

SOUTHWESTERN ENERGY CO

Form PRE 14A

March 25, 2010

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**UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549
SCHEDULE 14A**

Proxy Statement Pursuant to Section 14(a) of the Securities
Exchange Act of 1934 (Amendment No.)

Filed by the Registrant

Filed by a Party other than the Registrant

Check the appropriate box:

Preliminary Proxy Statement

Confidential, for Use of the Commission Only (as permitted by Rule 14a-6(e)(2))

Definitive Proxy Statement

Definitive Additional Materials

Soliciting Material Pursuant to §240.14a-12

Southwestern Energy Company

(Name of Registrant as Specified In Its Charter)

(Name of Person(s) Filing Proxy Statement, if other than the Registrant)

Payment of Filing Fee (Check the appropriate box):

No fee required.

Fee computed on table below per Exchange Act Rules 14a-6(i)(1) and 0-11.

(1) Title of each class of securities to which transaction applies:

(2) Aggregate number of securities to which transaction applies:

(3) Per unit price or other underlying value of transaction computed pursuant to Exchange Act Rule 0-11 (set forth the amount on which the filing fee is calculated and state how it was determined):

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(3) Filing Party:

(4) Date Filed:

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**2350 N. Sam Houston Parkway East, Suite 125
Houston, Texas 77032**

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS
ON MAY 18, 2010**

The Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Southwestern Energy Company (the Company) will be held at the Hilton North Houston (Greenspoint) Hotel, 12400 Greenspoint Drive, Houston, Texas 77060, on Tuesday, the 18th day of May, 2010, at 11:00 a.m., Central Daylight Time, for the following purposes:

- (1) The election of seven (7) directors to serve until the 2011 Annual Meeting of Stockholders or until their respective successors are duly elected and qualified;
- (2) The ratification of the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) to serve as the Company's independent registered public accounting firm for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2010;
- (3) To consider and take action upon a proposal to amend and restate the Company's certificate of incorporation to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock to 1,250,000,000 shares;
- (4) To consider two stockholder proposals, if properly presented at the Annual Meeting; and
- (5) To transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting or any adjournment or adjournments thereof.

The Board of Directors has fixed the close of business on March 31, 2010, as the record date for the determination of stockholders entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting and any adjournment thereof.

The Company's 2009 Annual Report, which is not part of the proxy soliciting material, is enclosed.

You are invited to attend the meeting. If you cannot attend, it is important that your shares be represented and voted at the meeting. You can vote your shares by completing and returning the proxy card or voting instruction card. As an alternative, you can also vote your shares by telephone or over the Internet.

You may revoke a proxy at any time prior to its exercise by giving written notice to that effect to the Secretary of Southwestern Energy Company or by submission of a later-dated proxy or subsequent Internet or telephonic proxy. If you attend the meeting, you may revoke any proxy previously granted and vote in person.

By Order of the Board of Directors

MARK K. BOLING
*Executive Vice President,
General Counsel & Secretary*

April 7, 2010

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PROXY STATEMENT QUESTIONS

WHO IS ENTITLED TO VOTE AT THE ANNUAL MEETING?

Stockholders who own shares of common stock as of March 31, 2010 may vote at the meeting. There were [] shares of common stock outstanding on that date.

WHEN WERE THE ENCLOSED SOLICITATION MATERIALS FIRST GIVEN TO STOCKHOLDERS?

This Proxy Statement and accompanying proxy are first being mailed, given or made available to stockholders, on or about April 7, 2010. We are making our proxy materials available to our stockholders on the Internet. You may read, print and download our 2009 Annual Report to Stockholders and our Proxy Statement at www.envisionreports.com/swn. On an ongoing basis, stockholders may request to receive proxy materials in printed form by mail or electronically by email.

WHAT AM I VOTING ON, AND WHAT ARE THE BOARD'S RECOMMENDATIONS?

You are voting on the following:

the election of seven (7) directors;

the ratification of the appointment of PwC as the Company's independent registered public accounting firm for fiscal year 2010;

a proposal to amend and restate the Company's certificate of incorporation to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock to 1,250,000,000 shares;

a stockholder proposal for a director election majority vote standard, if properly presented at the Annual Meeting; and

a stockholder proposal for a political contributions and expenditures report, if properly presented at the Annual Meeting.

The Board recommends a vote:

FOR the election of seven (7) directors;

FOR the ratification of the appointment of PwC as the Company's independent registered public accounting firm for 2010;

FOR the amendment and restatement of the certificate of incorporation to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock;

AGAINST the stockholder proposal for a director election majority vote standard; and

AGAINST the stockholder proposal for a political contributions and expenditures report.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A QUORUM OF STOCKHOLDERS?

We must have a quorum to conduct the meeting. A quorum is the presence at the Annual Meeting in person or by proxy of stockholders entitled to cast a majority of all the votes entitled to be cast as of the record date. Since there were [] shares of common stock outstanding on March 31, 2010, the quorum for the Annual Meeting requires the presence at the meeting in person or by proxy of stockholders entitled to vote at least [] shares. Broker non-votes, abstentions and withhold-authority votes COUNT for purposes of determining a quorum.

WHAT IS THE VOTING REQUIREMENT TO APPROVE EACH OF THE PROPOSALS?

Under our by-laws, a plurality of the votes cast by stockholders entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting is required for the election of directors. Accordingly, the seven nominees receiving the highest number of affirmative votes of the outstanding shares of the Company's common stock present or represented by proxy and voting at the

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Annual Meeting will be elected as directors to serve until the next annual meeting of stockholders and until their successors are duly elected and qualified. However, our by-law provisions and corporate governance guidelines also include a majority vote policy for the election of directors. Under this policy, in non-contested elections, if a director nominee receives a greater number of withheld votes than for votes, the director must immediately offer to submit his or her resignation from the Board, and the Board will decide, through a process managed by the Nominating and Governance Committee and excluding the nominee in question, whether to accept the offer. Our Corporate Governance Guidelines are available on our website at www.swn.com under the heading Corporate Governance.

Approval of Proposals No. 2, No. 3, No. 4 and No. 5 requires a vote that satisfies the following two criteria:

the affirmative vote must constitute a majority of the voting power present or represented by proxy and voting at the Annual Meeting; and

the affirmative vote must constitute a majority of the voting power required to constitute the quorum.

IF I AM THE BENEFICIAL OWNER OF SHARES THAT ARE HELD IN STREET NAME BY MY BROKER, WILL MY BROKER VOTE FOR ME?

Under the New York Stock Exchange (the NYSE) member rules, a member broker (*i.e.*, a member of the New York Stock Exchange) who holds shares in street name for customers generally has the authority to vote on certain routine or discretionary proposals if it has transmitted proxy soliciting materials to the beneficial owner but has not received instructions from that owner. However, the NYSE precludes brokers from exercising voting discretion on certain proposals without instructions from the beneficial owner and a recent amendment to an NYSE rule now expressly prohibits brokers holding in street name for their *beneficial* holder clients from voting in an uncontested election without receiving specific instructions from those clients. Under the NYSE rules, brokers will have the discretion to vote only on Proposal No. 2 (ratification of the appointment of PwC as the Company's independent registered public accounting firm for fiscal year 2010) and Proposal No. 3 (increase in number of shares of authorized common stock). Therefore, if your broker holds shares in your name and delivers this proxy statement to you, the broker is entitled to vote your shares for the increase in number of shares of authorized common stock and the ratification of the appointment of our independent auditors even if the broker does not receive voting instructions from you. Brokers cannot vote on Proposals No. 1 (election of directors), No. 4 (stockholder proposal for a director election majority vote standard) or No. 5 (stockholder proposal for a political contributions and expenditures report).

HOW ARE BROKER NON-VOTES TREATED?

Broker non-votes are counted for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present. Because directors are elected by a plurality of the votes cast, a broker non-vote will have no impact on the election, although a director who receives more votes withheld than for his or her election will be required to offer to submit his or her resignation as described above under *WHAT IS THE VOTING REQUIREMENT TO APPROVE EACH OF THE PROPOSALS?* above.

In the case of the increase in number of shares of authorized common stock, the ratification of the appointment of PwC and the stockholder proposals, only votes cast for or against the approval or ratification will be considered; broker non-votes votes will not be treated as a vote for or against the ratification or approval and therefore will have no effect on the vote.

HOW ARE ABSTENTIONS TREATED?

Abstentions are counted for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present. For the purpose of determining whether the stockholders have approved the matter addressed by a proposal, since an abstention is not treated as a vote

for or against the matter, it will have no effect on the outcome of the vote.

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HOW DO I VOTE?

On April 7, 2010, we mailed a notice to stockholders containing instructions on how to access our proxy materials and vote online at www.envisionreports.com/swn. You may also vote your shares in person at the Annual Meeting or by proxy. Since many of our stockholders are unable to attend the meeting in person, and may have limited access to the internet, we also send proxy cards and offer electronic and telephone voting to all of our stockholders who hold their shares in their own names (i.e., whose shares are not held by a broker in street name) to enable them to direct the voting of their shares. If your shares are held by your broker in street name, your broker will provide you with instructions for voting your shares.

IF MY SHARES ARE HELD IN STREET NAME BY MY BROKER, WILL MY BROKER VOTE FOR ME?

If your shares are held by your broker in street name and you do not vote your shares by following the instructions provided by your broker, we believe your broker can vote your shares in the ratification of the appointment of PwC as the Company's independent registered public accounting firm for fiscal year 2010 and the increase in number of shares of authorized common stock. If you do not provide instructions to your broker on how to vote your shares with respect to the other proposals, and your broker is not permitted to vote on the proposals without instructions from you, then your shares will be counted as broker non-votes for those proposals.

WHAT IS A PROXY?

A proxy is a person you appoint to vote on your behalf. When you vote by completing and returning the enclosed proxy card, you will be designating Kenneth R. Mourton and Charles E. Scharlau as your proxies. We solicit proxies so that all common shares may be voted at the Annual Meeting. You must complete and return the enclosed proxy card or vote by phone or Internet to have your shares voted by proxy.

HOW WILL MY PROXY VOTE MY SHARES?

Your proxies will be voted in accordance with your instructions. If you complete and return your proxy card but do not provide instructions on how to vote, your proxies will vote FOR the seven (7) director nominees, the amendment of the certification of incorporation to increase the authorized common stock and the ratification of PwC as the Company's independent registered public accounting firm for 2010 and AGAINST each additional proposal set out above. Also, your proxy card or a vote by you via phone or Internet will give your proxies authority to vote, using their best judgment, on any other business that properly comes before the meeting.

HOW DO I VOTE USING MY PROXY CARD?

There are three steps:

Step 1

a. Proposal No. 1

Election of a board of seven directors to serve until the next Annual Meeting or until their successors are duly elected and qualify.

To vote for a director, you check the box marked FOR opposite the name of the director. To withhold your vote from a director, mark the box WITHHELD opposite the name of the director.

b. Proposal No. 2

Ratification of the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP as the independent registered public accounting firm for the Company for fiscal year 2010.

To vote for Proposal No. 2, you check the box marked **FOR**. If you are opposed to the proposal, check the box, **AGAINST**. If you are unsure how to vote, mark the box **ABSTAIN**.

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c. Proposal No. 3

Approval of the amendment and restatement of the Company's certificate of incorporation to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock to 1,250,000,000 shares.

To vote for Proposal No. 3, you check the box marked **FOR**. If you are opposed to the proposal, check the box, **AGAINST**. If you are unsure how to vote, mark the box **ABSTAIN**.

d. Proposal No. 4

Approval of a director election majority vote standard.

To vote for Proposal No. 4, you check the box marked **FOR**. If you are opposed to the proposal, check the box, **AGAINST**. If you are unsure how to vote, mark the box **ABSTAIN**.

e. Proposal No. 5

Approval of a proposal for a political contributions and expenditures report.

To vote for Proposal No. 5, you check the box marked **FOR**. If you are opposed to the proposal, check the box, **AGAINST**. If you are unsure how to vote, mark the box **ABSTAIN**.

Step 2

Sign and date your proxy card. IF YOU DO NOT SIGN AND DATE YOUR PROXY CARD, YOUR VOTES CANNOT BE COUNTED. EACH PROPERLY EXECUTED PROXY WILL BE VOTED IN THE MANNER DIRECTED. IF NO DIRECTION IS MADE, EACH SUCH PROXY WILL BE VOTED AS **FOR** PROPOSALS NO. 1, 2 AND 3 AND **AGAINST** PROPOSALS NO. 4 AND 5.

Step 3

Mail your proxy card in the pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope.

HOW DO I VOTE BY TELEPHONE?

Record holders may submit proxies by following the **Vote-by-Telephone** instructions on their proxy cards.

Stockholders who hold shares beneficially in **street name** may vote by telephone by calling the number specified on the voting instruction card provided by their brokers, trustee or nominees. Please check the voting instruction card for telephone voting availability.

HOW DO I VOTE ON THE INTERNET?

Record holders with Internet access may submit proxies by following the **Vote-by-Internet** instructions on their proxy cards. Stockholders who hold shares beneficially in **street name** may vote by accessing the website specified on the voting instruction cards provided by their brokers, trustee or nominees. Please check the voting instruction card for Internet voting availability.

CAN I VOTE BY PROXY EVEN IF I PLAN TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING?

Yes. If you vote by proxy, you do not need to fill out a ballot at the Annual Meeting unless you want to change your vote.

WHO IS SOLICITING MY PROXY, HOW IS IT BEING SOLICITED, AND WHO PAYS THE COSTS?

Southwestern Energy Company, on behalf of the Board of Directors, through its officers and employees, is soliciting proxies primarily by mail. However, proxies may also be solicited in person, by telephone or facsimile. Morrow & Co., Inc., a proxy solicitation firm, will be assisting us for a fee of approximately \$7,500 plus

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out-of-pocket expenses. Southwestern Energy Company pays the cost of soliciting proxies and reimburses brokers and others for forwarding proxy materials to you.

PROPOSAL NO. 1

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

At the meeting, seven (7) directors are to be elected to serve until the next Annual Meeting or until their respective successors are duly elected and qualified. The shares of common stock represented by the enclosed proxy will be voted as instructed by the stockholders for the election of the nominees named below. If no direction is made, the proxy will be voted FOR the election of all of the nominees named below. If any nominee becomes unavailable for any reason or if a vacancy should occur before the election, the shares of common stock represented by the enclosed proxy may be voted for such other person as the Board of Directors may recommend. The Company has no knowledge that any nominee will be unavailable for election. Directors are elected by plurality vote. However, our by-law provisions and corporate governance guidelines also include a majority vote policy for the election of directors. Under this policy, in non-contested elections, if a director nominee receives a greater number of withheld votes than for votes, the director must immediately offer to submit his or her resignation from the Board, and the Board will decide, through a process managed by the Nominating and Governance Committee and excluding the nominee in question, whether to accept the offer. Our Corporate Governance Guidelines are available on our website at www.swn.com under the heading Corporate Governance.

The Board of Directors, upon the recommendation of the Nominating and Governance Committee, has proposed the nominees set forth below for election as directors. All nominees for director are presently directors of the Company. Certain information concerning the nominees is set forth below.

Nominees for Election

LEWIS E. EPLEY, JR. Mr. Epley is a retired Attorney at Law and a private investor. He is a member of the Arkansas Bar Association and served as President of the Carroll County Bar Association in Arkansas and Special Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Arkansas. He has served as a director of Cornerstone Bank (formerly the Bank of Eureka Springs) since 1964, and has been the Vice Chairman of its Board of Directors since 1993. He is a director, member of the Executive Committee and former Chairman of the University of Arkansas Foundation, Inc., which manages approximately \$1 billion in assets on behalf of itself and the University; and he is a member of the Board of Directors of Butterfield Trail Village, Inc. He is a member of the Community Advisory Board of The Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) and a member of the University of Arkansas Board of Advisors, including the Executive Committee thereof. He is also a member of the UAMS-Northwest Arkansas Advisory Board and the Area Agency on Aging of the Northwest Arkansas Foundation. Mr. Epley is 73 years old and was first elected to the Company's Board of Directors in 1998.

The Nominating and Governance Committee, in reviewing and assessing Mr. Epley's contributions to the Board, determined that Mr. Epley's considerable achievements in the field of law, coupled with his experience as director of a financial institution and community contacts in the State of Arkansas, the principal location of the Company's operations, will continue to complement the mix of skills of the other nominees and provide significant contributions to the Company's Board of Directors.

ROBERT L. HOWARD Mr. Howard is a retired Vice President of Shell Oil Company. From 1991 to 1995, he was Vice President, Domestic Operations, Exploration and Production of Shell, and President of Shell Western Inc. and Shell Offshore, Inc. In these positions, he was responsible for all domestic exploration and production activities. From 1985 to 1991, Mr. Howard was President, Shell Offshore Inc., and was responsible for all offshore exploration and

production in the Gulf of Mexico, the East Coast, and Florida. During Mr. Howard's 36 years with Shell, he held various positions within Shell's exploration and production operations, including General Manager, Exploration and Production, Mid-Continent Division, and General Manager, Exploration and Production, Rocky Mountain Division and Alaska Division. Mr. Howard served as a director of Camco International, Inc. of Houston, Texas, from 1995 until 1998. Mr. Howard served as a director of Ocean Energy, Inc. from 1996 to April 2003, at which time Ocean Energy, Inc. was acquired by Devon Energy Corp. Since April 2003, Mr. Howard has served as a director of

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Devon Energy Corp., one of the Company's competitors, where he is a member of the Reserves Committee and the Chairman of the Compensation Committee. Mr. Howard also served as a director for McDermott International, Inc., from 1997 to May 2009 and served as the chairman of its Nominating and Governance and Reserves Committees during his tenure. He is a director of Boys and Girls Country of Houston, a non-profit organization. Mr. Howard is also a director of the Company's subsidiaries, Southwestern Energy Production Company, SEECO, Inc., DeSoto Drilling, Inc. and Diamond M Production Company. He is 73 years old and first became a director of the Company in 1995.

The Nominating and Governance Committee, in reviewing and assessing Mr. Howard's contributions to the Board, determined that his past experience as an executive of a leading multinational exploration and production company and his considerable experience as a director of other well-known companies in the oil and gas industry will continue to complement the mix of skills of the other nominees and provide significant contributions to the Company's Board of Directors.

HAROLD M. KORELL Mr. Korell is the Chairman of the Board of the Company and will retire as an employee of the Company effective March 31, 2010. Mr. Korell served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Company from January 1, 1999 until May 19, 2009. Mr. Korell joined the Company in 1997 as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. On May 22, 1998, Mr. Korell was promoted to President and Chief Operating Officer and was promoted from Chief Operating Officer to Chief Executive Officer effective January 1, 1999. Mr. Korell was elected Chairman of the Board on May 16, 2002. Previously, Mr. Korell was Senior Vice President Operations of American Exploration Company, Executive Vice President of McCormick Resources, and held various technical and managerial positions during his 17 years with Tenneco Oil Company, including Vice President of Production. Prior to that time, he held various positions with Mobil Corporation. Mr. Korell is a board member of the National Petroleum Council and he is a member of America's Natural Gas Alliance, where he serves on the membership and executive committees. He is a member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers. He also serves on the Executive Advisory Board for the Sam M. Walton School of Business at the University of Arkansas and the Board of Governors at the Colorado School of Mines. Mr. Korell is also a director of the Company's subsidiaries, Southwestern Energy Production Company, SEECO, Inc., DeSoto Drilling Inc. and Diamond M Production Company. Mr. Korell is 65 years old and first became a director of the Company in 1998.

The Nominating and Governance Committee, in reviewing and assessing Mr. Korell's contributions to the Board, determined that his past experience as the Company's President and Chief Executive Officer, his prior experience as an executive of other oil and gas companies and his involvement in industry associations will continue to complement the mix of skills of the other nominees and provide significant contributions to the Company's Board of Directors.

VELLO A. KUUSKRAA Mr. Kuuskraa is the President and Chairman of the Board of Advanced Resources International, Inc., a privately held geological and engineering technical services company located in Arlington, Virginia, which he has led since 1991. He is internationally recognized for his work in unconventional gas resources, energy economics, supply modeling, and new oil and gas recovery technologies. Mr. Kuuskraa served on the United States Secretary of Energy's Natural Gas Supply Task Force, was a member of the National Academy of Sciences Study Committee for defining the National Energy Modeling System, and has testified before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on the outlook for natural gas supplies. He has published over 100 technical papers, reports and presentations on energy resources and future natural gas supplies. Mr. Kuuskraa is a recognized expert on the technologies of tight gas and shale gas recovery. He is also a recognized expert on the technologies of coalbed methane and enhanced oil recovery and their adaptation for carbon dioxide sequestration. Mr. Kuuskraa is also a director of the Company's subsidiaries, Southwestern Energy Production Company, SEECO, Inc., DeSoto Drilling, Inc. and Diamond M Production Company. Mr. Kuuskraa is 69 years old and was first elected to the Company's Board of Directors in 2003.

The Nominating and Governance Committee, in reviewing and assessing Mr. Kuuskraa's contributions to the Board, determined that his geological and engineering background, his demonstrated knowledge of the natural gas industry as well as his leadership experience as President and Chairman of the Board of an internationally recognized geological and engineering advisory firm will continue to complement the mix of skills of the other nominees and provide significant contributions to the Company's Board of Directors.

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KENNETH R. MOURTON Mr. Mourton is an Attorney at Law with and Managing Principal Attorney of the firm of Ball and Mourton, Ltd., PLLC, Fayetteville, Arkansas, where he has practiced since 1975. He is a certified public accountant (inactive) and owns and operates several businesses in various states related to beer distribution, lodging, warehousing and travel. He is the Chairman of the Razorback Foundation and is also a Board member of the Arkansas Rural Endowment Fund, a non-profit corporation created by the State of Arkansas to help lower income, rural Arkansas children obtain college and university educations. Mr. Mourton is 59 years old and was first elected to the Company's Board of Directors in 1995.

The Nominating and Governance Committee, in reviewing and assessing Mr. Mourton's contributions to the Board, determined that his legal and accounting background and considerable business experience will continue to complement the mix of skills of the other nominees and provide significant contributions to the Company's Board of Directors.

STEVEN L. MUELLER Mr. Mueller is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company, a position he has held since May 19, 2009. Prior to that, as of June 2, 2008, Mr. Mueller served as the President and Chief Operating Officer of the Company. He joined the Company from CDX Gas, LLC, a privately owned company where he was employed as Executive Vice President from September 2007 to May 2008. CDX voluntarily filed for bankruptcy in December 2008 and, in 2009, emerged from bankruptcy and resumed operations as Vitruvian Exploration LLC. From 2001 until its acquisition by Forest Oil in 2007 for approximately \$1.5 billion, Mr. Mueller served first as the Senior Vice President and General Manager Onshore and later as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of The Houston Exploration Company. Mr. Mueller has over 30 years of experience in the oil and gas industry and has served in multiple operational and managerial roles at Tenneco Oil Company, Fina Oil Company, American Exploration Company, Belco Oil & Gas Company and The Houston Exploration Company. Mr. Mueller has a degree in geologic engineering from the Colorado School of Mines. Mr. Mueller first became a director of the Company in July 2009. He is 57 years old. Mr. Mueller is also a director of the Company's subsidiaries, Southwestern Energy Production Company, SEECO, Inc., DeSoto Drilling, Inc. and Diamond M Production Company.

The Nominating and Governance Committee, in reviewing and assessing Mr. Mueller's extensive experience in the oil and gas industry, determined that his role as the Company's President and Chief Executive Officer coupled with his past executive experience will complement the mix of skills of the other nominees and provide significant contributions to the Company's Board of Directors.

CHARLES E. SCHARLAU Mr. Scharlau is of counsel with the law firm of Conner & Winters, LLP, which is an unpaid, non-management advisory position. He retired as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company on December 31, 1998 and was a consultant to the Company through May 2005. He began his career as the Company's legal counsel in 1951 and was involved in all facets of the Company's business for over 47 years. In 1966, he was named Executive Vice President and first elected a director of the Company. In 1972, he was elected President and Chief Executive Officer. He was a member of the State Economic Expansion Commission and served terms as a member and as Chairman of the State's Energy Commission. He has been Chairman of the Mineral Law Section of the Arkansas Bar Association and a speaker at their institutes. He also served on the Board of Directors of the American Gas Association, the Southern Gas Association and the National Association of Manufacturers. During his tenure with the Company, Mr. Scharlau also served two terms as president of the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and three terms as chairman of the board of the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce. From 1980 until it was sold in 2008, Mr. Scharlau served as a director of ABLEST, Inc., and served as the Chairman of the Compensation Committee from 2004. He served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas and as chair of their audit committee from 2000 to 2005. He is currently chair of the audit committee of the University of Arkansas Foundation which manages approximately \$1 billion in assets on behalf of itself and the University. He is also a director of Arvest Bank-Fayetteville and the Razorback Foundation. Mr. Scharlau is also a director of the Company's subsidiaries, Southwestern Energy Production Company, SEECO, Inc., DeSoto Drilling, Inc. and Diamond M Production

Company. Mr. Scharlau is 82 years old.

The Nominating and Governance Committee, in reviewing and assessing Mr. Scharlau's contributions to the Board, determined that Mr. Scharlau's past executive experience, legal background, experience as director of other companies and extensive community involvement in the State of Arkansas, the principal location of the Company's

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operations, will continue to complement the mix of skills of the other nominees and provide significant contributions to the Company's Board of Directors.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

We have long believed that good corporate governance is important to ensure that the Company is managed for the long-term benefit of its stockholders. We periodically review our corporate governance policies and practices and compare them to those suggested by various authorities in corporate governance and to the practices of other public companies. In the past year, as part of our ongoing efforts to improve our governance practices, we have implemented a number of new policies, including director stock ownership guidelines (included in our Corporate Governance Guidelines), officer stock ownership guidelines (discussed in Compensation Discussion and Analysis below), a director resignation policy (included in our Corporate Governance Guidelines and also discussed under Proposal No. 4 below) and a political contributions policy (available on our website under Corporate Governance and discussed under Proposal No. 5 below). We also continuously review the rules and regulations promulgated under the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, all new and proposed rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC) and all new and proposed listing and compliance standards of the NYSE, on which our common stock is listed, in order to ensure compliance with all applicable requirements. The corporate governance policies implemented by us in order to meet these requirements are available on our website, www.swn.com, under the section Corporate Governance and include our:

Audit Committee Charter;

Compensation Committee Charter;

Nominating and Governance Committee Charter;

Retirement Committee Charter;

Corporate Governance Guidelines, which include our director stock ownership guidelines;

Business Conduct Guidelines;

Code of Ethics for § 406 Officers;

Confidential Complaint Procedures for Questionable Accounting Practices;

Non-Retaliation Policy; and

Procedures for Contacting the Board/Presiding Director.

Copies of our committee charters are included in the annexes to this proxy statement and copies of all of these documents are also available in print free of charge to any stockholder upon request to our Investor Relations Department located at our corporate headquarters and reachable at (281) 618-4700.

Identifying and Evaluating Nominees for Director

The Nominating and Governance Committee of our Board of Directors has been delegated the responsibility of selecting candidates for Board membership and for extending invitations to join the Board of Directors. The Nominating and Governance Committee is responsible for screening candidates (in consultation with the Chief

Executive Officer, or CEO), for establishing criteria for nominees and for recommending to the Board a slate of nominees for election to the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting of Stockholders. After a concurrent review of all candidates by the Committee and the CEO, the Chairman of the Board interviews the potential candidates selected by the Committee and our CEO, and reports his conclusions to the Committee, together with a recommendation of final candidates for interview by the members of the Committee. The Nominating and Governance Committee then interviews the final candidates and recommends to the full Board candidates for election based upon the results of the interview. Final approval of any candidate is made by the full Board of Directors. Candidates are selected for their character, judgment, business experience and specific areas of expertise, among other relevant considerations, such as the requirements of applicable law and listing standards.

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The Board of Directors recognizes the importance of soliciting new candidates for membership on the Board of Directors and that the needs of the Board of Directors, in terms of the relative experience and other qualifications of candidates, may change over time. Candidates for membership on the Board may be suggested by any director or stockholder, and the Board may retain professional search firms. Stockholders may nominate candidates for directors by following the procedures described below under Stockholder Nominations.

Selection Criteria for Nominees for Directors

Each member of the Board is expected to bring a unique and valuable perspective to the governance of the Company. When these unique skill sets are combined in an environment of interaction and respect, they provide the overall skill set of the Board and provide a strong governance structure. Our Corporate Governance Guidelines, which are available on our website at www.swn.com under Corporate Governance, set forth certain criteria that apply to the selection of director candidates:

Each nominee director should be chosen without regard to sex, race, religion or national origin;

Each nominee director should be an individual of the highest character and integrity and have the ability to work well with others;

Each nominee director should have an inquiring mind, vision and good judgment;

Each nominee director should be free of any conflict of interest which would violate any applicable law or regulation or interfere with the proper performance of the responsibilities of a director;

Each nominee director should possess substantial and significant business experience in specific areas of expertise that would be important to the Company in the performance of the duties of a director;

Each nominee director's skill set should be complementary to the background and experience of other Board members;

Each nominee director should have sufficient time available to devote to the affairs of the Company in order to carry out the responsibilities of a director; and

Each nominee director should have the capacity and desire to represent the balanced, best interests of all stockholders and objectively appraise management performance.

The Nominating and Governance Committee of the Board of Directors evaluates the qualifications of each director candidate against the foregoing criteria in connection with its recommendation to the Board concerning each nomination for election or re-election as a director, including members of the Committee. The Nominating and Governance Committee, with direct input and advice from our CEO, is responsible for assessing the appropriate mix of skills and characteristics required of Board members based on the Board's perceived needs at a given point in time and periodically reviews and updates the foregoing criteria as deemed necessary. While the guidelines of our Nominating and Governance Committee do not prescribe diversity standards, diversity in personal background, race, gender, age and nationality for the Board as a whole may be taken into account in considering individual candidates.

Each director's continuation on the Board is reviewed before that director is considered for re-election at the expiration of his or her term. In connection with its annual recommendation of a slate of nominees, the Nominating and Governance Committee, in consultation with the CEO, reviews and assesses the contributions of those directors selected for re-election. At the conclusion of this process, the Chairman of the Nominating and Governance

Committee reports the Committee's conclusions to the full Board.

Stockholder Nominations

Our by-laws permit stockholders to nominate directors for consideration at an annual meeting of stockholders. Such nominations must be made pursuant to timely notice in writing to the Secretary of the Company, Mark K. Boling, Southwestern Energy Company, 2350 N. Sam Houston Parkway East, Suite 125, Houston, Texas 77032. To be timely, a stockholder's notice must be delivered to or mailed and received at the principal executive offices of the

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Company not less than 50 nor more than 75 days prior to the meeting date; provided, however, that in the event that less than 45 days notice of the meeting date is given to stockholders, notice by the stockholder must be received no later than the close of business on the 15th day following the day on which notice of the meeting date was mailed. The written notice must set forth (a) as to each nominee whom the stockholder proposes to nominate for election or re-election as a director, (i) the name, age, business address and residence address of the nominee, (ii) the principal occupation or employment of the nominee, (iii) the class and number of shares of capital stock of the Company which are beneficially owned by the nominee and (iv) any other information relating to the nominee that is required to be disclosed in solicitations for proxies for election of directors pursuant to Schedule 14A under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder; and (b) as to the stockholder giving the notice, (i) the name and record address of the stockholder, (ii) the class and number of shares of capital stock of the Company that are beneficially owned by the stockholder, (iii) a description of all arrangements or understandings between such stockholder and each proposed nominee and any other person or persons (including their names) pursuant to which nominations are to be made by such stockholder and (iv) a representation that such stockholder intends to appear in person or by proxy at the meeting to nominate the persons named in the notice. The Company may require any proposed nominee to furnish such other information as may reasonably be required by the Company to determine the eligibility of such proposed nominee to serve as a director of the Company.

It is the policy of the Nominating and Governance Committee to consider properly submitted stockholder nominations for directors as described above under Identifying and Evaluating Nominees for Directors. In evaluating such nominations, the Nominating and Governance Committee seeks to address the criteria set forth above under Selection Criteria for Nominees for Directors.

Director Independence

As set forth in the Company's Corporate Governance Guidelines, which are available on our website at www.swn.com under Corporate Governance, it is the policy of the Board of Directors that a majority of the members of the Board be independent of the Company's management. For a director to be deemed independent, the Board must affirmatively determine that the director has no material relationship with the Company or its affiliates (either directly or as a partner, stockholder or officer of an organization that has a relationship with the Company or its affiliates) or any member of the senior management of the Company or his or her affiliates. Material relationships include commercial, banking, industrial, consulting, legal, accounting, charitable and familial relationships. For making this determination, the Board has adopted a set of director independence standards as required by the NYSE. Under the Board's independence standards, a director will not be deemed independent if he or she:

is, or within the past three years has been, employed by the Company or any of its affiliates;

has an immediate family member who is, or within the past three years has been, an officer of the Company of any of its affiliates

has received during any twelve-month period within the last three (3) years more than \$120,000 in direct compensation from the Company and its affiliates (collectively), excluding director and committee fees and pension or other forms of deferred compensation for prior service (provided such compensation is not contingent in any way on continued service);

has an immediate family member who has received during any twelve-month period within the last three (3) years more than \$120,000 in direct compensation from the Company and its affiliates (collectively), excluding compensation for service as a non-officer employee of the Company;

(A) is a partner or an employee of a present or former auditor of the Company or any of its affiliates; (B) is the immediate family member of a current partner of any such firm, or a current employee of such firm who personally works on the Company's audit; or (C) within the past three (3) years, has been a partner or employee of any such firm or has any immediate family member who has been a partner of such firm or an employee of any such firm, and personally worked on the Company's audit;

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is, or has an immediate family member who is, currently employed (or within the last three years has been employed) as an officer of another entity where any executive officer of the Company or any of its affiliates serves (or served) on the compensation committee of such entity; or

is a current employee, or has an immediate family member who is an officer, of any entity that has made payments to, or received payments from, the Company for property or services in an amount which in any of the last three fiscal years of such entity exceeds the greater of \$1,000,000, or two percent (2%) of the entity's consolidated gross revenues.

Contributions to tax-exempt entities not considered to be payments for purposes of the foregoing bullet-points, but are considered in determining whether a director has a material relationship with the Company. None of the contributions made by the Company to tax exempt organizations in which one of our independent directors serves as an officer exceeded the greater of \$1 million, or 2% of such tax exempt organization's consolidated gross revenues in any single fiscal year within the preceding three (3) years.

Our Board of Directors has determined that the following majority of directors – Lewis E. Epley, Jr., Robert L. Howard, Vello A. Kuuskraa, Kenneth R. Mourton and Charles E. Scharlau – qualify as independent under the applicable NYSE standards.

The Board's Role in Risk Management

The Board of Directors, which is elected by the stockholders, is the ultimate decision making body of the Company, except with respect to matters reserved to the stockholders. The Board of Directors selects the Chief Executive Officer and certain other members of the executive management of the Company, who are charged with directing the Company's business. The primary function of the Board of Directors is therefore oversight – defining and enforcing standards of accountability that enable executive management to execute their responsibilities fully and in the interests of stockholders. Consistent with that function, one of the primary responsibilities of the Board is reviewing the Company's strategic plans and objectives, including the principal risk exposures of the Company. Our Board of Directors has delegated to the Audit Committee oversight responsibility relating to the evaluation of our enterprise risk issues. In this connection, the Committee discusses with management, the internal auditor (or internal audit service provider) and the independent auditors (i) the Company's major risk exposures (whether financial, operating or otherwise), (ii) the steps management has taken to monitor and control such exposures (including the Company's risk assessment and risk management policies) and manage legal compliance programs, and (iii) such other considerations as may be relevant to their respective audits. In addition, at least annually, the entire Board of Directors engages in a review of the Company's strategic plan and the principal current and future risk exposures of the Company and the corporate compliance officer also discusses with the Board the focus and results of the Company's semi-annual legal compliance program conducted for employees in all locations.

Board Leadership Structure, Presiding Director and Executive Sessions

The Board of Directors has determined that the most effective leadership structure for the Company at this time is to have a Chairman of the Board who is not also the CEO. Historically, our Board leadership has been structured to have our CEO also act as the Chairman of the Board, which the Board believes served the Company and its stockholders well. The decision to separate of the role of the Chairman of the Board from the CEO position was made in the context of the retirement of our former CEO in May 2009 and his transition to the role of Executive Chairman as part of the Board's management succession plans. Our Executive Chairman will retire as an employee effective March 31, 2010 and he will remain the non-executive Chairman of the Board. The Board may modify this structure in the future to ensure that the Board leadership structure for the Company remains effective and advances the best interests of our

stockholders.

In addition to the foregoing, because the Chairman of the Board is our former CEO, the Board has retained the role of Presiding Director as part of the Board's leadership structure. One of the Company's non-management directors (as defined by the rules of the NYSE) serves as the Presiding Director of executive sessions of the non-employee directors of the Company, which are held at every meeting of the Board of Directors. The Presiding Director is appointed by the non-employee directors each year at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors, which is generally held in May. The independent directors, to the extent not identical to the non-management

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directors, are required to meet in executive session as appropriate matters for their consideration arise, but, in any event, at least once a year. The agenda of these executive sessions shall include such topics as the participating directors shall determine. The Presiding Director acts as the chair of all executive sessions and is responsible for coordinating the activities of the other outside directors, as required by our corporate governance guidelines and the NYSE listing standards. The Presiding Director also acts as the liaison director for any informal, confidential communications with the Chief Executive Officer outside of the normal Committee and Board procedures. Mr. Robert L. Howard is the current Presiding Director.

Committees of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors held eleven meetings in 2009, five of which were telephonic. The meetings were attended by all of the directors with the exception of Mr. Howard, who did not attend two telephonic meetings. The Board of Directors has four standing committees: the Audit Committee, the Compensation Committee, the Nominating and Governance Committee and the Retirement Committee. The Audit, Compensation, and Nominating and Governance committees are comprised solely of independent directors in accordance with NYSE corporate governance listing standards. The charter of each of these committees complies with requirements of the NYSE, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 and applicable SEC rules.

Audit Committee The Audit Committee is composed entirely of non-employee members of the Board, each of whom satisfy the independence requirements for audit committee members under Rule 10A-3 promulgated under the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), is independent and financially literate as defined by NYSE rules and meets the Company's independence standards. Members of the Audit Committee may not simultaneously serve on the audit committee of more than two (2) other public companies. In addition, the Board of Directors has determined that Mr. Kenneth R. Mourton, Audit Committee Chairman, a certified public accountant (inactive), is an audit committee financial expert as defined in Item 407(d)(5) of Regulation S-K and is independent as defined by Item 407(d)(5)(i)(B) of Schedule 14A under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. The Audit Committee also includes Messrs. Robert L. Howard and Vello A. Kuuskraa. During 2009, the Audit Committee held four meetings, each of which was attended by all members of the Committee.

The Audit Committee is responsible to the Board for reviewing the accounting and auditing procedures and financial reporting practices of the Company and for the engagement of, and overseeing all audit work conducted by, the independent registered public accounting firm, including the pre-approval of the current year audit and non-audit fees (the Pre-Approval Policy). The Audit Committee is governed by a charter that has been approved by the Board of Directors. The Audit Committee meets periodically with the Company's management, internal auditor and independent registered public accounting firm to review the Company's financial information and systems of internal controls and ensure such parties are properly discharging their responsibilities. The independent registered public accounting firm reports directly to the Audit Committee and periodically meets with the Audit Committee without management representatives present. The Audit Committee maintains an internal audit function that provides management and the Audit Committee with ongoing assessments of the Company's risk management processes and system of internal controls and the Audit Committee periodically meets with the internal audit function without management representatives present. The Audit Committee also meets with the Company's independent petroleum engineering firm once a year to review the results of their audit of the Company's reserves.

Compensation Committee The Compensation Committee is governed by a charter that has been approved by the Board of Directors. Messrs. Vello A. Kuuskraa, Compensation Committee Chairman, Robert L. Howard, and Kenneth R. Mourton presently serve on this committee. During 2009, the Compensation Committee held three meetings, one of which was telephonic and each of which was attended by all members of the Committee. The Compensation Committee is composed entirely of non-employee members of the Board, each of whom is independent as defined by NYSE rules as well as under the Company's independence standards. The Compensation Committee is responsible for

establishing officer compensation and discretionary awards under the various incentive plans. The Compensation Committee has engaged Ernst & Young, LLP as its independent compensation consultant to advise it on all compensation matters related to our senior management.

Nominating and Governance Committee The Nominating and Governance Committee is governed by a charter that has been approved by the Board of Directors. Messrs. Lewis E. Epley, Jr., Nominating and Governance

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Committee Chairman, Robert L. Howard and Kenneth R. Mourton presently serve on this committee. During 2009, the Nominating and Governance Committee held two meetings, each of which was attended by all members of the Committee. The Nominating and Governance Committee is composed entirely of non-employee members of the Board, each of whom is independent as defined by NYSE rules as well as under the Company's independence standards. The Nominating and Governance Committee considers candidates for nomination for Board positions, including qualified candidates recommended by stockholders as discussed above under Identifying and Evaluating Nominees for Director, and oversees the Company's corporate governance matters and practices. The Nominating and Governance Committee is responsible for recommending non-management director compensation for approval by the Board. The Nominating and Governance Committee has engaged Ernst & Young, LLP as its independent compensation consultant to advise it on non-management director compensation.

Retirement Committee The Retirement Committee is governed by a charter that has been approved by the Board of Directors. Messrs. Charles E. Scharlau, Retirement Committee Chairman, Lewis E. Epley, Jr., and Kenneth R. Mourton presently serve on this committee. During 2009, the Retirement Committee held five meetings, each of which was attended by all members of the Committee. The Retirement Committee is responsible for administering the Company's pension and retirement plans and for recommending retirement policy to the Board of Directors.

Communications to Non-Employee Directors

The Board provides a process for stockholders and other interested persons to send communications to the Presiding Director, the non-employee directors as a group or any of the other directors, including the entire Board. Stockholders and other interested persons may send written communications to the non-employee directors, the Presiding Director or any of the other directors to the Secretary of the Company, Mark K. Boling, Southwestern Energy Company, 2350 N. Sam Houston Parkway East, Suite 125, Houston, Texas 77032. The Secretary will review, sort and summarize the communications and forward them to the intended recipient(s) on a periodic basis, but no less frequently than every calendar quarter.

Attendance at Annual Meeting

It is our policy that nominee directors who are currently directors must attend the Annual Meeting of Stockholders. Each member of the Company's Board of Directors attended last year's Annual Meeting of Stockholders.

Table of Contents**PROPOSAL NO. 2****RATIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM**

The Audit Committee of the Board of Directors has selected PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC) as the independent registered public accounting firm of the Company for 2010. PwC has been the independent registered public accounting firm of the Company since its selection, based upon recommendation of the Audit Committee, on June 20, 2002.

Relationship with Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

The following table presents aggregate fees for professional audit services rendered by PwC for the audit of the Company's annual financial statements for each of the years ended December 31, 2009 and 2008, and fees billed for other services rendered by PwC during those years.

	2009	2008
Audit Fees(1)	\$ 795,320	\$ 814,260
Audit-Related Fees		
Tax Fees(2)	55,650	10,200
All Other Fees		
Total	\$ 850,970	\$ 824,460

(1) The Audit Fees for the years ended December 31, 2009 and 2008 were for professional services rendered for the integrated audits of the Company's internal controls and consolidated financial statements, reviews of the quarterly financial statements and assistance with review of documents filed with the SEC.

(2) Tax Fees for the years ended December 31, 2009 and 2008 were for services related to the review of federal and state tax returns.

The Audit Committee pre-approves all audit services and non-audit (i.e., audit-related, tax and other) services (including the fees and terms thereof) to be performed by its independent registered public accounting firm, as required by applicable law or listing standards and subject to the terms of the Pre-Approval Policy established by the Audit Committee, the form of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A. The Committee may delegate authority to one or more of its members when appropriate, including the authority to grant pre-approvals of audit and permitted non-audit services, provided that decisions of any such member to grant pre-approvals are consistent with the terms of the Pre-Approval Policy and are presented to the full Committee at its next scheduled meeting.

The Committee receives periodic reports from the independent registered public accounting firm as required by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) regarding the auditors' independence, which is not less frequently than annually. The Committee discusses such reports with the auditors, and if so determined by the Committee, takes appropriate action to satisfy itself of the independence of the auditors. The Committee reviews the

performance of the Company's independent registered public accounting firm annually. In doing so, the Committee consults with management and the internal auditor and obtains and reviews a report by the independent registered public accounting firm describing (i) their internal quality-control procedures, (ii) material issues raised by their most recent internal quality-control review, or peer review (if applicable), or by any inquiry or investigation by governmental or professional authorities for the preceding five years, (iii) the response of the independent registered public accounting firm with respect to any such issues and (iv) all relationships between the independent registered public accounting firm and the Company. The Committee ensures rotation of the audit partners as required by applicable law and listing standards.

The Audit Committee approved all non-audit services for 2009. The Audit Committee also considered whether the provisions of the services by PwC described above under "All Other Fees" are compatible with maintaining the independence of PwC.

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Representatives of PwC will be present at the Annual Meeting of Stockholders and will have an opportunity to make a statement to stockholders if they so desire. The representatives will also be available to respond to questions from stockholders. There have been no disagreements with the independent registered public accounting firm on accounting and financial disclosure.

AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

The Audit Committee has reviewed and discussed with management the Company's audited financial statements as of and for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009. The Committee also has discussed with the independent registered public accounting firm for the Company the matters required to be discussed by statement on Auditing Standards No. 61, Communication with Audit Committees, as amended (AICPA, *Professional Standards*, Vol. 1. AU Section 380), as adopted by the PCAOB in Rule 3200T. The Committee has received and reviewed the written disclosures and the letter from the independent public accountants for the Company required by applicable requirements of the PCAOB regarding the independent accountant's communications with the audit committee concerning independence, and has discussed with the independent accountant its independence from management and the Company, including consideration of non-audit fees on that firm's independence.

Based on the review and discussions referred to above, the Audit Committee recommended to the Board of Directors that the year-end audited financial statements be included in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009, for filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Members of the Audit Committee

KENNETH R. MOURTON, CHAIRMAN
ROBERT L. HOWARD
VELLO A. KUUSKRAA

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PROPOSAL NO. 3

**AMENDMENT AND RESTATEMENT OF THE COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION
TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF AUTHORIZED SHARES OF COMMON STOCK**

On February 24, 2010, the Board of Directors adopted a resolution deeming it advisable to adopt, and recommending that the stockholders approve at this meeting, an amendment and restatement of our certificate of incorporation to increase the number of shares of common stock that the Company is authorized to issue from 540,000,000 to 1,250,000,000 shares. As of March 31, 2010, the Company had [] shares of common stock outstanding, and an aggregate of [] shares reserved for issuance under its existing equity compensation plans and agreements.

Since 2003, the Company has only issued common stock in connection with three stock splits (two of which were effected in 2005 and another in 2008), raising capital in the public markets in 2003 and 2005 and its equity compensation plans and agreements. The Company's one-, three-, five- and ten-year total stockholder returns were 66.38%, 175.04%, 660.70% and 5,843.77%, respectively. The Board of Directors believes the availability of additional authorized shares will enable the Company to act with flexibility when and as the need arises to issue additional shares in the future without the delays necessitated by having to obtain a stockholder vote (except as otherwise required by law or by the rules of any securities exchange on which the shares of common stock are listed) and to take advantage of changing market and financial conditions in a more timely manner. Among the reasons for issuing additional shares would be to increase the Company's capital through sales of the Company's common stock, to effect additional stock splits of at least two-for-one or greater (which is not possible with the current number of authorized shares), to engage in other types of capital or strategic transactions, and to satisfy existing contractual commitments. Other than its equity compensation plans and agreements, the Company has no plan, agreement or arrangement for the issuance of any shares of common stock in connection with any such transaction or contractual commitment.

If the amendment and restatement of the Company's certificate of incorporation is approved, the Company's Board of Directors generally may issue such additional authorized shares of the Company's common stock without further stockholder approval in return for such consideration in money, property, or other things of value as the Board of Directors, in its discretion, shall determine. In some instances, stockholder approval for the issuance of additional shares may be required by law or by the requirements of the NYSE, on which the Company's common stock is now listed, or the obtaining of such approvals may be otherwise necessary or desirable. In particular, the NYSE requires stockholder approval for acquisition transactions where the issuance could increase the number of shares outstanding by 20% or more and for an increase in shares reserved for issuance under equity compensation plans for the Company's employees. In such cases, further stockholder authorization will be solicited.

The Company's Board of Directors has not proposed the increase in the amount of authorized shares with the intention of discouraging tender offers or takeover attempts of the Company. However, the availability of additional authorized shares for issuance could render more difficult or discourage a merger, tender offer, proxy contest or other attempt to obtain control of the Company.

In order to effect the increase in the number of authorized shares of common stock from 540,000,000 to 1,250,000,000, the Company's certificate of incorporation will be amended and restated as set forth in the form attached as Exhibit B to this proxy statement (the Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation). The increase in the authorized common stock is reflected in the FOURTH article of the Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation. The Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation also effects various changes to clarify language and make other technical corrections and non-substantive modifications.

TRANSACTIONS WITH RELATED PERSONS

During 2009, the Company entered into a customary commodity hedging transaction with Morgan Stanley, which beneficially owned more than 5% of the Company's common stock as of December 31, 2008 based on its filing of a Schedule 13G with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, in February 2009. In February 2010, Morgan Stanley amended its Schedule 13G and stated that it no longer beneficially owned more than 5% of the Company's common stock as of December 31, 2009.

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On December 12, 2006, the Board of Directors adopted a written policy that governs the approval of transactions with related parties, including, among others, officers, directors and their immediate family members. Pursuant to the policy, the Board has determined that the Audit Committee of the Board is best suited to review such transactions. At the first regularly scheduled Audit Committee meeting in each calendar year, management will recommend transactions to be entered into by the Company for that calendar year with related parties, including the proposed aggregate value of such transactions, if applicable. After review, the Audit Committee will approve or disapprove such transactions. At each subsequently scheduled meeting, management will update the Committee as to any material change to those proposed transactions. In the event management recommends any additional transactions subsequent to the first calendar year meeting, such transactions may be presented to the Audit Committee for approval or preliminarily entered into by management subject to ratification by the Committee; provided that if ratification shall not be forthcoming, management shall cancel or annul such transaction. The transaction with Morgan Stanley was approved by the Audit Committee.

SECTION 16(a) BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP REPORTING COMPLIANCE

Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 requires the Company's directors and executive officers, and persons who own more than ten percent of the Company's common stock, to report their initial ownership of the common stock and any subsequent changes in that ownership to the SEC and the New York Stock Exchange, and to furnish the Company with a copy of each such report.

To the Company's knowledge, based solely on review of the copies of such reports furnished to the Company and written representations that no other reports were required, its directors, executive officers and more than ten percent stockholders complied with all applicable Section 16(a) filing requirements with the exception of Harold M. Korell, the Company's Executive Chairman, who failed to file a Form 4 in May 2009 with respect to the sale of 25,000 shares of common stock beneficially owned by him through a family limited partnership. The May 2009 stock sale by the family limited partnership was ultimately reported on a Form 5 which was timely filed by Mr. Korell.

Table of Contents**SECURITY OWNERSHIP OF CERTAIN BENEFICIAL OWNERS**

The following persons were known by the Company to beneficially own more than 5% of the Company's common stock as of December 31, 2009 based on their filing of a Schedule 13G with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934:

Title of Class	Name and Address of Beneficial Owner	Amount and Nature of Beneficial Ownership	Percent of Class
Common Stock	FMR LLC and Edward C. Johnson 3d 82 Devonshire Street Boston, Massachusetts 02109	36,370,016(1)	10.533%
Common Stock	Black Rock Inc. 40 East 52nd Street New York, New York 10022	27,296,795(2)	7.91%

- (1) The Schedule 13G filed by FMR LLC and Mr. Johnson stated the following: (i) Fidelity Management & Research Company (Fidelity), 82 Devonshire Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02109, a wholly-owned subsidiary of FMR LLC and an investment adviser registered under Section 203 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, is the beneficial owner of 33,608,735 shares or 9.733% as a result of acting as investment adviser to various investment companies registered under Section 8 of the Investment Company Act of 1940. Edward C. Johnson 3d and FMR LLC, through its control of Fidelity, and the funds each has sole power to dispose of the 33,608,735 shares owned by the Funds. Members of the family of Edward C. Johnson 3d, Chairman of FMR LLC, are the predominant owners, directly or through trusts, of Series B voting common shares of FMR LLC, representing 49% of the voting power of FMR LLC. The Johnson family group and all other Series B shareholders have entered into a shareholders' voting agreement under which all Series B voting common shares will be voted in accordance with the majority vote of Series B voting common shares. Accordingly, through their ownership of voting common shares and the execution of the shareholders' voting agreement, members of the Johnson family may be deemed, under the Investment Company Act of 1940, to form a controlling group with respect to FMR LLC. Neither FMR LLC nor Edward C. Johnson 3d, Chairman of FMR LLC, has the sole power to vote or direct the voting of the shares owned directly by the Fidelity Funds, which power resides with the Funds' Boards of Trustees. Fidelity carries out the voting of the shares under written guidelines established by the Funds' Boards of Trustees; (ii) Strategic Advisers, Inc., 82 Devonshire Street, Boston, MA 02109, a wholly-owned subsidiary of FMR LLC and an investment adviser registered under Section 203 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, provides investment advisory services to individuals. As such, FMR LLC's beneficial ownership includes 4,644 shares, or 0.001%, beneficially owned through Strategic Advisers, Inc.; Pyramis Global Advisors, LLC (PGALLC), 900 Salem Street, Smithfield, Rhode Island, 02917, an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of FMR LLC and an investment adviser registered under Section 203 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, is the beneficial owner of 656,840 shares or 0.190% as a result of its serving as investment adviser to institutional accounts, non-U.S. mutual funds, or investment companies registered under Section 8 of the Investment Company Act of 1940 owning such shares. Edward C. Johnson 3d and FMR LLC, through its control of PGALLC, each has sole dispositive power over 656,840 shares and sole power to vote or to direct the voting of

656,840 shares owned by the institutional accounts or funds advised by PGALLC as reported above; (iii) Pyramis Global Advisors Trust Company (PGATC), 900 Salem Street, Smithfield, Rhode Island, 02917, an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of FMR LLC and a bank as defined in Section 3(a)(6) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, is the beneficial owner of 933,827 shares or 0.270% as a result of its serving as investment manager of institutional accounts owning such shares. Edward C. Johnson 3d and FMR LLC, through its control of PGATC, each has sole dispositive power over 933,827 shares and sole power to vote or to direct the voting of 830,227 shares owned by the institutional accounts managed by PGATC as reported above; (iv) FIL Limited (FIL), Pembroke Hall, 42 Crow Lane, Hamilton, Bermuda, and various foreign-based subsidiaries provide investment advisory and management services to a number of non-U.S. investment companies and certain institutional investors. FIL, which is a qualified institution under section 240.13d-1(b)(1)(ii), is the beneficial owner of 1,165,970 shares or 0.338%. Partnerships controlled

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predominantly by members of the family of Edward C. Johnson 3d, Chairman of FMR LLC and FIL, or trusts for their benefit, own shares of FIL voting stock with the right to cast approximately 47% of the total votes which may be cast by all holders of FIL voting stock. FMR LLC and FIL are separate and independent corporate entities, and their Boards of Directors are generally composed of different individuals; (v) FMR LLC and FIL are of the view that they are not acting as a group for purposes of Section 13(d) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the 1934 Act) and that they are not otherwise required to attribute to each other the beneficial ownership of securities beneficially owned by the other corporation within the meaning of Rule 13d-3 promulgated under the 1934 Act. Therefore, they are of the view that the shares held by the other corporation need not be aggregated for purposes of Section 13(d). However, FMR LLC is making this filing on a voluntary basis as if all of the shares are beneficially owned by FMR LLC and FIL on a joint basis; and (vi) FIL has sole dispositive power over 1,165,970 shares owned by the International Funds. FIL has sole power to vote or direct the voting of 1,053,820 shares and no power to vote or direct the voting of 112,150 shares held by the International Funds as reported above.

- (2) The Schedule 13G filed by Black Rock, Inc. stated that it is the parent holding company or control person of the entities holding these shares and that it had sole power to vote or to direct the vote of, and sole power to dispose or to direct the disposition of, 27,296,795 shares.

Table of Contents**SHARE OWNERSHIP OF MANAGEMENT, DIRECTORS AND NOMINEES**

The following table sets forth information as of March 19, 2010 with respect to the beneficial ownership of the Company's common stock by each director, nominee and each executive officer named in the Summary Compensation Table, whom we collectively refer to as our Named Executive Officers or NEOs, and by all directors, nominees and executive officers as a group.

Name of Beneficial Owner	Amount and Nature of Beneficial Ownership				Total Number of Shares of Common Stock	Percent of Class
	Shares Owned Directly	Shares Owned 401(k)	Restricted Stock Outstanding (Voting Power)	Options Exercisable		
Named Executive Officers:						
Harold M. Korell	2,088,274		42,728	2,374,035	4,505,037	1.29%
Steven L. Mueller	12,482		68,088	21,653	102,223	*
Greg D. Kerley	968,810(1)	25,206	27,288	747,791	1,769,095(1)	*
Mark K. Boling	350,140		18,640	121,754	490,534	*
Gene A. Hammons	16,912		16,083	42,649	75,644	*
Directors and Nominees:						
Lewis E. Epley, Jr.	89,641		4,410	223,016	317,067	*
Robert L. Howard	147,100		4,410	95,016	246,526	*
Vello A. Kuuskraa	44,180		4,410	95,016	143,606	*
Kenneth R. Mourton	336,180(2)		4,410	159,016	499,606(2)	*
Charles E. Scharlau	1,049,172		4,410	273,256	1,326,838	*
All directors, nominees and executive officers as a group (19 persons)	5,812,894	93,075	265,032	4,384,383	10,555,384	3.01%

* Less than one percent of class.

(1) Includes 89,950 shares beneficially owned by Mr. Kerley that have been pledged as security.

(2) Includes 334,595 shares beneficially owned by Mr. Mourton that have been pledged as security.

EQUITY COMPENSATION PLANS

The following table sets forth certain information as of December 31, 2009, concerning outstanding stock options under all of the Company's equity compensation plans, the weighted average exercise price of the outstanding options and the number of shares available for future issuance under the plans:

Plan Category	(a) Number of Shares to be Issued Upon Exercise of Outstanding Options	(b) Weighted-Average Exercise Price of Outstanding Options	(c) Number of Shares Remaining Available for Future Issuance
Equity compensation plans approved by stockholders(1)	5,469,937	\$ 11.92	11,708,270
Equity compensation plans not approved by stockholders(2)	179,296	1.49	
Total	5,649,233	\$ 11.59	11,708,270

(1) Consists of the Southwestern Energy Company 2000 Stock Incentive Plan, and the Southwestern Energy Company 2004 Stock Incentive Plan. Shares remaining available for issuance may be issued under the Southwestern Energy Company 2004 Stock Incentive Plan, which plan provides for grants and awards in the form of stock options, shares of restricted stock, and restricted stock units.

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- (2) Consists of the Southwestern Energy Company 2002 Employee Stock Incentive Plan and equity compensation that was issued to non-executive officers and new employees upon hiring. Grants generally mirrored the 2000 Stock Incentive Plan, but were issued separate and apart from this plan.

**OUR COMPENSATION POLICIES AND PRACTICES
AS RELATED TO OUR RISK MANAGEMENT**

Since 1999, our management has been guided by our formula, which represents the essence of our corporate philosophy and how we operate our business:

Our formula, which stands for The Right People doing the Right Things, wisely investing the cash flow from our underlying Assets will create Value+, also guides our compensation policies and practices. Our compensation policies and practices for our employees are designed to enhance our business by encouraging innovation and new ideas that will create value for every dollar we invest. As an exploration and production company that is focused on organic growth achieved through our own drilling programs, there is a certain level of risk involved in all aspects of our operations, but our compensation is structured to ensure that levels of risk taken by our employees are appropriate.

Total compensation for our employees is structured similarly to that for our NEOs and consists of cash compensation in the form of a base salary and a performance-based annual bonus under our Incentive Compensation Plan; equity incentive compensation in the form of stock option and restricted stock awards under our 2004 Stock Incentive Plan; long-term cash incentive compensation under our Performance Unit Plan; and retirement, health and welfare benefits. However, unlike our NEOs and senior management, for whom incentive compensation is the substantial part of their total compensation, the compensation for most of our employees is weighted towards salary and annual cash bonus. Our hourly employees participate in an annual bonus pool pursuant to which awards are given based upon individual performance as assessed by management, while our salaried employees receive annual cash incentives under our Incentive Compensation Plan based largely upon the achievement of specific performance objectives of the business team and the Company.

The performance objectives under the plan established by our Board of Directors are based upon measures that are designed to control our costs, increase our productivity and efficiency and reduce our overall risk. In connection with the establishment of the annual performance objectives for each business team, we assess whether there have been any changes or if changes are anticipated in the near term that affect our risk profile and, as needed, revise our measures to address any such changes. Although the performance objectives differ for our various business teams, when taken together, all of our performance objectives are intended to address the principal factors that we believe will affect the Company's overall performance. Effective for fiscal year 2010, the performance objectives under our Incentive Compensation Plan for all of our officers of our operating subsidiaries at the level of senior vice president or higher were changed to align with our overall corporate objectives. This change decreases the impact of our compensation policies and practices on risk management as the short-term cash incentive compensation for these executives is no longer directly tied to the performance of the business teams for which they have direct responsibility.

We also provide additional incentive compensation to most of our salaried employees and to our senior management under our 2004 Stock Incentive Plan and our Performance Unit Plan. These long-term incentives are designed to align an employee's compensation with the value created for stockholders and, because they vest over time periods of three to four years, provide an incentive for achieving our long-term performance objectives.

Since the proportion of total compensation that is at risk (i.e., that will vary based on employee, segment, team and Company performance objectives) increases as the scope and level of the employee's decision-making responsibilities

increase, our incentive compensation program may encourage management level employees to take certain risks. However, the Board of Directors takes that fact into consideration through the use of annual and multi-year incentives that are intended to focus management on achieving strong annual results while also pursuing significant multi-year growth. The performance goals set by the Board of Directors are designed to be aggressive

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and challenging but also achievable without inappropriate risk-taking. We actively monitor our compensation policies and practices to determine whether our risk management objectives are being met through the incentives we provide to our employees.

COMPENSATION DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Executive Compensation Philosophy

Our compensation programs are designed and administered with the objectives of attracting, motivating and retaining the experienced and skilled professionals we need to grow our business and create value for our stockholders. The guiding principles of our executive compensation programs are:

Compensation is related to the value created for stockholders. We believe that a significant portion of an employee's compensation should relate to the value created for stockholders and be directly tied to the achievement of financial and non-financial performance goals and objectives and the executive's contribution to such achievement. When we surpass the targeted objectives, our employees should be paid more, and when we fail to achieve one or more key objectives, incentive compensation will be adjusted accordingly, at the Compensation Committee's discretion.

Incentive compensation is a substantial part of total compensation for senior management and balances short- and long-term performance. We believe that the proportion of total compensation that is at risk (i.e., that will vary based on employee, segment, team and Company performance objectives) should increase as the scope and level of the employee's decision-making responsibilities increase. The design of our incentive compensation program is intended to balance the focus of management on achieving strong annual results while also pursuing significant multi-year growth by achieving aggressive and challenging goals. Participation in the long-term incentive programs increases at higher levels of responsibility to reflect the influence that employees occupying leadership roles have on our business strategy. The equity component of long-term incentive compensation is designed to align management's interests with those of our stockholders and provides an incentive for achieving our long-term performance objectives.

Compensation levels are not merely competitive but reflect the complexity of our rapidly growing business and the challenges of retaining executive talent in a climate of high demand. As a rapidly growing mid-sized independent energy company, we strive to retain our executive talent by targeting total executive compensation between the 50th and 75th percentiles of compensation for comparable positions within a select group of mid-sized public, independent energy peer companies similar to us in terms of the complexity of their operations that compete with us for executives. Targeted total executive compensation also reflects the maturity of the executive and the value of his or her expertise in the pursuit of our short- and long-term objectives.

Factors Considered in Determining NEO Total Compensation

Each year the Compensation Committee engages an independent executive compensation consulting firm to provide comparative market data of compensation practices and programs based on analysis of peer competitors, which we refer to collectively as Survey Data, and the Compensation Committee directs our Corporate Affairs staff to conduct certain internal compensation analyses. Since 2002, the Compensation Committee has retained Ernst & Young, LLP (E&Y) as its independent compensation consultant to advise it on all matters related to compensation of our senior management, including our principal executive officer, our CEO and our principal financial officer, the Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (EVP & CFO or CFO). In 2009, in addition to our CEO and CFO, the executives named in the Summary Compensation Table and referred to collectively as our Named Executive Officers, or NEOs, include our Executive Chairman of the Board (who was our Chief Executive Officer until May 19, 2009), Executive Vice President and General Counsel (EVP & General Counsel or General Counsel) and the President of our marketing and gathering subsidiary group (President-Midstream). The analyses performed by us and E&Y include a

peer group analysis, an analysis of all components of the NEOs' compensation, an internal pay equity analysis and, with respect to long-term equity incentives, a wealth accumulation analysis. In addition, the Compensation Committee requires E&Y to provide an objective

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opinion of the appropriateness of the mix of compensation and the total executive compensation levels relative to our executives' responsibilities.

At a meeting generally held in early December, which we refer to as the December Compensation Meeting, the Compensation Committee reviews the compensation of the NEOs and other members of our senior management and makes its compensation determinations for the upcoming fiscal performance cycle at that time. The Compensation Committee bases its decisions on the Survey Data provided by E&Y as well as its assessment of each executive's level of experience, tenure, position and responsibilities and the appropriate competitive pressures for his or her expertise and skills within the industry. The Compensation Committee balances the scope of the responsibilities and experience of the executive against the competitive compensation levels. With respect to compensation determinations for the NEOs other than the CEO, the Compensation Committee also takes into account the recommendations of the CEO based on his evaluation of each individual's contribution and performance over the past year, strengths, weaknesses, development plans and succession potential. The Compensation Committee and CEO jointly discuss the CEO's proposed compensation package as well. Although post-retirement benefits for our NEOs, with the exception of a Supplemental Retirement Plan and a Non-Qualified Plan (each discussed below under Pension and Other Retirement Plans), are provided on the same basis as for other employees and are not taken into consideration in the determination of total compensation, the Compensation Committee also reviews those benefits as well as any perquisites paid to the NEOs at the December Compensation Meeting. Certain aspects of the compensation for our Executive Chairman were determined in August 2009 when we entered into a retirement agreement with him that allowed for the smooth transitioning of the CEO functions. In connection with the negotiation of the retirement agreement, in July 2009, the Board of Directors retained E&Y to conduct a compensation review for the role of executive chairman as compared with the same role at other energy companies. Under the retirement agreement, among other things, our Executive Chairman agreed that the stock-related components of his long-term incentive compensation for 2010 would be awarded based on his continuing role as a director and that he would receive no awards under our Performance Unit Plan, or the PUP Plan. Our Executive Chairman's compensation was not reviewed at the December Compensation Meeting in 2009 as there were no changes made from the prior compensation determinations.

Peer Group Analysis. We target total compensation for our NEOs between the 50th and 75th percentiles of compensation for a select group of companies that are comparable to us in terms of size, complexity and industry, or the Peer Group. The Peer Group is selected by the Compensation Committee with the assistance of E&Y based on a number of factors, including, but not limited to, types of operations, total revenues, market capitalization and number of employees. The Peer Group is utilized to benchmark each component of compensation as well as total compensation for our NEOs, senior management and the Board of Directors and, to the extent applicable, for determinations of awards and performance targets under our compensation plans. The Peer Group utilized for 2009 compensation purposes was determined in December 2008 and was comprised of the following companies: Cabot Oil & Gas Corp., Chesapeake Energy Corp., Cimarex Energy, Denbury Resources, EOG Resources, Inc., Forest Oil Corporation, Newfield Exploration Co., Noble Energy, Inc., Pioneer Natural Resources Co., Range Resources, Inc., Sandridge Energy, St. Mary Land & Exploration Co., Ultra Petroleum Corporation and XTO Energy Inc., collectively, the 2009 Peer Group. The Peer Group utilized for 2010 was the same as for 2009, except in the case of the compensation review conducted in July 2009 for our Executive Chairman, for whom the peer group consisted of the following companies who also employed an executive chairman: Amerigas Partners, Apache, Biofuel Energy, BPC Resources, Encore Acquisition, Gulfport Energy, Oilsands Quest, Patterson UTI Energy, Quicksilver Resources, RPC and Uranium Resources; as applicable, these peer groups are referred to herein as the 2010 Peer Group. The Compensation Committee approved the annual base salaries and incentive award levels for the NEOs for 2009 and 2010 at meetings held on December 11, 2008 and December 13, 2009, respectively. The 2009 actual cash incentive awards for the NEOs were approved by the Compensation Committee on February 23, 2010.

Components of Compensation. The Compensation Committee reviews tally sheets prepared by our Corporate Affairs staff in order to determine whether the level of total compensation for our CEO and the other NEOs is reasonable. The

tally sheets set forth the aggregate amounts and mix of all components including base salary, annual incentive compensation, long-term incentive compensation, accumulated (realized and unrealized) stock option and restricted stock gains, the value to the executive and cost to the Company of all perquisites and other personal

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benefits, the earnings and accumulated obligations under the Company's non-qualified deferred compensation plan, and the actual projected payout obligations under the Company's supplemental executive retirement plan under several potential severance and change-in-control scenarios.

Internal Pay Equity. The Compensation Committee monitors the relationship between the compensation of our executives and the compensation of our non-managerial employees. In addition to considering external market conditions and individual factors when establishing total executive compensation levels, the Compensation Committee views a ten-year historical comparison of the total compensation levels (including salary, cash bonus, long-term incentives and other items of compensation) within our Company between our CEO, our CFO and certain lower paid employees.

Accumulated Wealth Analysis. The Compensation Committee recognizes that past equity grants may have limited ongoing retention value for executives and that retention value is a key attribute of current equity grants. Nonetheless, the Compensation Committee reviews a summary of the future wealth potential of a NEO's prior awards under our stock incentive plans prior to determining long-term equity incentive compensation for that executive. We conduct the analysis utilizing three stock price scenarios to calculate the pre-tax value of the holdings. The Compensation Committee is also provided with summary information regarding each NEO's stock ownership position and exercise and hold behavior.

Tax Deductibility of Compensation Payments. Section 162(m) of the Internal Revenue Code could potentially limit our ability to deduct, for federal income tax purposes, certain compensation in excess of \$1,000,000 per year paid to individuals named in the Summary Compensation Table. In recent years, the Compensation Committee's need for flexibility in designing effective compensation plans to meet our objectives and respond quickly to marketplace needs has typically outweighed our need to maximize the deductibility of compensation payments. Although the Compensation Committee will from time to time review the advisability of making changes in compensation plans to reflect changes in government-mandated policies, it will not do so unless it feels that such changes are in our best interests and those of our stockholders.

Total Compensation and Allocation Among Components

We do not have employment agreements with any of the NEOs and the Compensation Committee of our Board of Directors reviews and determines compensation for the NEOs on an annual basis. The Compensation Committee believes that total compensation for our NEOs should consist of:

- (i) cash compensation in the form of a base salary and a performance-based annual bonus payable under the Southwestern Energy Company Incentive Compensation Plan, as amended (the "Incentive Plan" or "ICP"), which we collectively refer to as "total cash compensation";
- (ii) equity incentive compensation in the form of stock option and restricted stock awards under our 2004 Stock Incentive Plan, (the "Stock Plan");
- (iii) cash incentive compensation under our 2002 Performance Unit Plan, as amended (the "PUP Plan"), which is designed to compensate our NEOs and employees for achieving our long-term performance objectives;
- (iv) retirement, health and welfare benefits; and
- (v) perquisites and perquisite allowance payments.

Total compensation for each NEO is targeted in the range of the 50th and 75th percentiles of total compensation paid to comparably ranked executives in the Peer Group (based on total compensation as set forth in the proxy statements of such companies). Total compensation is determined by evaluating the analysis conducted by, and recommendations of, E&Y, the Compensation Committee's assessment of the executive's overall performance, the short-term strategic value of his expertise and skills and the extent of his decision-making responsibilities and, to the extent applicable, our CEO's recommendations. Consistent with our compensation philosophy that incentive compensation should be the substantial part of total compensation for senior management and balance short- and long-term performance, generally no more than 30% of each executive's compensation package

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is salary and the remainder is at risk and contingent upon company and individual performance. Pursuant to the terms of the retirement agreement we entered into with our Executive Chairman in August 2009, the stock-related components of his long-term incentive compensation for 2010 were awarded based on his continuing role as a director and he received no awards under the PUP Plan. As a result of these changes, his salary is approximately 33% of his 2010 compensation package.

Utilizing the Black-Scholes valuation for stock options, the grant date price for restricted stock and the total cash payout earned in 2009 on the performance units granted in 2006, the total compensation for 2009 of the NEOs is as set forth in the Summary Compensation Table. In the case of each of the NEOs, 2009 total compensation was above the target level that could be earned based on the Compensation Committee's targeted compensation for each position under the relevant performance objectives. Consistent with the Company's compensation philosophy, total compensation for each of the NEOs placed them above the median of competitive total compensation for comparable positions in the 2009 Peer Group.

Utilizing the Black-Scholes valuation for stock options, the grant date price for restricted stock and the target value for performance units, the Compensation Committee established targeted total compensation for 2010 for each of the other NEOs between the 50th and 75th percentile of competitive total compensation for comparably ranked positions in the 2010 Peer Group as follows:

	2010 Targeted Total Compensation
Executive Chairman	\$ 1,818,437
President & CEO	\$ 5,880,635
EVP & CFO	\$ 2,471,614
EVP & General Counsel	\$ 1,840,909
President-Midstream	\$ 1,646,785

The Compensation Committee's determination of targeted total compensation for 2010 for the NEOs reflects the variations in the results of the 2010 Peer Group for the positions benchmarked as well as the compensation philosophies with respect to the individual executive officers. For 2010, the difference in our CEO's compensation as compared to the other NEOs reflects the Compensation Committee's assessment of his increased responsibilities and his individual performance as well as his business impact and perceived retention value. For the other NEOs, targeted total compensation reflects the weighting of a number of factors as they related to each individual's circumstances, including size of salary and bonus opportunity in prior years, the relative weighting between long-term equity and cash compensation, the individual's tenure in his position and performance, the scope and business impact of his position and his retention value, except for our Executive Chairman, whose total targeted compensation reflects the level of compensation established for him based on the peer group analysis conducted in July 2009, including long-term incentive compensation identical to those awarded to our other directors for 2010. The following are the percentiles of the 2010 Peer Group at which the targeted total compensation for our NEOs were set based on comparable positions: our Executive Chairman, 52nd percentile, our CEO, 59th percentile; our EVP & CFO, the 75th percentile; our EVP & General Counsel, 65th percentile; and our President-Midstream, 64th percentile.

Total Cash Compensation

Total cash compensation for each NEO is targeted in the range of the 50th and 75th percentiles of total cash compensation paid to comparable executives in the Peer Group and determined by evaluating the analysis conducted

by, and recommendations of, E&Y, the Compensation Committee's assessment of the NEO's overall performance, the short-term strategic value of his expertise and skills and the extent of his decision-making responsibilities and, to the extent applicable, our CEO's recommendations.

Base Salary. In establishing the base salaries for our NEOs, the Compensation Committee examines the Peer Group analysis prepared by E&Y in order to determine whether base pay, together with total compensation, is competitive with compensation offered by the Peer Group. In addition to the Peer Group analysis, base salaries are determined based upon consideration of each executive's performance, responsibilities, qualifications, experience and skills. The Compensation Committee recognizes that changes in base salary affect other elements of

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compensation including: (i) awards under the Incentive Compensation Plan, (ii) pension benefits, (iii) company matching portions of 401(k) and non-qualified plan contributions and (iv) life insurance and disability benefits. As such, adjustments to base salary are only made after consideration of the impact to the executive's entire package.

At the December Compensation Meeting in 2008, the Compensation Committee increased the 2009 salaries of our NEOs as shown in the Summary Compensation Table after consideration of a number of factors, including, but not limited to the results of the analysis conducted by E&Y with respect to the base salary paid at the 50th and 75th percentiles to comparable positions of the 2009 Peer Group, the objective recommendations of E&Y based on Survey Data, the Compensation Committee's assessment of the executive's overall performance, the short-term strategic value of his expertise and skills to us and the extent of his decision-making responsibilities as well as our CEO's recommendations. On July 16, 2009, our Executive Chairman's salary was decreased from \$725,000 to \$600,000 based on a compensation review conducted by E&Y and the Compensation Committee approved an increase in the 2009 base salary for our CEO from \$480,000 to \$600,000 in connection with his promotion from President and Chief Operating Officer. With respect to 2010 base salaries, other than in the case of our Executive Chairman whose salary was unchanged, the Compensation Committee utilized the same decision-making criteria at the December Compensation Meeting in 2009, establishing the following 2010 base salaries for our NEOs:

	2010 Base Salary
Executive Chairman	\$ 600,000
President & CEO	\$ 720,000
EVP & CFO	\$ 460,000
EVP & General Counsel	\$ 385,000
President - Midstream	\$ 320,000

Incentive Plan. Our Incentive Plan is designed to encourage the achievement of annual (short-term) performance goals by our executives and managers. These goals are designed to increase stockholder value, are determined at the beginning of each annual performance cycle and may be based on (1) production targets, (2) a defined reserve replacement ratio, (3) targeted PVI (which we define as present value added for each dollar of capital invested) on a project or aggregate basis, (4) a targeted return on equity, (5) goals for production, expenses and reserve additions and (6) operational goals in our midstream services business segment, or Midstream. The applicability of each of these criteria in determining awards to any particular executive depends on the Compensation Committee's assessment of the responsibilities of that executive. The Compensation Committee has selected these criteria because they are important indicators of increased stockholder value. The Company sets aggressive performance targets for these criteria and therefore does not publicly disclose the specific objectives. Disclosing specific objectives would provide competitors and other third parties with insights into the Company's planning process and would therefore cause competitive harm.

Although awards under the ICP may be made in cash, restricted shares of common stock, or a combination of cash and restricted shares of common stock, for the last eleven years, the Compensation Committee has determined that all awards under the Incentive Plan would be made in cash. Determinations of the target award levels for each fiscal year are made at the December Compensation Meeting prior to the beginning of the fiscal year in order to coincide with our budget process and the culmination of the performance review process. The performance goals for each fiscal performance cycle under the Incentive Plan are determined once the assessment as to whether the performance objectives have been attained for the prior fiscal performance cycle have been made by the Compensation Committee at a meeting held in February (the February Compensation Meeting). The bonus opportunities under the Incentive Plan vary based on each executive's level of responsibility. A portion of each incentive award is based upon the achievement of the executive's pre-established corporate organizational performance objectives.

During 2009, the corporate performance objectives for our Executive Chairman, CEO, CFO and General Counsel related to (1) production, (2) reserve replacement, (3) PVI and (4) return on equity versus a targeted level. These factors were weighted 27.5%, 27.5%, 30% and 15%, respectively, with a proportionate award opportunity for each performance goal that is met at the pre-established levels. For our CEO, (i) in his former capacity as our President and Chief Operating Officer from January 1, 2009 through May 19, 2009, 75% of his performance

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objectives specifically related to our E&P business and included (1) production, (2) reserve replacement, (3) PVI, (4) controlling expenses (operating and maintenance, or O&M, and direct general and administrative, or G&A, expenses per Mcf) and (5) two components of health, safety and environmental performance (HS&E), which were weighted 30%, 30%, 30%, 5% and 5%, respectively, while the remaining 25% was based upon the overall corporate goals as discussed above for our Executive Chairman, CFO and General Counsel and (ii) for the remainder of 2009, 100% was based upon the overall corporate performance objectives. For our President-Midstream, his performance goals for 2009 specifically related to the performance of midstream operations and included (1) net operating income, 25%, (2) controlling the amount of capital expended for pipe installed by DeSoto Gathering Company, LLC (DeSoto Capital), 20%, (3) controlling G&A expenses and O&M per Mcfe, 20%, (4) maximizing gathering volumes in the Fayetteville Shale area (DeSoto Gathered Volumes), 15%, (5) fuel, lost and unaccounted for gas-DeSoto (DeSoto FL&U), 15% and (6) two components of HS&E, each weighted at 2.5%.

For 2010, our President-Midstream's performance objectives were also changed to the overall corporate performance objectives under the Incentive Plan and the weighting of those measures for him is the same as for our Executive Chairman, CEO, CFO and General Counsel, which remained the same as in 2009 and were as follows: (1) production weighted at 27.5%, (2) reserve replacement weighted at 27.5%, (3) PVI weighted at 30% and (4) return on equity versus a targeted level weighted 15%.

Each participant in the Incentive Compensation Plan is assigned minimum, target and maximum total award levels that are expressed as a percentage of his or her base salary. The target total award is typically benchmarked at the median for cash incentive bonuses of the Peer Group based on the relevant positions. The minimum total target award typically represents one-half of that target while the maximum total award typically represents one and one-half times that target and assumes attainment of maximum performance objectives and the maximum discretionary amount.

If the actual level achieved for a specified corporate performance objective is not at least equal to the predetermined minimum level, then the proportionate amount of the award represented by that performance measure will not be paid. The remaining portion of each award is discretionary based on a subjective evaluation of the executive's individual performance by the Compensation Committee. Due to the discretionary component, the total award at the minimum level can also reach the target level. Additionally, the Compensation Committee may also issue special awards outside of the ICP based upon an executive's performance during the year that could result in a total bonus award above the maximum percentage. Minimum, target and maximum award levels are also subject to adjustment based on internal pay equity considerations among the NEO group and the particular value of an individual NEO to the Company.

The award levels for the NEOs were established at the December Compensation Meeting in 2008. The following table sets forth the minimum, target and maximum incentive award levels for the organizational, discretionary and total annual incentives for 2009 related to the attainment of corporate performance objectives for the NEOs as established by the Compensation Committee as a percentage of base salary:

2009 Annual Incentive Compensation Bonus Percentages

	Organizational Performance			Discretionary			Total		
	Min. (%)	Target (%)	Max. (%)	Min. (%)	Target (%)	Max. (%)	Min. (%)	Target (%)	Max. (%)
Executive Chairman	52.5	105.0	195.0	122.5	70.0	67.5	175.0	175.0	262.5
President & CEO	45.0	90.0	170.0	105.0	60.0	55.0	150.0	150.0	225.0
EVP & CFO	39.0	78.0	145.0	91.0	52.0	50.0	130.0	130.0	195.0
	37.5	75.0	140.0	87.5	50.0	47.5	125.0	125.0	187.5

EVP & General
Counsel

President	Midstream	37.5	75.0	140.0	87.5	50.0	47.5	125.0	125.0	187.5
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At the February Meeting in 2010, the Compensation Committee awarded our NEOs the following bonuses under the ICP, based on the achievement of the applicable performance measures and the exercise of discretion by the Compensation Committee, as well as certain other bonuses outside of the ICP:

	Performance	ICP Discretionary	Total
Executive Chairman	\$ 1,078,416	\$ 460,584	\$ 1,539,000
President & CEO	\$ 750,830	\$ 299,170	\$ 1,050,000
EVP & CFO	\$ 524,207	\$ 222,793	\$ 747,000
EVP & General Counsel	\$ 425,167	\$ 178,833	\$ 604,000
President Midstream	\$ 382,521	\$ 143,479	\$ 526,000

In 2009, with respect to the ICP performance measures for our Executive Chairman, EVP & CFO and General Counsel, the PVI and reserve replacement performance measures were at the maximum performance objectives and production and return on equity were between target and maximum performance levels. For our CEO, his corporate performance measures were the same as our Executive Chairman, EVP & CFO and General Counsel and all of his E&P measures exceeded maximum performance objectives, with the exception of production, which was between target and maximum performance levels. For our President-Midstream, (i) one component of HS&E, net operating income, DeSoto Capital and G&A and O&M per Mcfe were at maximum levels and (ii) DeSoto Gathered Volumes, DeSoto FL&U and the other component of HS&E were between target and maximum levels. The amounts set forth in the table under ICP Performance reflect the amounts earned by the NEOs based on the achievement of the 2009 performance objectives.

In making its determination with respect to discretionary awards under the Incentive Compensation Plan, the Compensation Committee considered management's accomplishments for the year, which included maintaining the strength of the Company's balance sheet in a very difficult commodity price environment, the further building of the Midstream pipelines and related facilities and continuing to significantly strengthen the geological, engineering and operations capability for aggressively developing the Fayetteville Shale project. Based on the Compensation Committee's recognition of the significant and successful efforts of management in building a solid foundation for the future growth and profitability of the Company and in continuing to achieve record levels of production, reserves and cash flow, the Compensation Committee evaluated the ICP calculations based on organizational performance and provided maximum discretionary awards to each of the NEOs as set forth above. The total ICP awards for NEOs were at or near maximum levels that could be achieved at the Board's discretion based on the applicable organizational performance component.

At the December Compensation Meeting in 2009, the Compensation Committee established the following minimum, target and maximum incentive award levels for the organizational, discretionary and total annual incentives for 2010 related to the attainment of corporate performance objectives for the NEOs as a percentage of base salary:

2010 Annual Incentive Compensation Bonus Percentages

	Organizational Performance			Discretionary			Total		
	Min. (%)	Target (%)	Max. (%)	Min. (%)	Target (%)	Max. (%)	Min. (%)	Target (%)	Max. (%)
Executive Chairman	52.5	105.0	195.0	122.5	70.0	67.5	175.0	175.0	262.5

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President & CEO	52.5	105.0	195.0	122.5	70.0	67.5	175.0	175.0	262.5
EVP & CFO	39.0	78.0	145.0	91.0	52.0	50.0	130.0	130.0	195.0
EVP & General Counsel	37.5	75.0	140.0	87.5	50.0	47.5	125.0	125.0	187.5
President Midstream	37.5	75.0	140.0	87.5	50.0	47.5	125.0	125.0	187.5

At the February meeting in 2010, after evaluating the Company's performance relative to performance goals established for 2009, the Compensation Committee established the performance objectives for 2010. The 2010 performance targets take into consideration the anticipated economic recovery as well as the continued uncertainty

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and volatility in the natural gas commodity prices but are nonetheless designed to continue to motivate our NEOs to outperform relative to their peers at other companies. The Compensation Committee believes that, assuming external economic factors remain the same, the minimum performance levels should be achievable with some difficulty, while the target and maximum levels represent relatively more challenging degrees of difficulty.

Long-Term Incentives

The long-term incentives for the NEOs are awarded pursuant to two plans: (1) the Stock Plan and (2) the PUP Plan. Our long-term incentive program is designed to provide incentives for key employees to focus on the long-term strategic goals of our business and to attract and retain key employees through share ownership. In order to achieve these objectives, long-term incentives for each fiscal year are awarded at the December Compensation Meeting prior to the commencement of the fiscal year. Total long-term incentive compensation for the NEOs is calculated in a manner intended to ensure that targeted total compensation for our NEOs is between the 50th and 75th percentiles in the Peer Group based on the relevant positions. As previously stated, it is the Company's policy that salary constitute no more than 30% of each executive's compensation package and the remainder be at risk and contingent upon company and individual performance. The equity component of long-term incentive compensation is designed to align management's interests with those of our stockholders, provides an incentive for achieving our long-term performance objectives and constitutes the major component of at-risk compensation. It is the Compensation Committee's practice to determine the targeted total compensation and the targeted total cash compensation for each NEO and then to determine long-term incentive compensation based on the difference between the targeted total compensation and targeted total cash compensation. The Compensation Committee determines the overall dollar amount of the long-term incentives and then makes the allocations among the three award types: restricted stock, stock options and performance units. Based upon discussions with E&Y, long-term incentive compensation for the NEOs is allocated approximately on a one-third basis between restricted stock, stock options and performance units, with variations attributable to the valuation of the options using the Black-Scholes model and the restricted stock component being based on the grant date stock price. As discussed above, the long-term incentives granted to the NEOs for 2010 resulted in 2010 targeted total compensation for the NEOs that ranged from the 59th to the 75th percentiles of total compensation for comparable positions in the 2010 Peer Group.

Stock Plan and Officer Stock Ownership Guidelines. Under the Stock Plan, the Compensation Committee may grant options to purchase common stock and award shares of restricted stock, restricted stock units and stock appreciation rights, each in such amounts as determined by the Compensation Committee. The Compensation Committee believes that stock options and other equity-based compensation align the interests of executives and other managers with those of our stockholders because the value of such compensation is directly related to appreciation of our stock price. In December 2009, the Board of Directors adopted stock ownership requirements for our executives that require all officers at the senior vice president level and higher to achieve ownership of a number of qualifying shares with a market value equal to a multiple of the executive's applicable base salary within the later of five (5) years after the adoption of the guidelines or three (3) years after first being designated as such an executive. Qualifying shares include stock purchased on the open market, stock obtained through stock option exercises, pursuant to the Company's Employee Stock Purchase Plan or under the Company's 401(k) Plan, restricted stock and restricted stock units, stock beneficially owned in a trust, by a spouse and/or minor children, and 25% of shares of stock that the executive has the right to acquire through the exercise of stock options (whether or not vested). The market value of the qualifying shares each executive is required to own or hold is as follows:

Chief Executive Officer: A multiple of four (4) times the executive's base salary.

Executive Vice Presidents: A multiple of three (3) times the executive's base salary.

Senior Vice Presidents: A multiple of two (2) times the executive's base salary.

We have also implemented a policy that prohibits all employees, including the NEOs, their spouses and members of their household, from hedging the economic risk of ownership of our stock. Specifically, short selling and buying or selling puts, calls or options in respect of our securities are prohibited under our Business Conduct Guidelines. Our Business Conduct Guidelines also prohibit employees, including the NEOs, from engaging in transactions involving our securities when they are in possession of material, non-public information about us or during certain designated black-out periods. It is our policy not to issue stock options during black-out periods

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but it is generally our practice to issue options during such periods to newly hired employees and at the December Compensation Meeting, whether or not employees may be in possession of material, non-public information.

The determinations of our regular annual equity incentive awards are made at the December Compensation Meeting prior to the beginning of the fiscal year in order to coincide with the culmination of our performance review process and the establishment of the other components of compensation for the upcoming fiscal year. At the December Compensation Meetings in 2008 and 2009, the Compensation Committee granted stock options and shares of restricted stock (including related tax gross-ups only in 2008) under the Stock Plan for fiscal years 2009 and 2010, respectively. Commencing with the December Compensation Meeting in 2009, the Company ceased providing tax gross-ups with respect to grants of restricted stock to the NEOs. All stock options given to the NEOs in 2008 and 2009 had an exercise price based on the fair market value (as defined in the Stock Plan) of our common stock on the date prior to the applicable date of grant, had terms of seven years commencing from the grant date and vest over a period of three years from the grant date. All shares of restricted stock given to the NEOs for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 vest over a four-year period from the date of grant. The unvested stock options and restricted stock awards are forfeited upon termination of employment other than a change in control (discussed more fully below), or a termination of employment due to death, disability or retirement at age 65 with at least five (5) years of service with us.

Performance Unit Plan. Our Performance Unit Plan is used to provide long-term cash incentives for our executives and certain employees. The Performance Unit Plan is designed to insure that our long-term strategy is competitive with our peers and that our executives are rewarded with cash for actual long-term performance and not just stock price appreciation. The Plan also complements the equity-based compensation awarded under the Stock Plan by providing additional awards for enhancing our long-term value and mitigating the effect of stockholder dilution. The determinations of performance unit awards are made at the December Compensation Meeting prior to the beginning of the fiscal year in order to coincide with the culmination of our performance review process and the establishment of the other components of compensation for the upcoming fiscal year. Because the Performance Unit Plan is tied to operating performance success metrics over a three-year period, it also provides a supplementary long-term retention component. Actual payout occurs more than three years after the awards are given and is determined by the attainment of certain threshold, target and maximum performance objectives, which pay \$500 per unit at the threshold level, \$1,000 per unit at the target level and \$2,000 per unit at the maximum level, at the end of the three-year period. Performance objectives are calculated weighing three-year total stockholder return versus the Peer Group at the time of the award and a performance measure known as a reserve replacement efficiency ratio (determined by dividing pre-tax operating cash flow by finding and development costs) versus the target and the Peer Group at the time of the award. The assessment as to whether the performance objectives have been attained for the performance units awarded in any given fiscal year are made by the Compensation Committee when the Peer Group results are finalized, approximately three years following the year in which the award was made. At the December Compensation Meetings in 2008 and 2009, the Compensation Committee granted performance units to the NEOs for fiscal years 2009 and 2010, respectively, except in the case of our Executive Chairman, who did not receive any performance units for fiscal year 2010. In March 2010, the Compensation Committee calculated the amounts payable to the NEOs under performance units relating to the three-year period ended December 31, 2009 and authorized the payment of the following amounts: \$1,800,000 for our Executive Chairman; \$700,000 for our CFO; \$534,000 for our EVP & General Counsel; and \$384,000 for our President-Midstream. Our CEO did not receive a PUP payment because he did not have any performance units for this three-year period having only joined the Company in June 2008.

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Total Long-Term Incentives. The total long-term incentive compensation for the NEOs is typically compared to information provided regarding total long-term incentive compensation at the 50th and 75th percentiles in the Peer Group based on the relevant positions. At the December Compensation Meeting in 2008, the Compensation Committee awarded total long-term incentive compensation to our NEOs for 2009, (utilizing the Black-Scholes valuation for stock options, the grant date price for restricted stock and the target value of the performance units), as follows:

	2009 Total Long-Term Incentives			
	Options	Restricted Stock	PUPs	Total
Executive Chairman(1)	\$ 1,479,144	\$ 1,365,755	\$ 1,335,000	\$ 4,179,899
CEO(1)	\$ 748,482	\$ 545,530	\$ 533,000	\$ 1,827,012
EVP & CFO	\$ 498,515	\$ 460,079	\$ 450,000	\$ 1,408,594
EVP & General Counsel	\$ 369,194	\$ 340,835	\$ 333,000	\$ 1,043,029
President Midstream	\$ 332,291	\$ 306,559	\$ 300,000	\$ 938,850

(1) At the time that the 2009 long-term incentives were determined in December 2008, our Executive Chairman was then our CEO and our CEO was then our President & COO.

At the December Compensation Meeting in 2009, the Compensation Committee awarded total long-term incentive compensation to our NEOs for 2010, (utilizing the Black-Scholes valuation for stock options, the grant date price for restricted stock and the target value of the performance units), as follows:

	2010 Total Long-Term Incentives			
	Options	Restricted Stock	PUPs	Total
Executive Chairman(1)	\$ 86,570	\$ 81,867	\$ 0	\$ 168,437
President & CEO	\$ 1,318,668	\$ 1,247,967	\$ 1,334,000	\$ 3,900,635
EVP & CFO	\$ 478,104	\$ 452,510	\$ 483,000	\$ 1,413,614
EVP & General Counsel	\$ 329,667	\$ 311,992	\$ 333,000	\$ 974,659
President Midstream	\$ 313,271	\$ 296,514	\$ 317,000	\$ 926,785

(1) Pursuant to the terms of the retirement agreement we entered into with our Executive Chairman in August 2009, the stock-related components of his long-term incentive compensation for 2010 were awarded based on his continuing role as a director and he received no awards under the PUP Plan.

Health, Welfare and Retirement Benefits

We have competitive health, welfare and retirement programs for our eligible employees. Our NEOs generally are eligible for the benefit programs on the same basis as all other employees. Our health and welfare programs include medical, pharmacy, dental, life insurance and disability. We also offer a charitable gift matching program. The life insurance and disability programs provide higher benefit amounts for our NEOs due to their higher base salaries. Our executives have disability coverage that applies if they are unable to perform in their current occupation while

disability coverage for all other employees applies only if they are unable to perform any occupation. In addition, monthly disability benefits for our officers are capped at \$16,000, as opposed to \$7,500 for all other employees.

We offer retirement programs that are intended to supplement our employees' social security benefits and personal savings. The programs include:

the Southwestern Energy Company 401(k) Savings Plan, or the 401(k) Plan;

a defined benefit plan, or the Pension Plan;

a supplemental retirement plan, or the SERP; and

a non-qualified deferred compensation plan, or the Non-Qualified Plan.

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All employees are generally eligible for the 401(k) Plan and the Pension Plan and the NEOs participate in those plans on the same basis as other employees. The 401(k) Plan allows a participant to elect to contribute a percentage of their eligible compensation, generally salary and wages, to an investment trust. Employee contributions are matched by us 100% for the first 3% of the employee's eligible compensation and 50% for the next 3% and such matching contributions immediately vest. The 401(k) Plan provides a number of different investment options, including our common stock, for which a participant has sole discretion in determining the allocation of their and our contributions among the investment options.

The Internal Revenue Code, or the Code, limits both the amount of compensation that may be used for purposes of calculating a participant's benefit under our Pension Plan and the maximum annual benefit payable to a participant under the Pension Plan. For the 2009 plan year, (i) a participant's compensation in excess of \$245,000 is disregarded for purposes of determining average compensation and (ii) the maximum annual Pension Plan benefit permitted under the Code was \$195,000. Until December 31, 1997, our Pension Plan had benefits payable based upon average final compensation and years of service. Effective January 1, 1998, we amended our Pension Plan to become a cash balance plan on a prospective basis. A cash balance plan provides benefits based upon a fixed percentage of an employee's annual compensation. Eligible officers and employees who were participants in the Pension Plan as of January 1, 1998 are entitled to annual benefits payable upon retirement based upon years of service through December 31, 1997 and average compensation during the five years of highest pay in the last ten years of service before termination.

Under the cash balance provisions of our Pension Plan, each participant has, for recordkeeping purposes only, a hypothetical account to which credits are allocated annually based upon a percentage of the participant's base salary. The applicable percentage is equal to 6% plus an additional percentage for participants in the Pension Plan as of January 1, 1998. The additional percentage is based upon a participant's age and is designed to approximate any lost benefits due to the change to a cash balance plan. The additional percentage is equal to 6.3% for our Executive Chairman and 3.7% for our CFO, who were both participants in the plan as of January 1, 1998. All employee balances in the cash balance account also earn a fixed rate of interest that is credited annually. The interest rate for a particular year is the annual rate of interest of the 30-year treasury securities for November of the prior year with a minimum of 6%. Interest is credited as long as the participant maintains a balance in the Pension Plan. Additional information about the Pension Plan is provided below following the Pension Plan Table.

The SERP allows certain employees at the level of vice president and above to continue to earn pension benefits for retirement once they reach the limits imposed by the Internal Revenue Service. The SERP provides benefits equal to the amount that would be payable under the Pension Plan in the absence of certain limitations of the Code, less the amount actually paid under the Pension Plan. In the event of a change in control as defined under Severance and Other Change in Control Benefits, the benefits of a NEO under the SERP would be determined as if the participant had credit for three additional years of service. The credit of three additional years of service is designed to ensure that the pension benefits in the event of a change in control are consistent with the other change in control arrangements between us and the NEOs. An executive's benefits under the SERP do not vest until the executive has completed three years of service with us and the credit of the additional three years may be utilized to satisfy this requirement. At retirement or termination of employment, the vested amount credited to a participant is payable to the participant in the form of a lump sum or in lifetime monthly payments. The remuneration covered by the Pension Plan and the SERP includes wages and salaries but excludes incentive awards, bonuses and fees. Additional information about the SERP is provided below following the Pension Plan Table.

Our NEOs and other highly compensated employees are also eligible to participate in the Non-Qualified Plan, which allows any participant to defer income and receive a match on the same basis as the 401(k) Plan, subject to the same total cap as for all employees. In addition, participants can defer all or a portion of their annual incentive payments until termination of employment under the Non-Qualified Plan. The Non-Qualified Plan is not considered to be a

funded plan under the rules of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as such participants are deemed to be our general creditors. All amounts deferred in the Non-Qualified Plan increase or decrease based on the investment results of the executive s requested investment alternatives and executives do not earn or accrue above-market or preferential earnings on their accounts. Plan distributions after employment ends are paid out of our funds.

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In August 2009, in order to effect a smooth transition of our CEO functions, we entered into a retirement agreement with our Executive Chairman that provides him with certain limited benefits following his retirement in exchange for his agreement to delay his retirement until March 31, 2010. Because our Executive Chairman had more than five years of service and was age 65 at the time of his retirement, all of his restricted stock and stock options vested and became exercisable as of his retirement date pursuant to the terms of our standard award agreements. Pursuant to the terms of our standard award agreements for options issued on or after December 7, 2005, all of our Executive Chairman's options issued on or after December 7, 2005 will remain exercisable until their respective original expiration dates as set forth in the stock option agreements. Under the terms of the retirement agreement, all of our Executive Chairman's options issued prior to December 7, 2005 will also remain exercisable until their respective original expiration dates. In addition, we have agreed under the retirement agreement to provide our Executive Chairman with fully equipped office space (which office space may be located at a location separate from our Houston headquarters), including computers, telephones, portable communication devices and secretarial and information technology support that are the same as or similar to what we provided as of the date of his retirement for a period of five (5) years following the retirement date. Pursuant to the retirement agreement, our Executive Chairman provided to the Company general releases with respect to claims arising out of his employment, or retirement from employment, with us.

Perquisites, Allowances and Other Benefits

The type and amount of perquisites for our NEOs is reviewed and approved by the Compensation Committee as part of its compensation decision-making. In 2009, the primary perquisites for our NEOs at or above the level of executive vice president (or the president level if the position is held at the subsidiary level) are the payment of dues for one social club designated by us (except in the case of our Executive Chairman who also has an additional membership to a separate social club), a \$7,380 annual car allowance, estate and financial planning expenses for each NEO up to \$18,500 per year, a medical reimbursement plan that covers all out-of-pocket expenses and an annual complete personal physical exam. We pay the fees for one local social club (two in the case of our Executive Chairman) to provide our executives with a forum for business entertainment and for appropriate interaction with members of the business community. We reimburse our NEOs for expenses incurred with respect to estate and financial planning because we believe the utilization of experts will reduce the amount of time our executives will have to devote to those matters while also maximizing the net value of the compensation we provide.

We permit our NEOs and members of senior management to use our corporate aircraft for business-associated personal use on limited occasions. This use typically consists of permitting family members to accompany the executive when traveling for business and is limited to situations where the presence of the family member will not conflict with the business purpose of the travel. We also may permit personal use of the aircraft in very limited situations where, absent such use, the executive's work obligations create a significant and inappropriate imposition on personal plans or obligations. The cost to us of this benefit, if used by a Named Executive Officer, is reflected in All Other Compensation in the Summary Compensation Table.

Finally, we have also entered into indemnity agreements with our senior management, including the NEOs and certain key employees, where we have agreed to indemnify them against all liabilities and losses incurred in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, investigative or other matter involving them in their capacity as our officer, employee, trustee or agent (including a fiduciary) and to pay any amount which they are legally obligated to pay because of any claim or claims made against them because of any act or omission or neglect or breach of duty, including any actual or alleged error or misstatement or misleading statement committed by them or occurring while they are acting in such capacity. Under the indemnity agreements, we have agreed to advance reasonable expenses subject to an undertaking that such advances will promptly be reimbursed if the employee is found not to have been entitled to indemnification. Subject to certain exceptions, for a period of time following termination of service (but in no event longer than four (4) years), we have also agreed to maintain the existing directors' and officers' insurance policies covering our executives for so long as

they shall continue to serve as our director, officer, employee, trustee or agent (including a fiduciary) or as a director, officer, employee, trustee or agent (including a fiduciary) of any subsidiary (or shall continue at our request to serve as a director, officer, employee, trustee or agent (including a fiduciary) of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise).

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Severance and Other Change in Control Benefits

We believe that our senior management and other key employees are the primary reason for our success and that it is important to protect them in the event their employment is terminated in connection with a change in control or they elect in certain circumstances to leave us following a change in control. Therefore, we have entered into a severance agreement with each of our NEOs that entitles them to receive a payment if within three years after a change in control, (i) the executive's employment is terminated without cause or (ii) they voluntarily terminate employment with us for good reason. Cause, when used in connection with the termination of an executive's employment, means (a) a willful and continued failure by the executive substantially to perform his duties and obligations to us (other than any such failure resulting from his disability) that continues after we have given notice thereof or (b) the willful engaging in misconduct which is materially injurious to us. For purposes of this definition, no act, or failure to act, on an executive's part shall be considered willful unless done, or omitted to be done, by the executive in bad faith and without reasonable belief that his action or omission was in our best interests. Good reason includes (i) a reduction in the executive's employment status or responsibilities, (ii) a reduction in the executive's base salary, (iii) a change in the executive's principal work location of more than 40 miles and (iv) certain adverse changes in our incentive or other benefit plans.

The severance agreements do not provide severance benefits outside the context of a change in control. The severance payment for each of the NEOs is equal to the product of 2.99 and the sum of base salary as of the executive's termination date plus the maximum bonus opportunity available to the executive under the Incentive Compensation Plan and we have agreed to make additional payments to our NEOs for any excise taxes imposed as a result of the change in control benefits. In addition, each executive will be entitled to continued participation in certain health and welfare benefits and perquisites from the date of the termination of employment until the earliest of (a) the expiration of three years, (b) death, or (c) the date he is afforded a comparable benefit at comparable cost by a subsequent employer. As previously discussed under Health, Welfare and Retirement Benefits and Perquisites, Allowances and Other Benefits, each officer will also be credited with three additional years of service for pension benefit purposes upon a change in control and will continue to have coverage under our Directors' and Officers' insurance policies for a period of up to four years.

Our various long-term incentive plans and option agreements provide that all outstanding stock options and all rights become exercisable immediately upon a change in control. The plans also provide that all performance units and shares of restricted stock which have not previously vested or been cancelled or forfeited shall vest immediately upon a change in