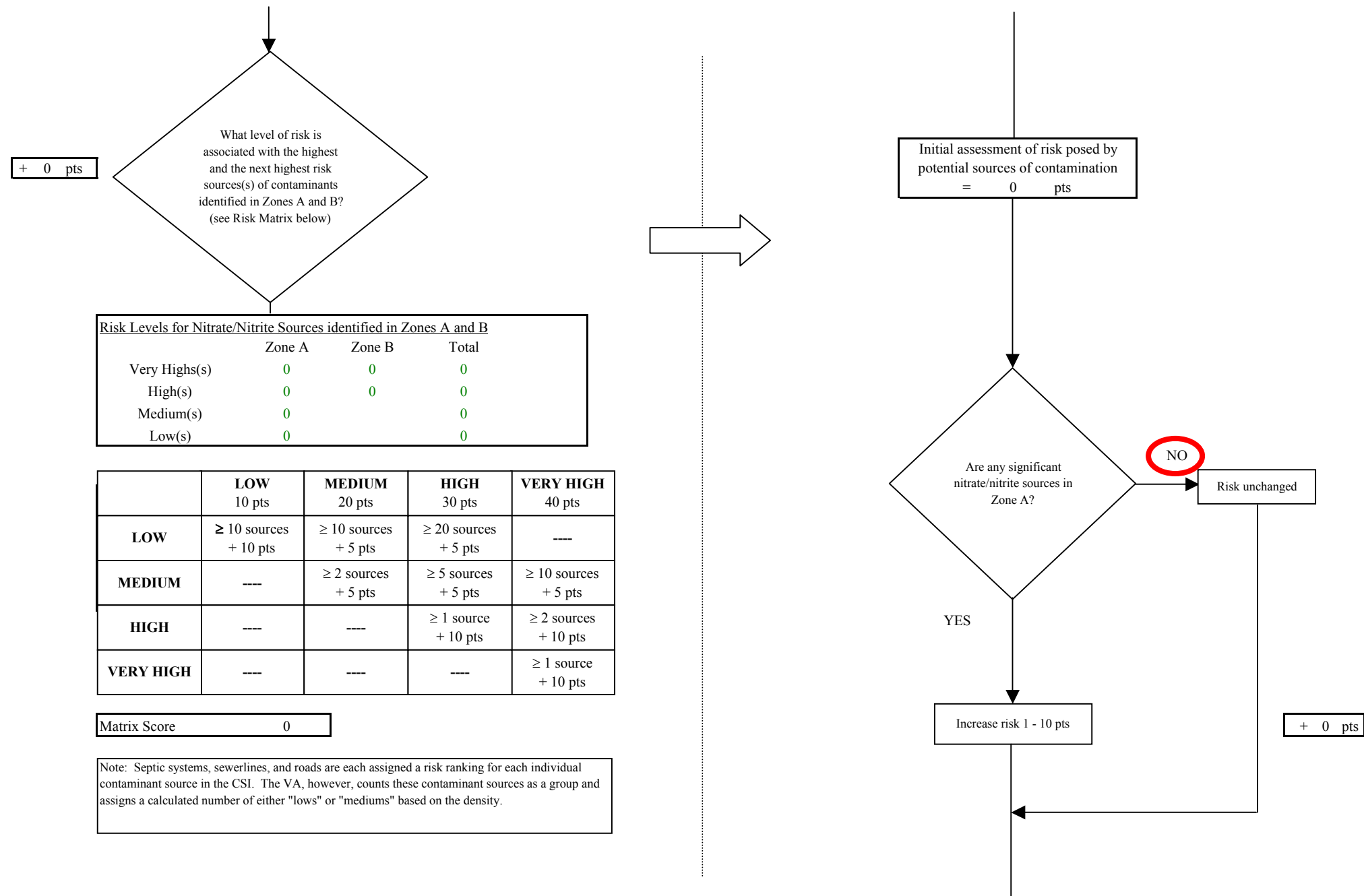


Chart 4. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Nitrates and Nitrites

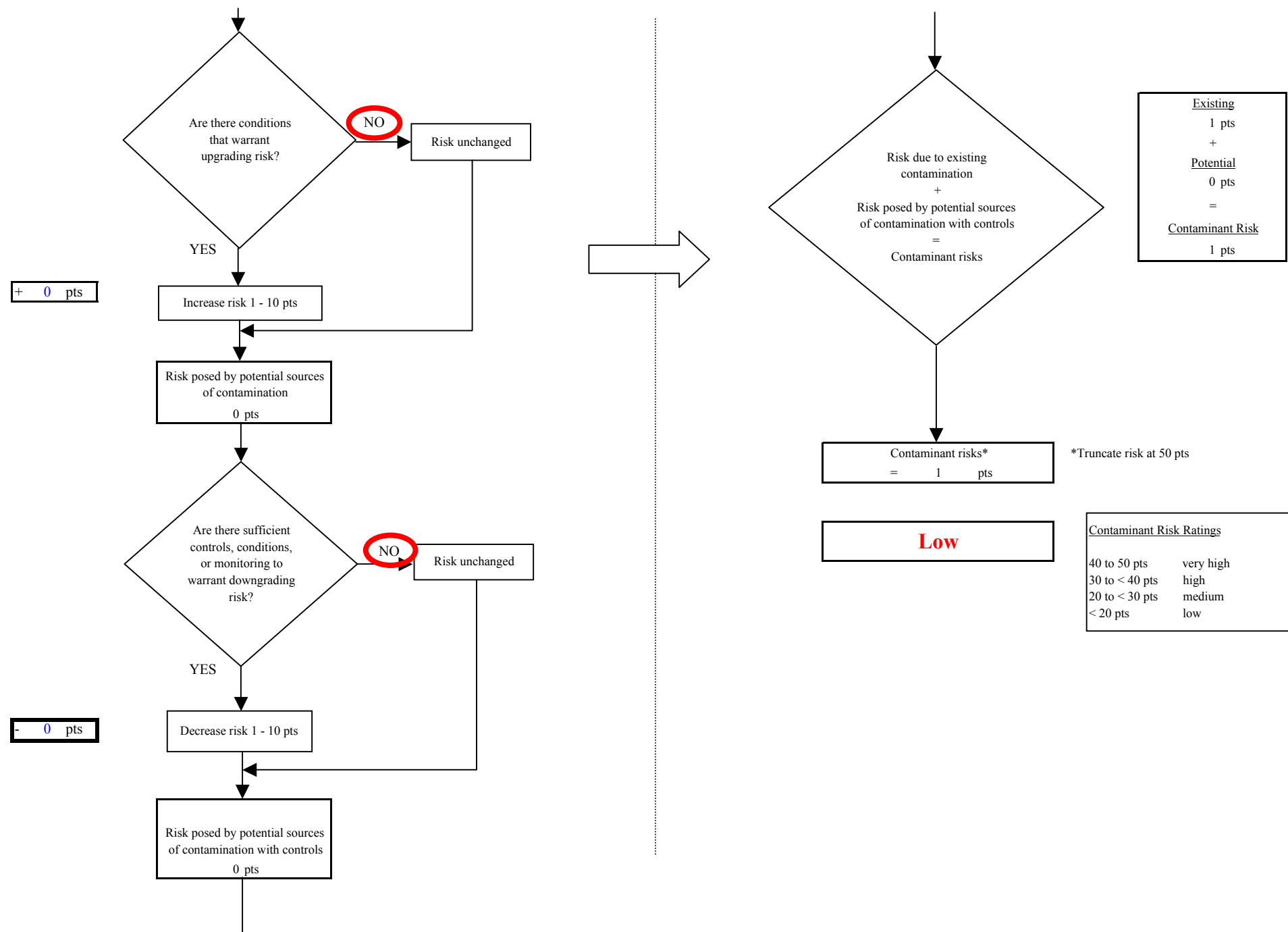


Chart 5. Vulnerability analysis for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Nitrates and Nitrites

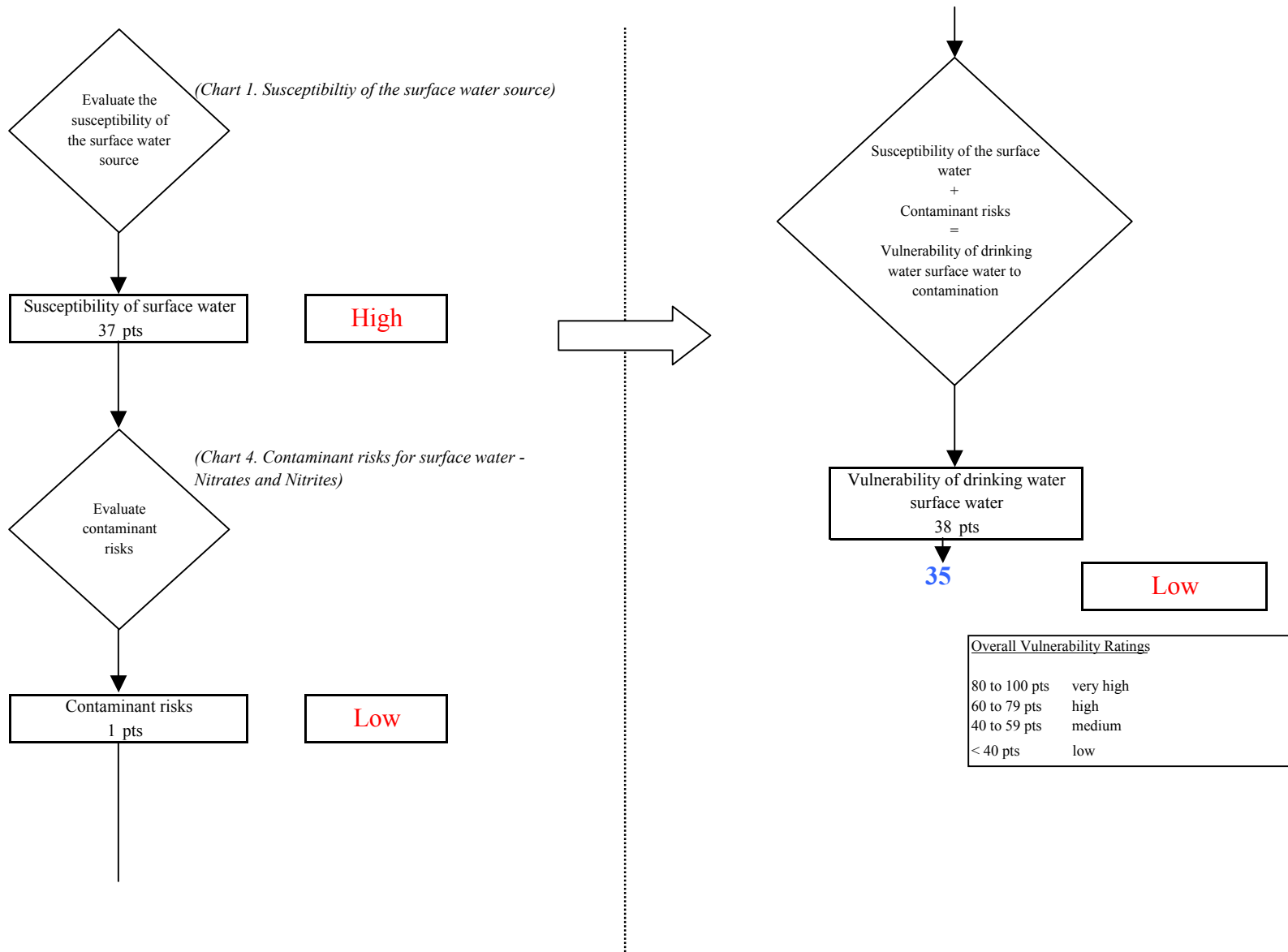


Chart 6. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Volatile Organic Chemicals

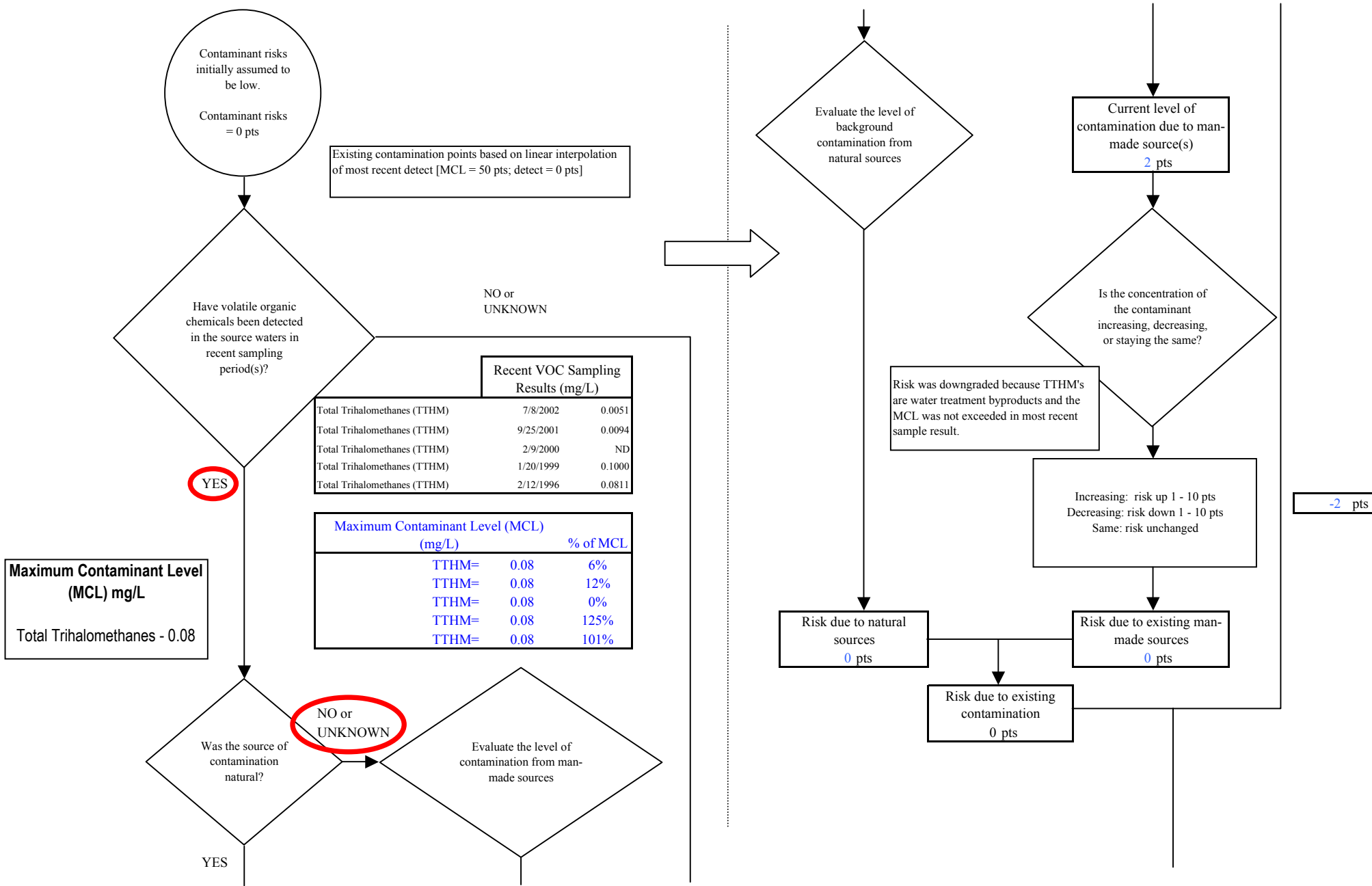


Chart 6. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Volatile Organic Chemicals

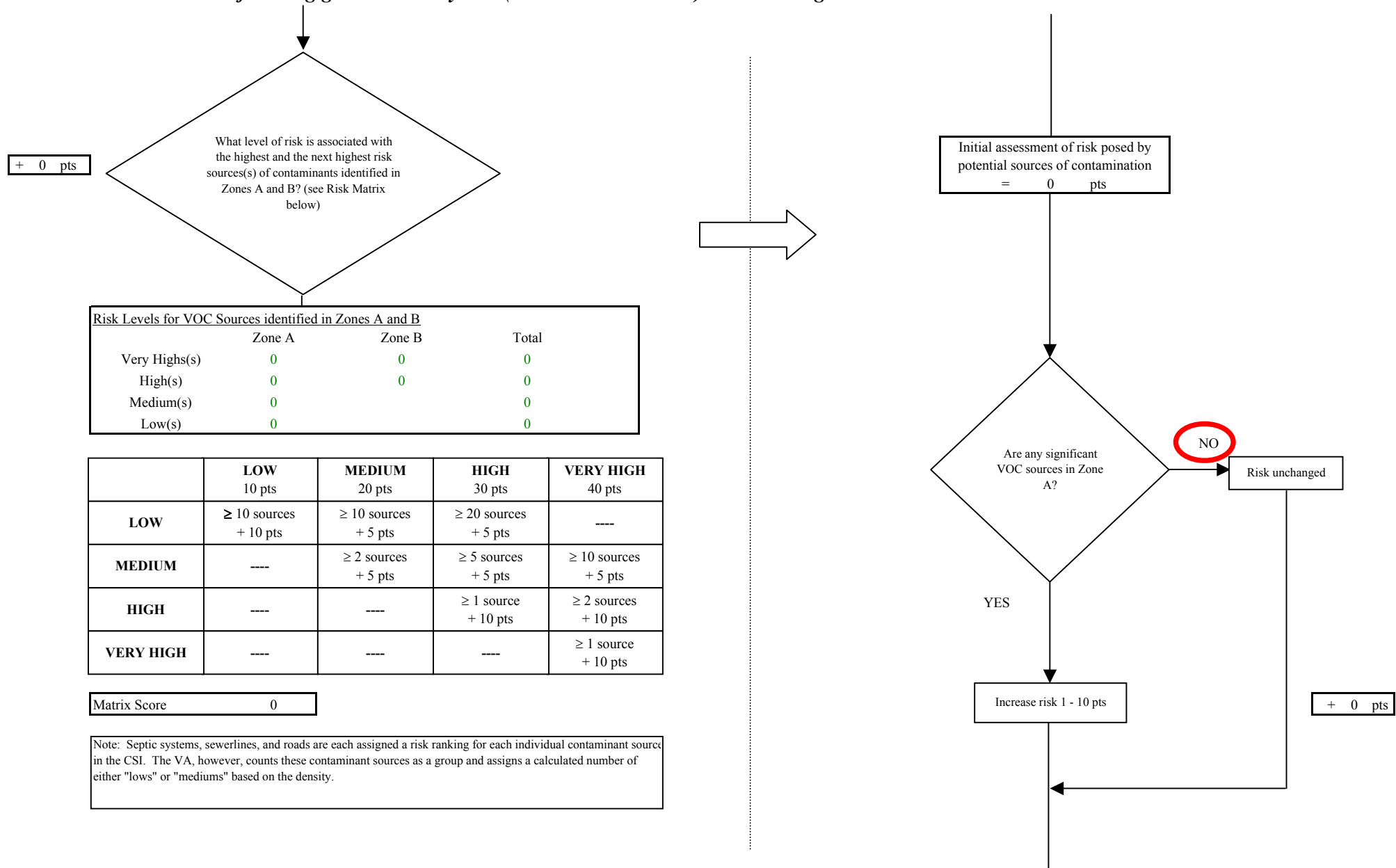


Chart 6. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Volatile Organic Chemicals

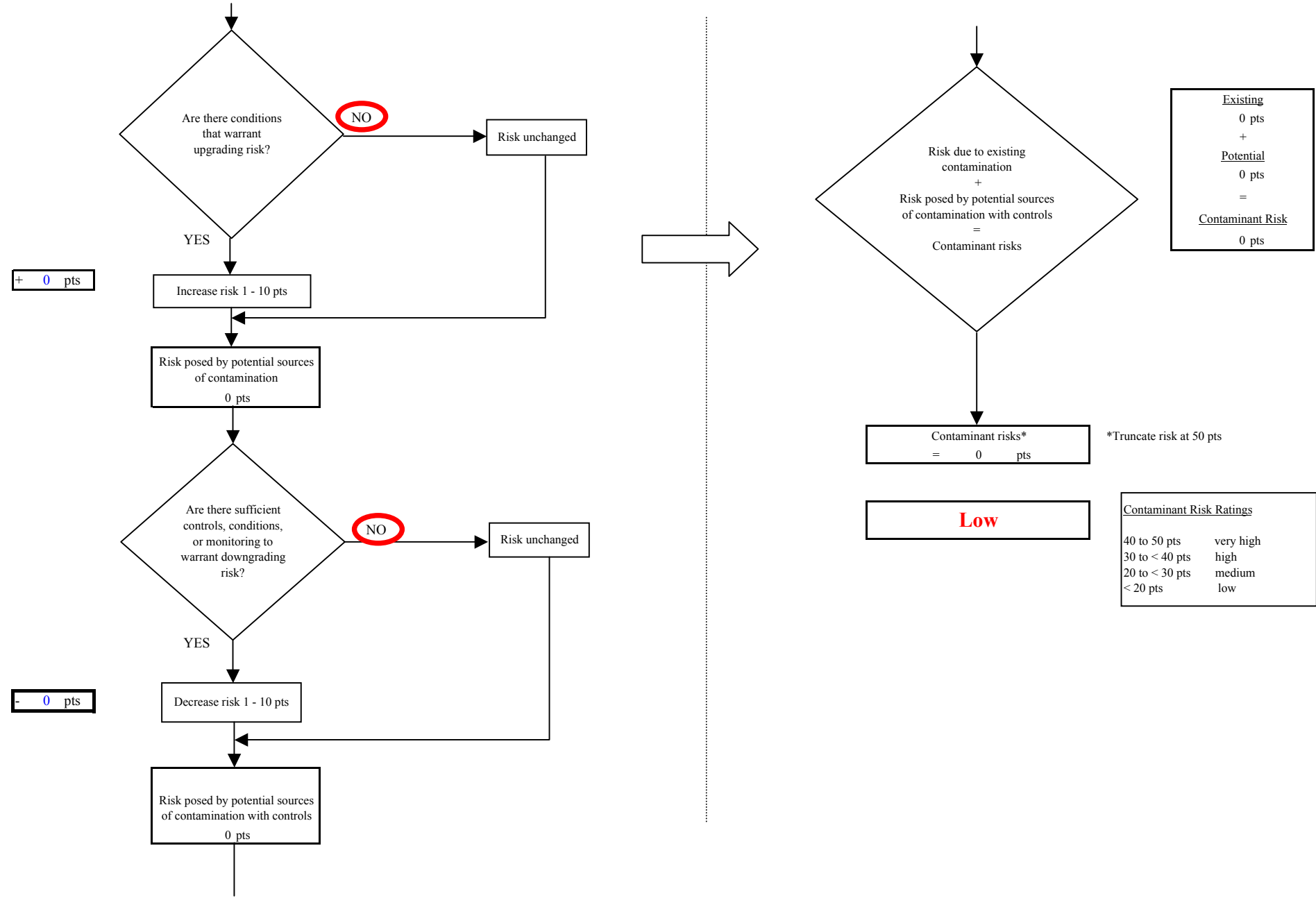


Chart 7. Vulnerability analysis for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Volatile Organic Chemicals

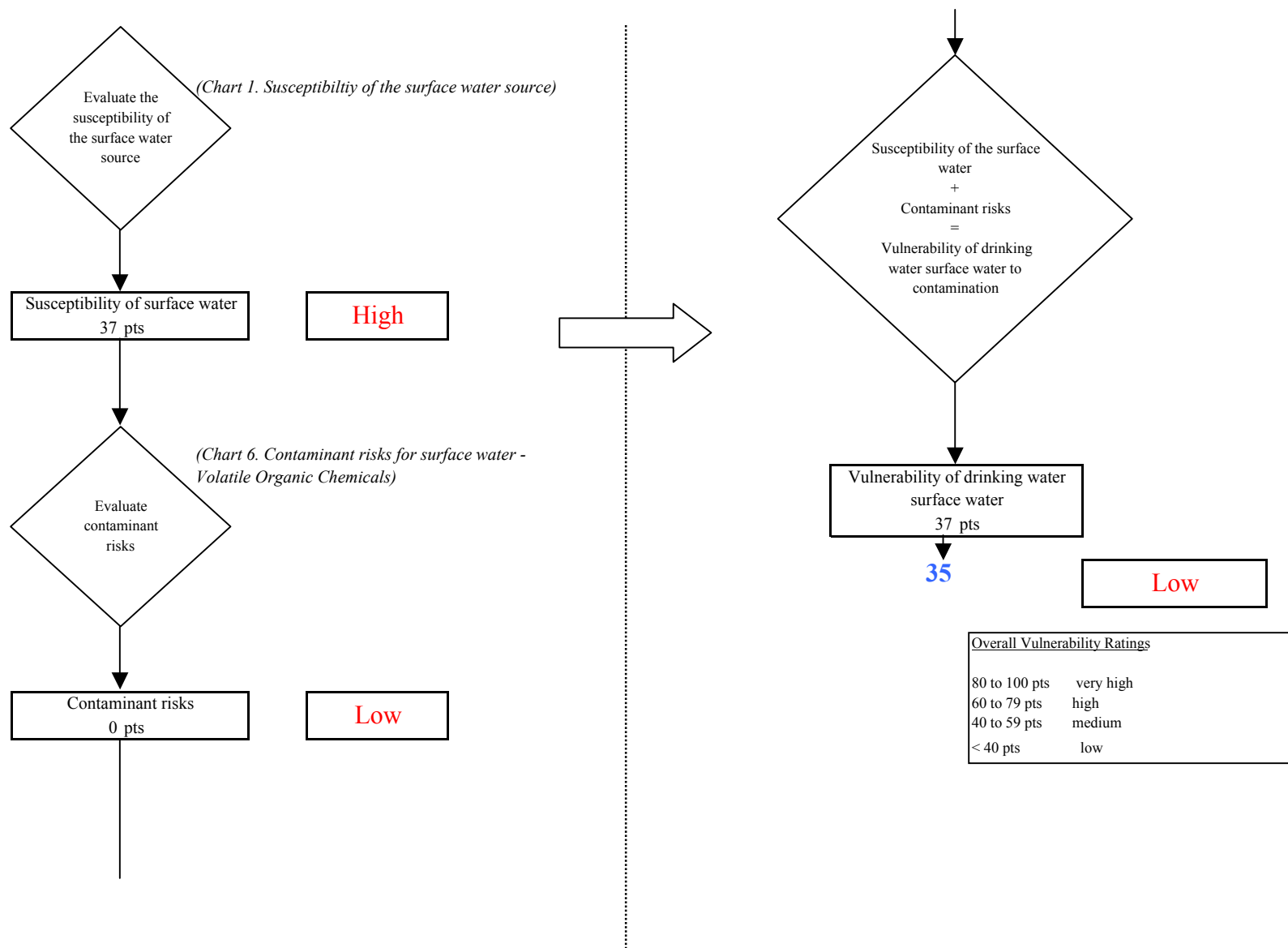


Chart 8. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Heavy Metals, Cyanide and Other Inorganic Chemicals

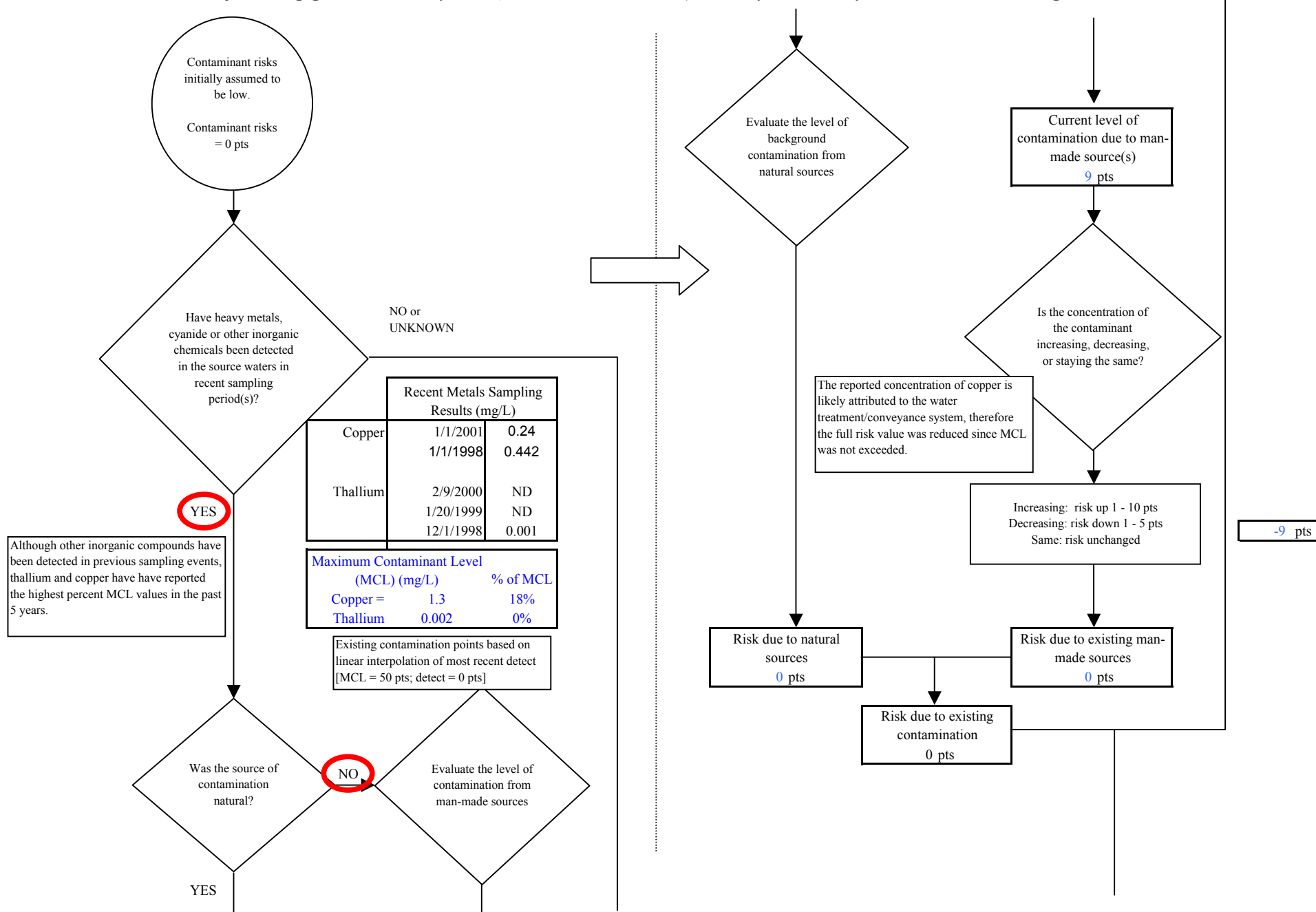


Chart 8. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Heavy Metals, Cyanide and Other Inorganic Chemicals

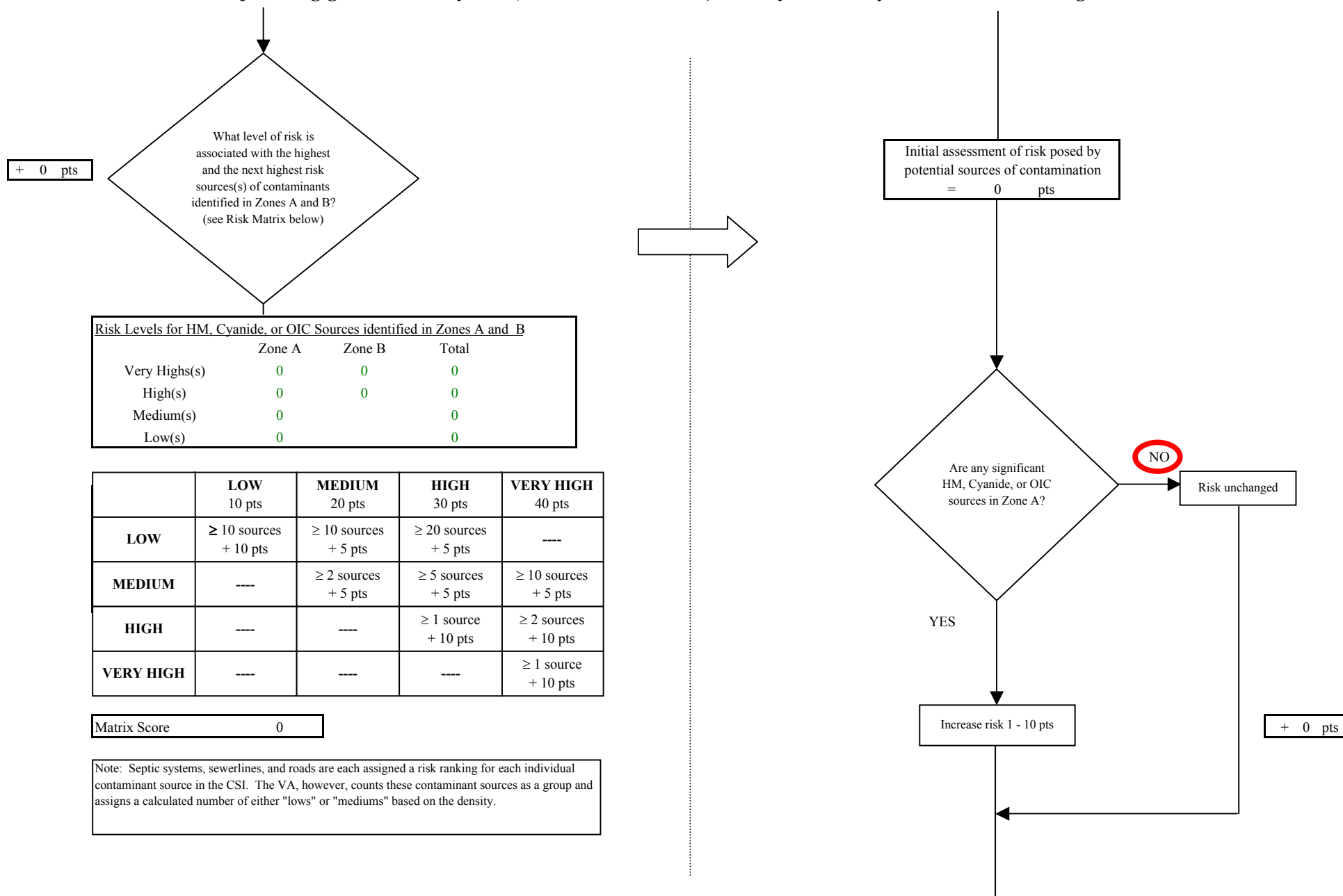


Chart 8. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Heavy Metals, Cyanide and Other Inorganic Chemicals

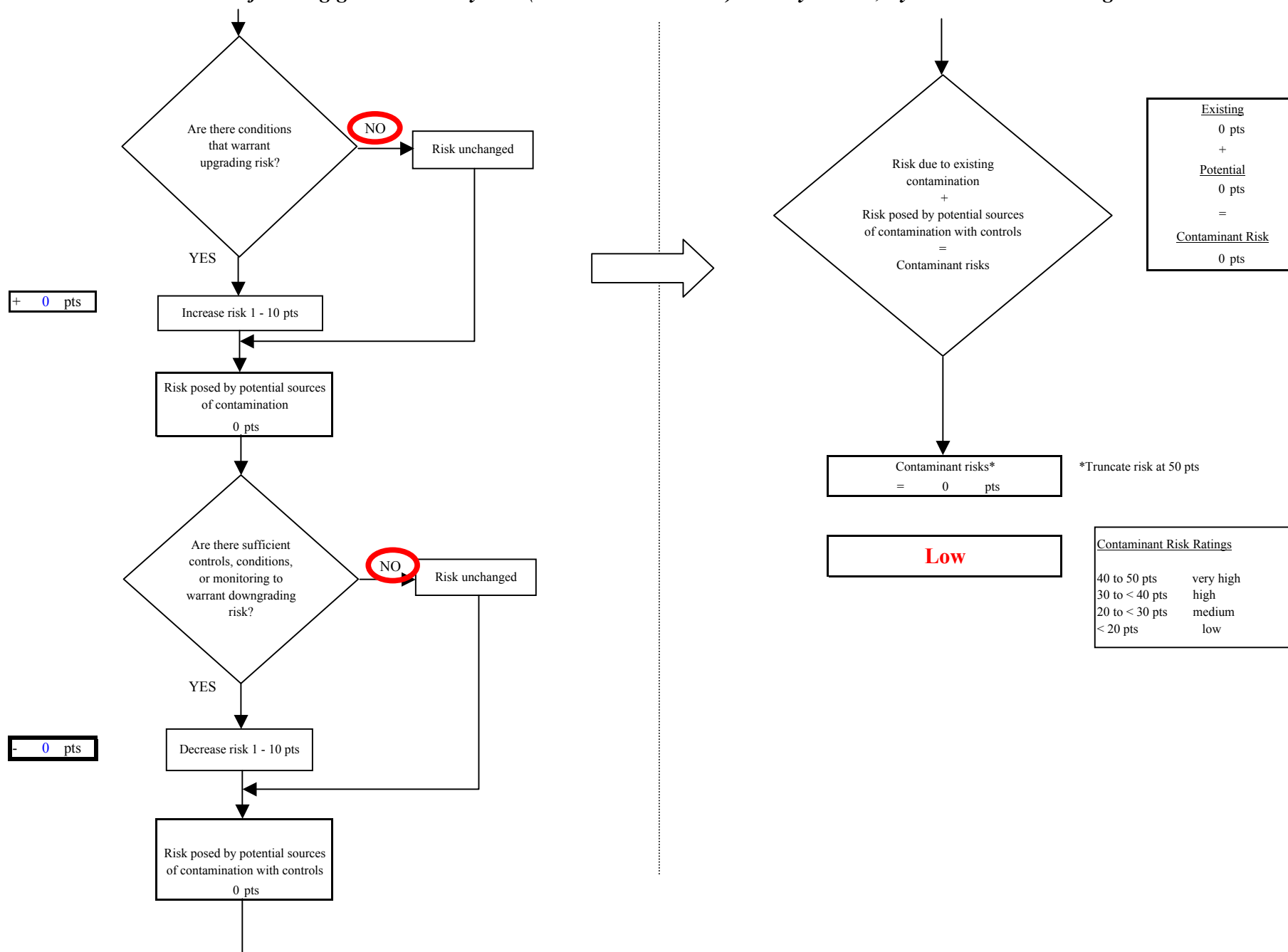


Chart 9. Vulnerability analysis for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Heavy Metals, Cyanide and Other Inorganic Chemicals

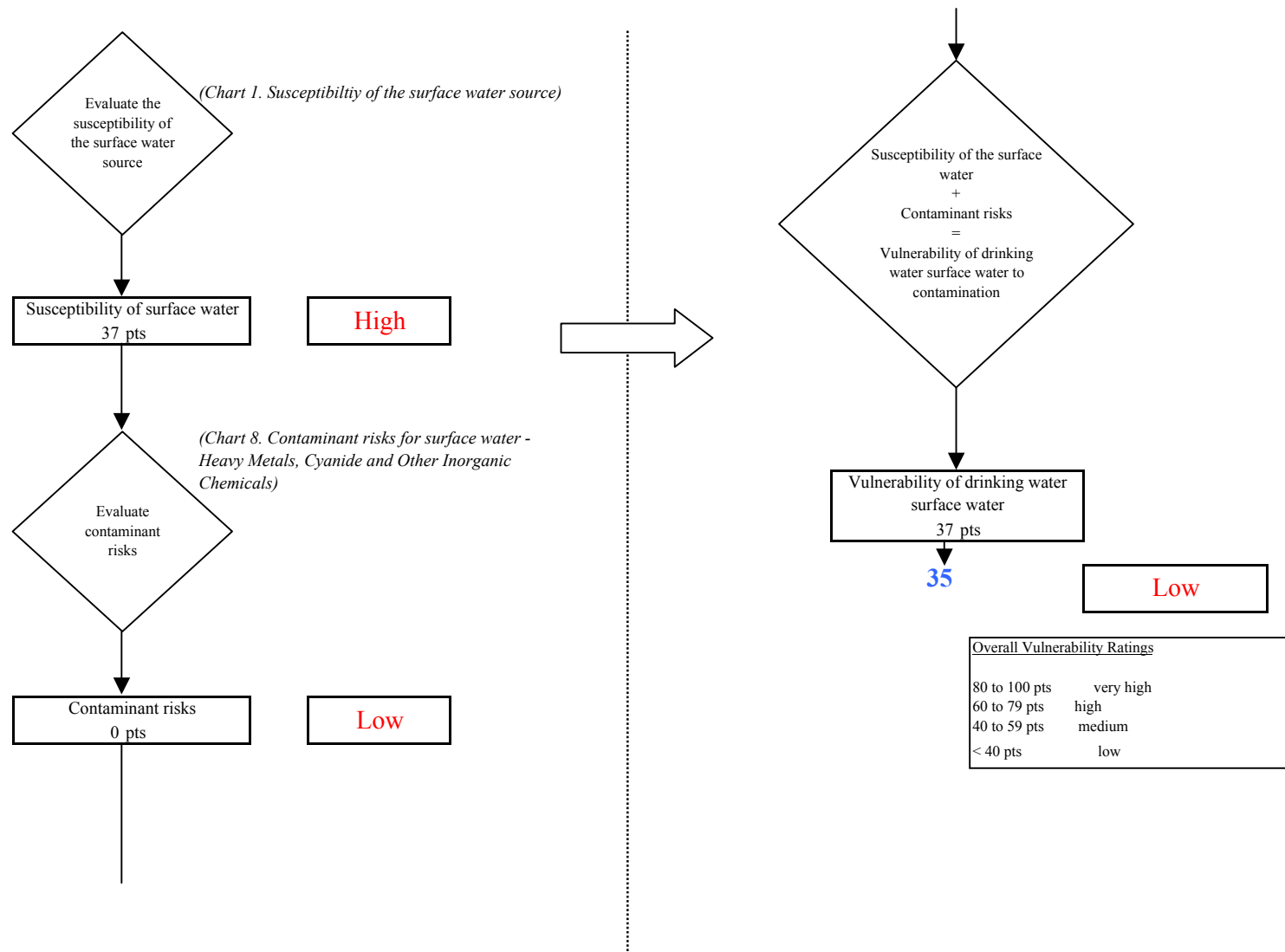


Chart 10. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Synthetic Organic Chemicals

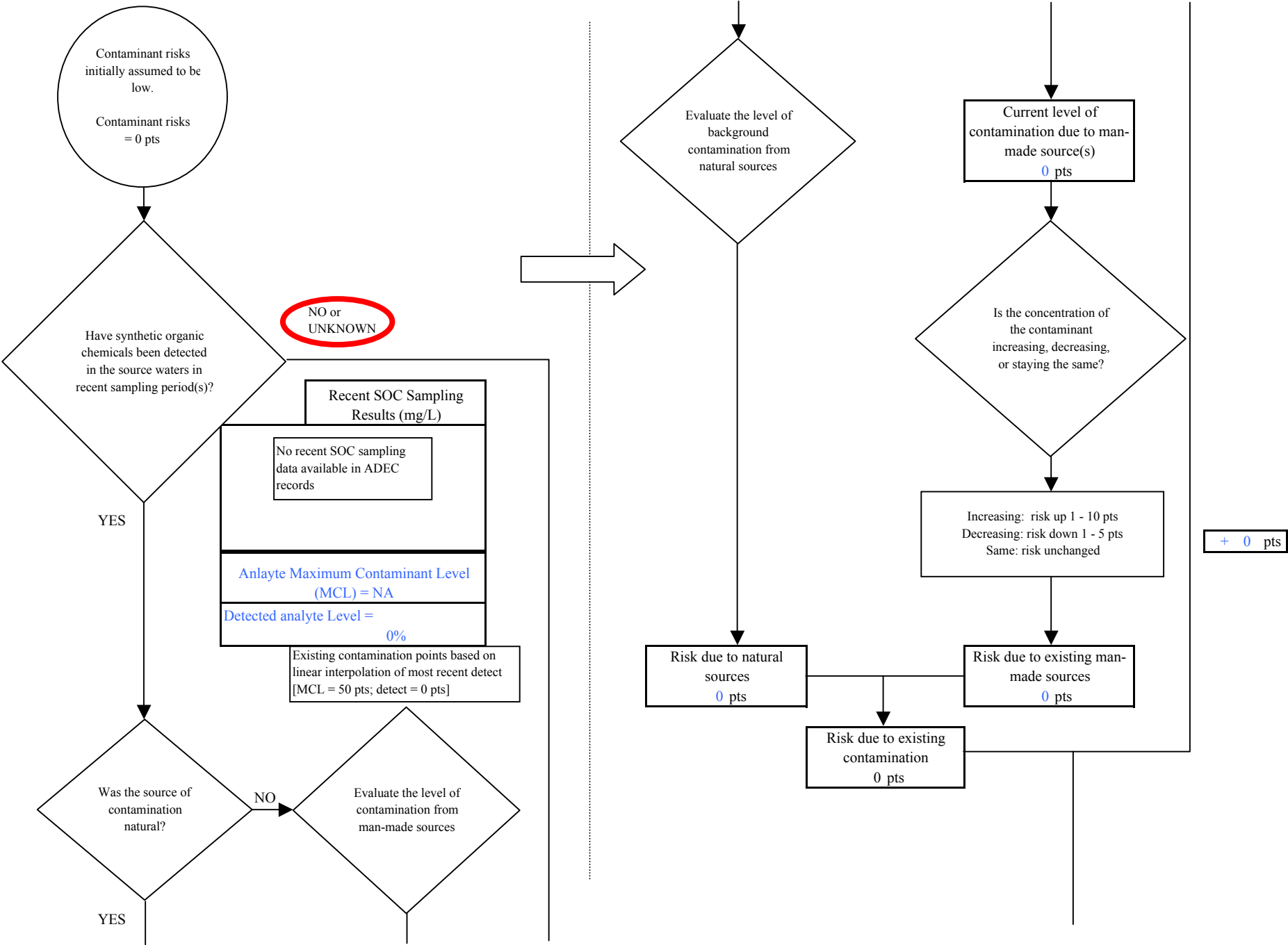


Chart 10. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Synthetic Organic Chemicals

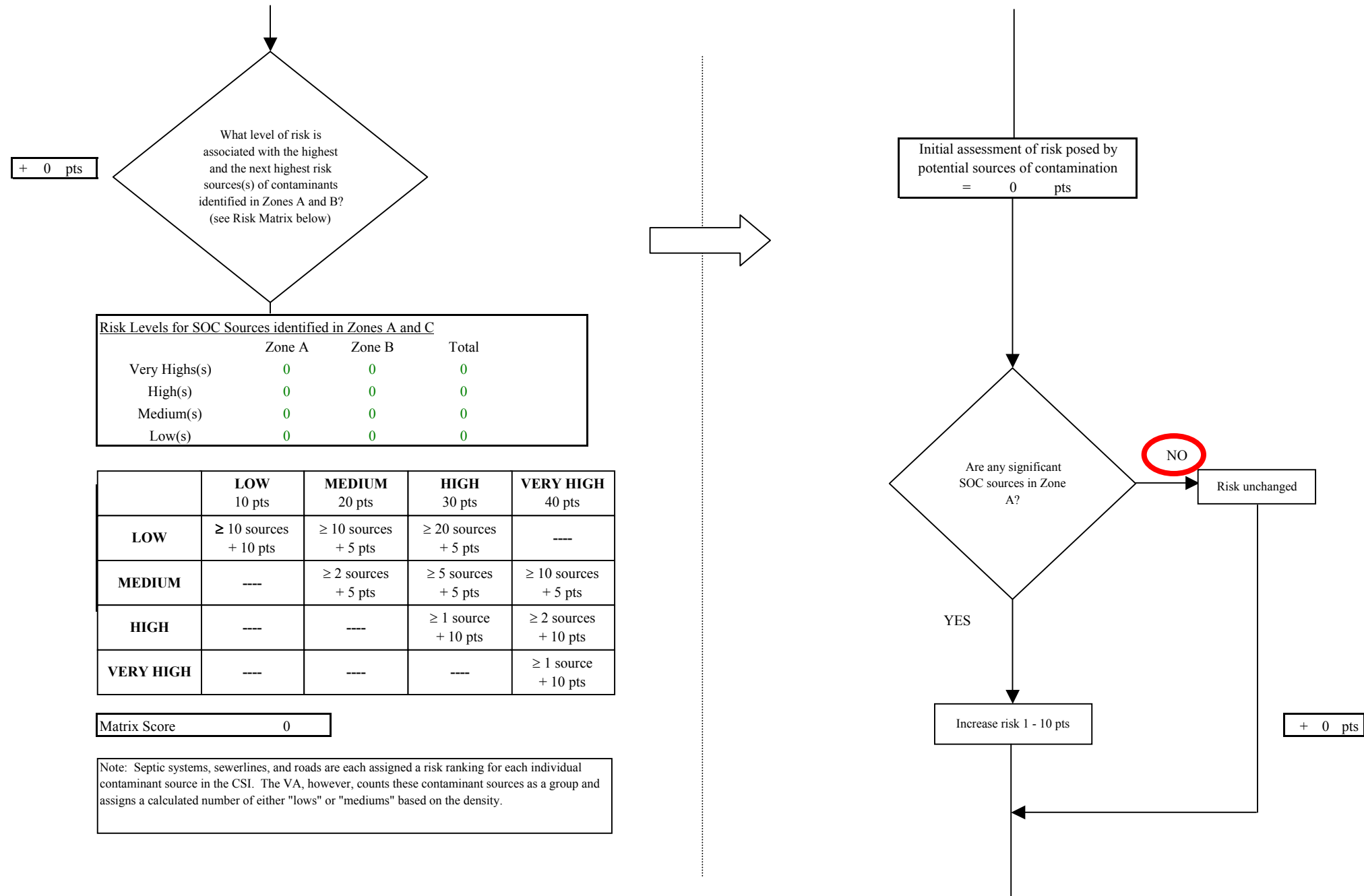


Chart 10. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Synthetic Organic Chemicals

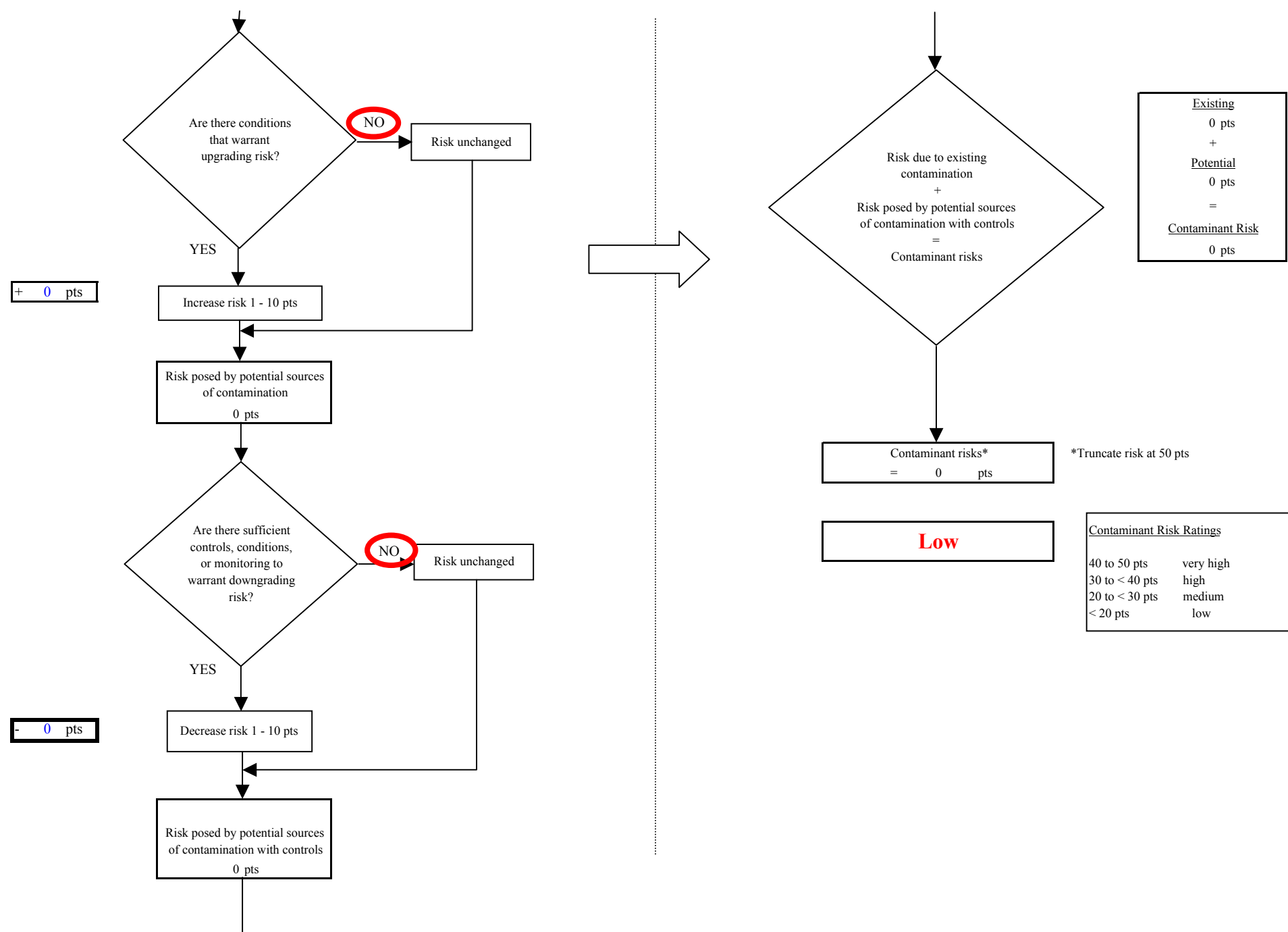


Chart 11. Vulnerability analysis for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Synthetic Organic Chemicals

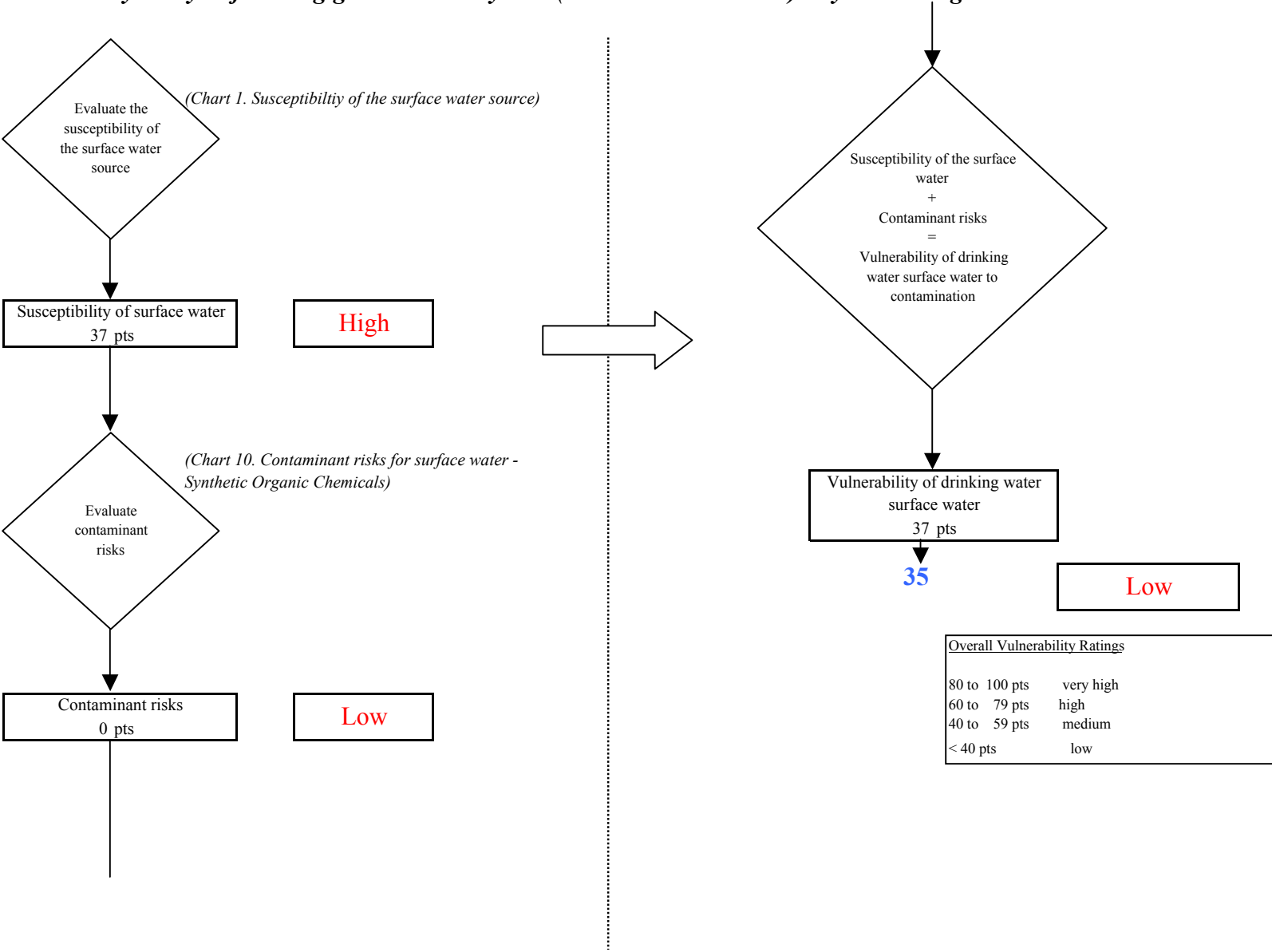


Chart 12. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Other Organic Chemicals

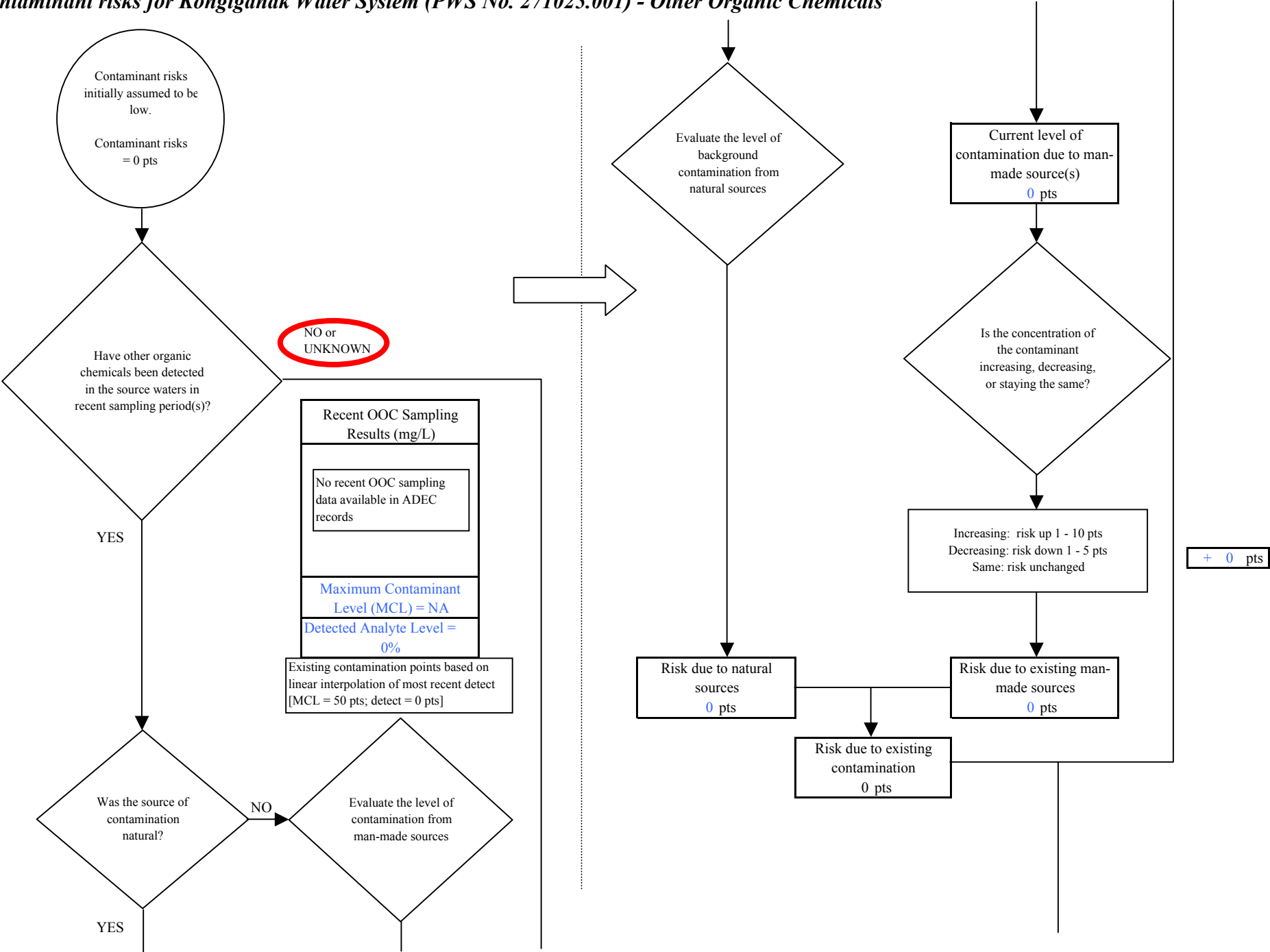


Chart 12. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Other Organic Chemicals

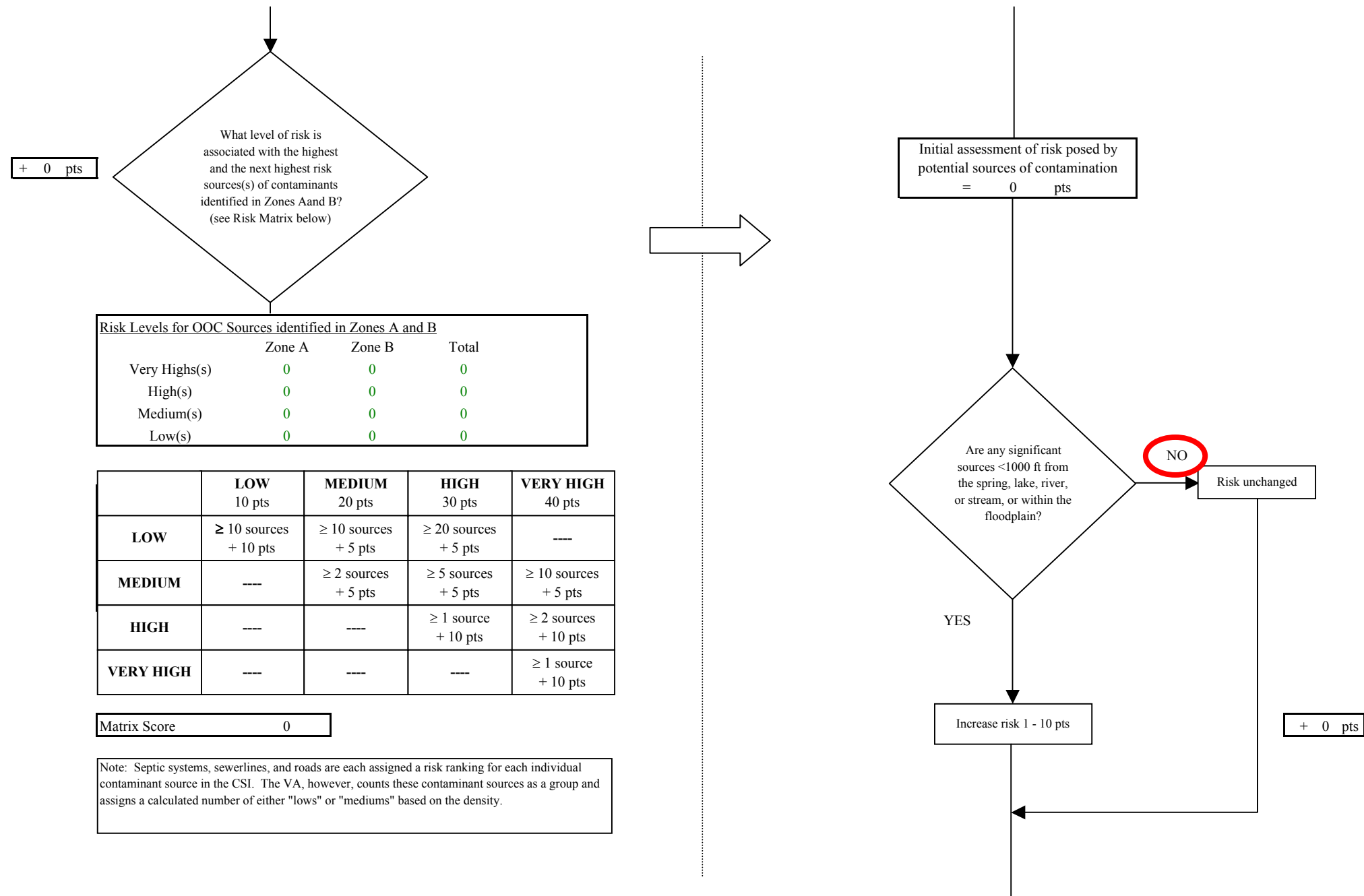


Chart 12. Contaminant risks for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Other Organic Chemicals

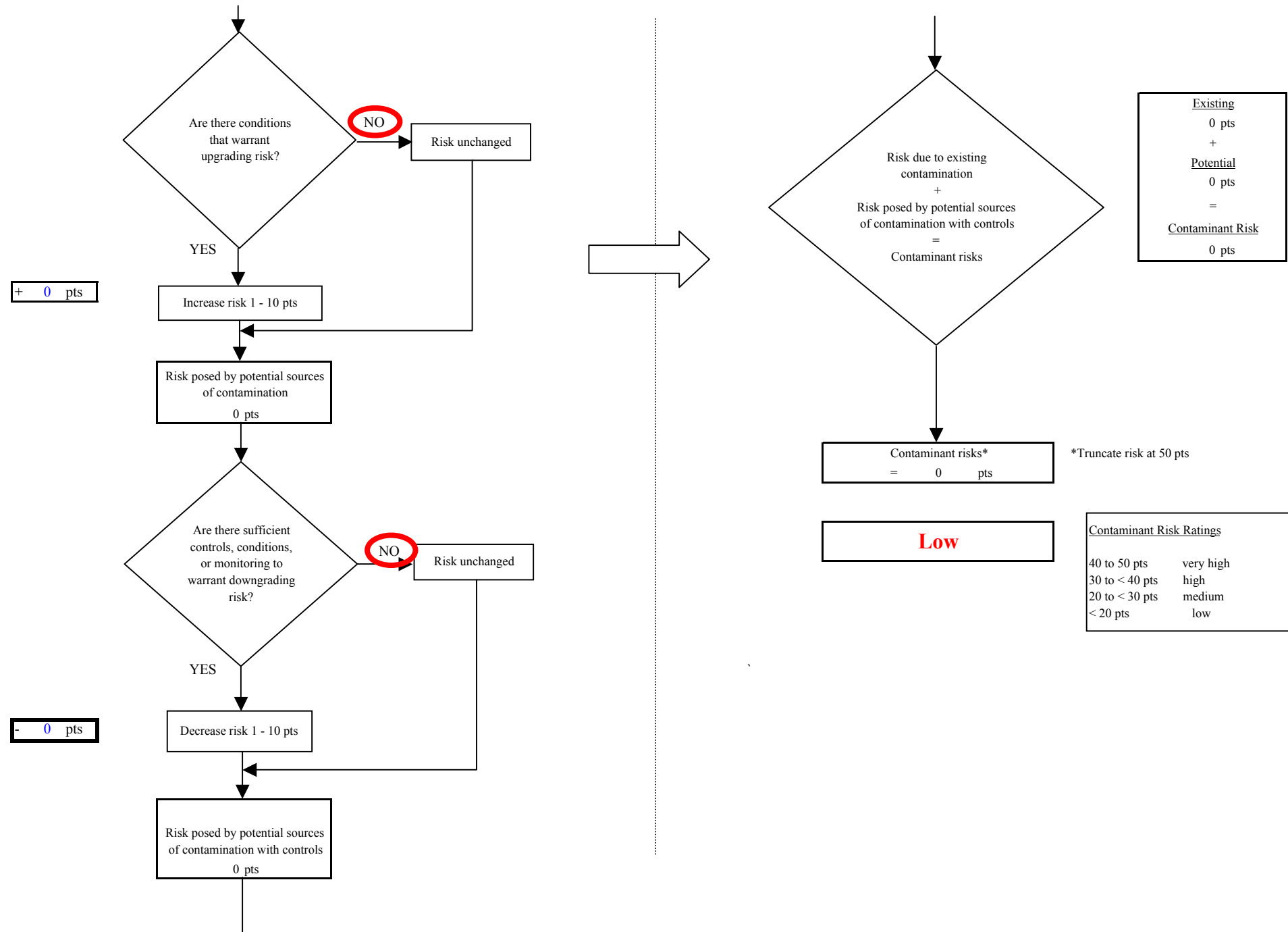


Chart 13. Vulnerability analysis for Kongiganak Water System (PWS No. 271025.001) - Other Organic Chemicals

