BLACK HILLS CORP /SD/
Form 10-Q
May 05, 2015

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

Form 10-Q

x QUARTERLY REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
For the quarterly period ended March 31, 2015

OR

o TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
For the transition period from __________ to __________.

Commission File Number 001-31303

Black Hills Corporation
Incorporated in South Dakota IRS Identification Number 46-0458824
625 Ninth Street
Rapid City, South Dakota 57701
Registrant's telephone number (605) 721-1700

Former name, former address, and former fiscal year if changed since last report
NONE

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the Registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.

Yes x No o

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate website, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the Registrant was required to submit and post such files).

Yes x No o

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).

Large accelerated filer x	Accelerated filer o
Non-accelerated filer o	Smaller reporting company o

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).

Yes o No x

Indicate the number of shares outstanding of each of the issuer's classes of common stock as of the latest practicable date.

Class	Outstanding at April 30, 2015	
Common stock, $1.00 par value	44,821,847	shares

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following terms and abbreviations appear in the text of this report and have the definitions described below:

AFUDC	Allowance for Funds Used During Construction
AOCI	Accumulated Other Comprehensive Income (Loss)
ASU	Accounting Standards Update issued by the FASB
Bbl	Barrel
BHC	Black Hills Corporation; the Company
Black Hills Electric Generation	Black Hills Electric Generation, LLC, a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Non-regulated Holdings
Black Hills Energy	The name used to conduct the business of Black Hills Utility Holdings, Inc., and its subsidiaries
Black Hills Non-regulated Holdings	Black Hills Non-regulated Holdings, LLC, a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Corporation
Black Hills Power	Black Hills Power, Inc., a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Corporation
Black Hills Utility Holdings	Black Hills Utility Holdings, Inc., a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Corporation
Black Hills Wyoming	Black Hills Wyoming, LLC, a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Electric Generation
Btu	British thermal unit
Cheyenne Light	Cheyenne Light, Fuel and Power Company, a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Corporation
Cheyenne Prairie	Cheyenne Prairie Generating Station is a 132 MW natural gas-fired generating facility jointly owned by Black Hills Power and Cheyenne Light in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Cheyenne Prairie was placed into commercial service on October 1, 2014.
Colorado Electric	Black Hills Colorado Electric Utility Company, LP (doing business as Black Hills Energy), an indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Utility Holdings
Colorado IPP	Black Hills Colorado IPP, LLC a direct wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Electric Generation
CPCN	Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity
CPUC	Colorado Public Utilities Commission
CVA	Credit Valuation Adjustment
Dodd-Frank	Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act
Dth	Dekatherm. A unit of energy equal to 10 therms or one million British thermal units (MMBtu)
Energy West	Energy West Wyoming, Inc., a subsidiary of Gas Natural, Inc.
FASB	Financial Accounting Standards Board
Fitch	Fitch Ratings
GAAP	Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GCA	Gas Cost Adjustment -- adjustments that allow us to pass the prudently-incurred cost of natural gas and certain services through to customers.
Global Settlement	Settlement with a utilities commission where the dollar figure is agreed upon, but the specific adjustments used by each party to arrive at the figure are not specified in public rate orders.
Heating Degree Day	A heating degree day is equivalent to each degree that the average of the high and the low temperatures for a day is below 65 degrees. The colder the climate, the

	greater the number of heating degree days. Heating degree days are used in the utility industry to measure the relative coldness of weather and to compare relative temperatures between one geographic area and another. Normal degree days are based on the National Weather Service data for selected locations over a 30-year average.
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standards

Iowa Gas	Black Hills Iowa Gas Utility Company, LLC (doing business as Black Hills Energy), a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Utility Holdings
IPP	Independent power producer
IRS	United States Internal Revenue Service
IUB	Iowa Utilities Board
Kansas Gas	Black Hills Kansas Gas Utility Company, LLC (doing business as Black Hills Energy), a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Utility Holdings
KCC	Kansas Corporation Commission
kV	Kilovolt
LIBOR	London Interbank Offered Rate
LOE	Lease Operating Expense
Mcf	Thousand cubic feet
Mcfe	Thousand cubic feet equivalent.
MMBtu	Million British thermal units
Moody’s	Moody’s Investors Service, Inc.
MW	Megawatts
MWh	Megawatt-hours
NGL	Natural Gas Liquids (1 barrel equals 6 Mcfe)
NPSC	Nebraska Public Service Commission
PPA	Power Purchase Agreement
Revolving Credit Facility	Our $500 million credit facility used to fund working capital needs, letters of credit and other corporate purposes, which matures in 2019.
SDPUC	South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
SEC	U. S. Securities and Exchange Commission
S&P	Standard and Poor’s, a division of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.
WPSC	Wyoming Public Service Commission
WRDC	Wyodak Resources Development Corp., a direct, wholly-owned subsidiary of Black Hills Non-regulated Holdings

BLACK HILLS CORPORATION
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF INCOME (LOSS)

(unaudited)	Three Months Ended March 31,	
	2015	2014
	(in thousands, except per share amounts)	
Revenue	$441,987	$460,169
Operating expenses:		
Utilities -		
Fuel, purchased power and cost of natural gas sold	205,327	230,468
Operations and maintenance	71,084	71,227
Non-regulated energy operations and maintenance	22,050	22,332
Depreciation, depletion and amortization	39,586	36,083
Taxes - property, production and severance	11,936	10,336
Other operating expenses	52	125
Total operating expenses	350,035	370,571
Operating income	91,952	89,598
Other income (expense):		
Interest charges -		
Interest expense incurred (including amortization of debt issuance costs, premiums and discounts and realized settlements on interest rate swaps)	(19,910)	(17,860)
Allowance for funds used during construction - borrowed	158	270
Capitalized interest	276	257
Interest income	448	390
Allowance for funds used during construction - equity	56	238
Other income (expense), net	331	592
Total other income (expense), net	(18,641)	(16,113)
Income (loss) before earnings (loss) of unconsolidated subsidiaries and income taxes	73,311	73,485
Equity in earnings (loss) of unconsolidated subsidiaries	(297)	(1)
Income tax benefit (expense)	(25,120)	(25,366)
Net income (loss) available for common stock	$47,894	$48,118
Earnings (loss) per share of common stock:		
Earnings (loss) per share, Basic	$1.08	$1.09
Earnings (loss) per share, Diluted	$1.07	$1.08
Weighted average common shares outstanding:		
Basic	44,541	44,330
Diluted	44,660	44,554
Dividends declared per share of common stock	$0.405	$0.390

The accompanying Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements are an integral part of these Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.

BLACK HILLS CORPORATION
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (LOSS)

(unaudited)	Three Months Ended March 31, 2015	2014
	(in thousands)	
Net income (loss) available for common stock	$47,894	$48,118
Other comprehensive income (loss), net of tax:		
Fair value adjustments on derivatives designated as cash flow hedges (net of tax (expense) benefit of $(1,042) and $1,307 for the three months ended 2015 and 2014, respectively)	1,836	(2,257)
Reclassification adjustments for cash flow hedges settled and included in net income (loss) (net of tax (expense) benefit of $1,254 and $(425) for the three months ended 2015 and 2014, respectively)	(1,241)	780
Benefit plan liability adjustments - net gain (loss) (net of tax (expense) benefit of $15 and $2 for the three months ended 2015 and 2014, respectively)	(27)	(2)
Benefit plan liability adjustments - prior service cost (net of tax (expense) benefit of $(90) for the three months ended 2014	—	164
Reclassification adjustments of benefit plan liability - prior service cost (net of tax (expense) benefit of $19 and $4 for the three months ended 2015 and 2014, respectively)	(36)	(9)
Reclassification adjustments of benefit plan liability - net gain (loss) (net of tax (expense) benefit of $(247) and $(85) for the three months ended 2015 and 2014, respectively)	458	157
Other comprehensive income (loss), net of tax	990	(1,167)
Comprehensive income (loss) available for common stock	$48,884	$46,951

See Note 11 for additional disclosures.

The accompanying Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements are an integral part of these Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.

BLACK HILLS CORPORATION
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS

(unaudited)	As of March 31, 2015	December 31, 2014	March 31, 2014
	(in thousands)		
ASSETS			
Current assets:			
Cash and cash equivalents	$63,385	$21,218	$17,641
Restricted cash and equivalents	2,191	2,056	2
Accounts receivable, net	178,421	189,992	203,625
Materials, supplies and fuel	66,626	91,191	66,187
Derivative assets, current	—	—	1,846
Income tax receivable, net	159	2,053	1,826
Deferred income tax assets, net, current	23,913	48,288	25,780
Regulatory assets, current	56,542	74,396	62,946
Other current assets	47,448	24,842	24,563
Total current assets	438,685	454,036	404,416
Investments	17,210	17,294	16,916
Property, plant and equipment	4,652,058	4,563,400	4,318,194
Less: accumulated depreciation and depletion	(1,351,857)	(1,324,025)	(1,298,398)
Total property, plant and equipment, net	3,300,201	3,239,375	3,019,796
Other assets:			
Goodwill	353,396	353,396	353,396
Intangible assets, net	3,121	3,176	3,342
Regulatory assets, non-current	178,935	183,443	138,173
Other assets, non-current	28,280	29,086	28,925
Total other assets, non-current	563,732	569,101	523,836
TOTAL ASSETS	$4,319,828	$4,279,806	$3,964,964

The accompanying Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements are an integral part of these Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.

BLACK HILLS CORPORATION
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS
(Continued)
(unaudited)

	As of		
	March 31, 2015	December 31, 2014	March 31, 2014
	(in thousands, except share amounts)		
LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY			
Current liabilities:			
Accounts payable	$88,770	$124,139	$149,681
Accrued liabilities	166,781	170,115	145,973
Derivative liabilities, current	3,342	3,340	3,498
Regulatory liabilities, current	17,621	3,687	583
Notes payable	102,600	75,000	100,000
Current maturities of long-term debt	—	275,000	—
Total current liabilities	379,114	651,281	399,735
Long-term debt, net of current maturities	1,542,658	1,267,589	1,396,949
Deferred credits and other liabilities:			
Deferred income tax liabilities, net, non-current	522,290	523,716	466,856
Derivative liabilities, non-current	2,143	2,680	4,805
Regulatory liabilities, non-current	148,918	145,144	116,793
Benefit plan liabilities	162,334	158,966	113,324
Other deferred credits and other liabilities	154,604	154,406	129,083
Total deferred credits and other liabilities	990,289	984,912	830,861
Commitments and contingencies (See Notes 7, 8, 13, 14)			
Stockholders' equity:			
Common stock equity —			
Common stock $1 par value; 100,000,000 shares authorized; issued 44,856,790; 44,714,072; and 44,666,953 shares, respectively	44,857	44,714	44,667
Additional paid-in capital	749,517	748,840	742,016
Retained earnings	629,135	599,389	570,963
Treasury stock, at cost – 33,755; 42,226; and 37,038 shares, respectively	(1,688)	(1,875)	(1,638)
Accumulated other comprehensive income (loss)	(14,054)	(15,044)	(18,589)
Total stockholders' equity	1,407,767	1,376,024	1,337,419
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	$4,319,828	$4,279,806	$3,964,964

The accompanying Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements are an integral part of these Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.

BLACK HILLS CORPORATION
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

(unaudited)	Three Months Ended March 31,	
	2015	2014
Operating activities:	(in thousands)	
Net income (loss) available for common stock	$47,894	$48,118
Adjustments to reconcile net income (loss) to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation, depletion and amortization	39,586	36,083
Deferred financing cost amortization	519	568
Stock compensation	2,083	3,716
Deferred income taxes	22,048	25,953
Employee benefit plans	5,283	3,703
Other adjustments, net	6,748	5,190
Changes in certain operating assets and liabilities:		
Materials, supplies and fuel	25,689	22,291
Accounts receivable, unbilled revenues and other operating assets	47,947	(78,576)
Accounts payable and other operating liabilities	(44,652)	29,074
Other operating activities, net	(1,658)	1,978
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	151,487	98,098
Investing activities:		
Property, plant and equipment additions	(117,523)	(83,609)
Other investing activities	(348)	(3,220)
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	(117,871)	(86,829)
Financing activities:		
Dividends paid on common stock	(18,148)	(17,399)
Common stock issued	999	881
Short-term borrowings - issuances	77,700	86,800
Short-term borrowings - repayments	(50,100)	(69,300)
Other financing activities	(1,900)	(2,451)
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities	8,551	(1,469)
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	42,167	9,800
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of period	21,218	7,841
Cash and cash equivalents, end of period	$63,385	$17,641

See Note 12 for supplemental disclosure of cash flow information.

The accompanying Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements are an integral part of these Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements.

BLACK HILLS CORPORATION

Notes to Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements
(unaudited)
(Reference is made to Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
included in the Company's 2014 Annual Report on Form 10-K)

(1) MANAGEMENT'S STATEMENT

The unaudited Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements included herein have been prepared by Black Hills Corporation (together with our subsidiaries the "Company," "us," "we," or "our"), pursuant to the rules and regulations of the SEC. Certain information and footnote disclosures normally included in financial statements prepared in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America have been condensed or omitted pursuant to such rules and regulations; however, we believe that the footnotes adequately disclose the information presented. These Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements should be read in conjunction with the consolidated financial statements and the notes thereto included in our 2014 Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the SEC.

We conduct our operations through the following reportable segments: Electric Utilities, Gas Utilities, Power Generation, Coal Mining and Oil and Gas. Our reportable segments are based on our method of internal reporting, which generally segregates the strategic business groups due to differences in products, services and regulation. All of our operations and assets are located within the United States.

Accounting methods historically employed require certain estimates as of interim dates. The information furnished in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements reflects all adjustments, including accruals, which are, in the opinion of management, necessary for a fair presentation of the March 31, 2015, December 31, 2014, and March 31, 2014 financial information and are of a normal recurring nature. Certain industries in which we operate are highly seasonal, and revenue from, and certain expenses for, such operations may fluctuate significantly among quarterly periods. Demand for electricity and natural gas is sensitive to seasonal cooling, heating and industrial load requirements, as well as changes in market price. In particular, the normal peak usage season for electric utilities is June through August while the normal peak usage season for gas utilities is November through March. Significant earnings variances can be expected between the Gas Utilities segment's peak and off-peak seasons. Due to this seasonal nature, our results of operations for the three months ended March 31, 2015 and March 31, 2014, and our financial condition as of March 31, 2015, December 31, 2014, and March 31, 2014, are not necessarily indicative of the results of operations and financial condition to be expected as of or for any other period. All earnings per share amounts discussed refer to diluted earnings per share unless otherwise noted.

Recently Issued and Adopted Accounting Standards

We have implemented all new accounting pronouncements that are in effect and may impact our financial statements. We are currently assessing the impact any other new accounting pronouncements that have been issued may have on our financial position, results of operations, or cash flows.

Simplifying the Presentation of Debt Issuance Costs, ASU 2015-03

In April 2015, the FASB issued ASU 2015-03, Simplifying the Presentation of Debt Issuance Costs. Debt issuance costs related to a recognized debt liability will be presented on the balance sheet as a direct deduction from the debt liability, similar to the presentation of debt discounts, rather than as an asset. Amortization of these costs will continue to be reported as interest expense. ASU 2015-03 is effective for annual and interim reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2015. Early adoption is permitted. We are currently evaluating the impact of adoption that ASU

2015-03 will have on our financial position, results of operations, or cash flows.

Revenue from Contracts with Customers, ASU 2014-09

In May 2014, the FASB issued ASU 2014-09, Revenue from Contracts with Customers. The standard provides companies with a single model for use in accounting for revenue arising from contracts with customers and supersedes current revenue recognition guidance, including industry-specific revenue guidance. The core principle of the model is to recognize revenue when control of the goods or services transfers to the customer, as opposed to recognizing revenue when the risks and rewards transfer to the customer under the existing revenue guidance. On April 1, 2015, FASB voted to propose to defer the effective date of ASU 2014-09 by one year. The proposed guidance would be effective for annual and interim reporting periods beginning after December 15, 2017 and early adoption is permitted. We are currently assessing the impact, if any, that ASU 2014-09 will have on our financial position, results of operations or cash flows.

(2) BUSINESS SEGMENT INFORMATION

Segment information and Corporate activities included in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Statements of Income (Loss) were as follows (in thousands):

Three Months Ended March 31, 2015	External Operating Revenue	Inter-company Operating Revenue	Net Income (Loss)
Utilities:			
Electric	$182,974	$3,424	$18,929
Gas	237,651	—	22,212
Non-regulated Energy:			
Power Generation	1,953	20,721	8,145
Coal Mining	8,142	7,792	3,010
Oil and Gas	11,267	—	(5,071)
Corporate activities	—	—	669
Inter-company eliminations	—	(31,937)	—
Total	$441,987	$—	$47,894

Three Months Ended March 31, 2014	External Operating Revenue	Inter-company Operating Revenue	Net Income (Loss)
Utilities:			
Electric	$178,095	$4,007	$14,575
Gas	259,337	—	24,698
Non-regulated Energy:			
Power Generation	1,269	21,079	8,073
Coal Mining	6,618	8,880	2,464
Oil and Gas	14,850	—	(2,022)
Corporate activities	—	—	330
Inter-company eliminations	—	(33,966)	—
Total	$460,169	$—	$48,118

Segment information and Corporate balances included in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets were as follows (in thousands):

Total Assets (net of inter-company eliminations) as of:	March 31, 2015	December 31, 2014	March 31, 2014
Utilities:			
Electric [(a)]	$2,817,423	$2,748,680	$2,572,616
Gas	839,802	906,922	842,660
Non-regulated Energy:			
Power Generation [(a)]	75,945	76,945	90,643
Coal Mining	77,399	74,407	74,523
Oil and Gas	403,657	366,247	295,083
Corporate activities	105,602	106,605	89,439
Total assets	$4,319,828	$4,279,806	$3,964,964

(a) The PPA under which Black Hills Colorado IPP provides generation to support Colorado Electric customers from the Pueblo Airport Generation Station is accounted for as a capital lease. As such, assets owned by our Power Generation segment are recorded at Colorado Electric under accounting for a capital lease.

(3) ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Following is a summary of Accounts receivable, net included in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets (in thousands) as of:

March 31, 2015	Accounts Receivable, Trade	Unbilled Revenue	Less Allowance for Doubtful Accounts	Accounts Receivable, net
Electric Utilities	$53,862	$24,540	$(834)	$77,568
Gas Utilities	63,252	28,785	(1,588)	90,449
Power Generation	1,152	—	—	1,152
Coal Mining	3,638	—	—	3,638
Oil and Gas	4,646	—	(13)	4,633
Corporate	981	—	—	981
Total	$127,531	$53,325	$(2,435)	$178,421

December 31, 2014	Accounts Receivable, Trade	Unbilled Revenue	Less Allowance for Doubtful Accounts	Accounts Receivable, net
Electric Utilities	$59,714	$26,474	$(722)	$85,466
Gas Utilities	47,394	45,546	(781)	92,159
Power Generation	1,369	—	—	1,369
Coal Mining	3,151	—	—	3,151
Oil and Gas	5,305	—	(13)	5,292
Corporate	2,555	—	—	2,555
Total	$119,488	$72,020	$(1,516)	$189,992

March 31, 2014	Accounts Receivable, Trade	Unbilled Revenue	Less Allowance for Doubtful Accounts	Accounts Receivable, net
Electric Utilities	$53,733	$20,063	$(690)	$73,106
Gas Utilities	77,982	35,791	(814)	112,959
Power Generation	1,340	—	—	1,340
Coal Mining	2,616	—	—	2,616
Oil and Gas	10,920	—	(13)	10,907
Corporate	2,697	—	—	2,697
Total	$149,288	$55,854	$(1,517)	$203,625

(4) REGULATORY ACCOUNTING

We had the following regulatory assets and liabilities (in thousands):

	Maximum Amortization (in years)	As of March 31, 2015	As of December 31, 2014	As of March 31, 2014
Regulatory assets				
Deferred energy and fuel cost adjustments - current [(a)] [(d)]	1	$30,833	$23,820	$23,935
Deferred gas cost adjustments [(a)(d)]	2	6,138	37,471	38,505
Gas price derivatives [(a)]	7	21,606	18,740	4,420
AFUDC [(b)]	45	12,114	12,358	12,349
Employee benefit plans [(c)] [(e)]	12	97,700	97,126	65,833
Environmental [(a)]	subject to approval	1,240	1,314	1,317
Asset retirement obligations [(a)]	44	3,237	3,287	3,271
Bond issue cost [(a)]	23	3,240	3,276	3,383
Renewable energy standard adjustment [(a)]	5	5,590	9,622	16,088
Flow through accounting [(c)]	35	26,835	25,887	21,837
Decommissioning costs	10	13,702	12,484	—
Other regulatory assets [(a)]	15	13,242	12,454	10,181
		$235,477	$257,839	$201,119
Regulatory liabilities				
Deferred energy and gas costs [(a)] [(d)]	1	$18,094	$6,496	$6,485
Employee benefit plans [(c)] [(e)]	12	53,151	53,139	34,355
Cost of removal [(a)]	44	81,449	78,249	67,640
Other regulatory liabilities [(c)]	25	13,845	10,947	8,896
		$166,539	$148,831	$117,376

(a) Recovery of costs, but we are not allowed a rate of return.

(b) In addition to recovery of costs, we are allowed a rate of return.

(c) In addition to recovery or repayment of costs, we are allowed a return on a portion of this amount or a reduction in rate base, respectively.

(d) Our deferred energy, fuel cost, and gas cost adjustments represent the cost of electricity and gas delivered to our electric and gas utility customers that is either higher or lower than current rates and will be recovered or refunded in future rates. Fluctuations in deferred gas cost adjustments compared to the same period in the prior year are primarily due to higher natural gas prices driven by demand and market conditions from the peak winter heating season in the first part of 2014. Our electric and gas utilities file periodic quarterly, semi-annual, and/or annual filings to recover these costs based on the respective cost mechanisms approved by their applicable state utility commissions.

(e) Increase compared to March 31, 2014 is due to a decrease in the discount rate and a change in the mortality tables used in employee benefit plan estimates.

(5) MATERIALS, SUPPLIES AND FUEL

The following amounts by major classification are included in Materials, supplies and fuel in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets (in thousands) as of:

	March 31, 2015	December 31, 2014	March 31, 2014
Materials and supplies	$52,429	$49,555	$50,727
Fuel - Electric Utilities	6,780	6,637	7,218
Natural gas in storage held for distribution	7,417	34,999	8,242
Total materials, supplies and fuel	$66,626	$91,191	$66,187

(6) EARNINGS PER SHARE

A reconciliation of share amounts used to compute Earnings (loss) per share in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Statements of Income (loss) is as follows (in thousands):

	Three Months Ended March 31,	
	2015	2014
Net income (loss) available for common stock	$47,894	$48,118
Weighted average shares - basic	44,541	44,330
Dilutive effect of:		
Equity compensation	119	224
Weighted average shares - diluted	44,660	44,554

The following outstanding securities were not included in the computation of diluted earnings per share as their effect would have been anti-dilutive (in thousands):

	Three Months Ended March 31,	
	2015	2014
Equity compensation	107	46
Anti-dilutive shares	107	46

(7) NOTES PAYABLE AND LONG-TERM DEBT

We had the following short-term debt outstanding in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets (in thousands) as of:

	March 31, 2015		December 31, 2014		March 31, 2014	
	Balance Outstanding	Letters of Credit	Balance Outstanding	Letters of Credit	Balance Outstanding	Letters of Credit
Revolving Credit Facility	$102,600	$22,300	$75,000	$35,000	$100,000	$27,700

Revolving Credit Facility

On May 29, 2014, we amended our $500 million corporate Revolving Credit Facility agreement to extend the term through May 29, 2019. This facility is substantially similar to the former agreement, which includes an accordion feature that allows us, with the consent of the administrative agent and issuing agents, to increase the capacity of the facility to $750 million. Borrowings continue to be available under a base rate or various Eurodollar rate options. The interest costs associated with the letters of credit or borrowings and the commitment fee under the Revolving Credit Facility are determined based upon our most favorable Corporate credit rating from S&P and Moody’s for our unsecured debt. Based on our credit ratings, the margins for base rate borrowings, Eurodollar borrowings, and letters of credit were 0.125%, 1.125%, and 1.125%, respectively at March 31, 2015. A commitment fee is charged on the unused amount of the Revolving Credit Facility and was 0.175% based on our credit rating.

Replacement of Corporate Term Loan

On April 13, 2015, we entered into a new $300 million Corporate term loan expiring April 12, 2017. This new term loan replaced the $275 million Corporate term loan due on June 19, 2015. In accordance with the terms of the agreement, the $275 million Corporate term loan is classified as Long-Term Debt as of March 31, 2015. The additional $25 million, less interest and fees, will be used for general corporate purposes. The cost of the borrowing under the new term loan is LIBOR plus a margin of 0.9%. The covenants on the new term loan are substantially the same as the revolving credit facility.

Debt Covenants

Our Revolving Credit Facility and our Term Loan require compliance with the following financial covenant at the end of each quarter:

	As of March 31, 2015	Covenant Requirement	
Recourse Leverage Ratio	55%	Less than	65%

As of March 31, 2015, we were in compliance with this covenant.

(8) RISK MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Our activities in the regulated and non-regulated energy sectors expose us to a number of risks in the normal operation of our businesses. Depending on the activity, we are exposed to varying degrees of market risk and credit risk. To manage and mitigate these identified risks, we have adopted the Black Hills Corporation Risk Policies and Procedures as discussed in our 2014 Annual Report on Form 10-K.

Market Risk

Market risk is the potential loss that might occur as a result of an adverse change in market price or rate. We are exposed to the following market risks including, but not limited to:

- Commodity price risk associated with our natural long position in crude oil and natural gas reserves and production; and our fuel procurement for certain of our gas-fired generation assets; and
- Interest rate risk associated with our variable-rate debt.

Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk of financial loss resulting from non-performance of contractual obligations by a counterparty.

For production and generation activities, we attempt to mitigate our credit exposure by conducting business primarily with high credit quality entities, setting tenor and credit limits commensurate with counterparty financial strength, obtaining master netting agreements, and mitigating credit exposure with less creditworthy counterparties through parental guarantees, prepayments, letters of credit, and other security agreements.

We perform ongoing credit evaluations of our customers and adjust credit limits based upon payment history and the customer's current creditworthiness, as determined by review of their current credit information. We maintain a provision for estimated credit losses based upon historical experience and any specific customer collection issue that is identified.

Our derivative and hedging activities recorded in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets, Condensed Consolidated Statements of Income (Loss) and Condensed Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income (Loss) are detailed below and in Note 9.

Oil and Gas

We produce natural gas, NGLs and crude oil through our exploration and production activities. Our natural long positions, or unhedged open positions, result in commodity price risk and variability to our cash flows.

To mitigate commodity price risk and preserve cash flows, we primarily use exchange traded futures and related options to hedge portions of our crude oil and natural gas production. We elect hedge accounting on these instruments. These transactions were designated at inception as cash flow hedges, documented under accounting standards for derivatives and hedging, and initially met prospective effectiveness testing. Effectiveness of our hedging position is evaluated at least quarterly.

The derivatives were marked to fair value and were recorded as Derivative assets or Derivative liabilities on the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets, net of balance sheet offsetting as permitted by GAAP. The effective portion of the gain or loss on these derivatives for which we have elected cash flow hedge accounting is reported in AOCI in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets and the ineffective portion, if any, is reported in Revenue in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Statements of Income (Loss).

The contract or notional amounts, terms of our commodity derivatives, and the derivative balances for our Oil and Gas segment reflected on the Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets were as follows (dollars in thousands) as of:

	March 31, 2015		December 31, 2014		March 31, 2014	
	Crude Oil Futures, Swaps and Options	Natural Gas Futures and Swaps	Crude Oil Futures, Swaps and Options	Natural Gas Futures and Swaps	Crude Oil Futures, Swaps and Options	Natural Gas Futures and Swaps
Notional [(a)]	305,000	5,367,500	334,500	6,582,500	442,500	8,296,250
Maximum terms in months [(b)]	1	1	1	1	1	1
Derivative assets, current	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—
Derivative assets, non-current	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—
Derivative liabilities, current	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—
Derivative liabilities, non-current	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—

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(a) Crude oil in Bbls, natural gas in MMBtus.

(b) Refers to the tenor of the derivative instrument. Assets and liabilities are classified as current/non-current based on the production month hedged and the corresponding settlement of the derivative instrument.

Based on March 31, 2015, prices a $9.9 million gain would be reclassified from AOCI over the next 12 months. Estimated and actual realized gains or losses will change during future periods as market prices fluctuate.

Utilities

The operations of our utilities, including natural gas sold by our Gas Utilities and natural gas used for Electric Utility generation plants or those plants under PPAs where our Electric Utilities must provide the generation fuel (tolling agreements), expose our utility customers to volatility in natural gas prices. Therefore, as allowed or required by state utility commissions, we have entered into commission approved hedging programs utilizing natural gas futures, options and basis swaps to reduce our customers' underlying exposure to these fluctuations. These transactions are considered derivatives, and in accordance with accounting standards for derivatives and hedging, mark-to-market adjustments are recorded as Derivative assets or Derivative liabilities on the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets, net of balance sheet offsetting as permitted by GAAP. Unrealized and realized gains and losses, as well as option premiums and commissions on these transactions are recorded as Regulatory assets or Regulatory liabilities in the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets in accordance with state commission guidelines. When the related costs are recovered through our rates, the hedging activity is recognized in the Condensed Consolidated Statements of Income (Loss), or the Condensed Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income (Loss).

The contract or notional amounts and terms of the natural gas derivative commodity instruments held at our Utilities were as follows, as of:

	March 31, 2015		December 31, 2014		March 31, 2014	
	Notional (MMBtus)	Maximum Term (months) (a)	Notional (MMBtus)	Maximum Term (months) (a)	Notional (MMBtus)	Maximum Term (months) (a)
Natural gas futures purchased	17,280,000	69	19,370,000	72	16,140,000	80
Natural gas options purchased	1,320,000	12	4,020,000	8	1,320,000	12
Natural gas basis swaps purchased	15,735,000	57	12,005,000	60	14,575,000	69

(a) Term reflects the maximum forward period hedged.

We had the following derivative balances related to the hedges in our Utilities reflected in our Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets as of (in thousands):

	March 31, 2015	December 31, 2014	March 31, 2014
Derivative assets, current	$—	$—	$1,846
Derivative assets, non-current	$—	$—	$—
Derivative liabilities, non-current	$—	$—	$—
Net unrealized (gain) loss included in Regulatory assets or Regulatory liabilities	$21,606	$18,740	$4,420

Financing Activities

We entered into floating-to-fixed interest rate swap agreements to reduce our exposure to interest rate fluctuations associated with our floating rate debt obligations. The contract or notional amounts, terms of our interest rate swaps and the interest rate swaps balances reflected on the Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets were as follows (dollars in thousands) as of:

	March 31, 2015 Interest Rate Swaps [(a)]	December 31, 2014 Interest Rate Swaps [(a)]	March 31, 2014 Interest Rate Swaps [(a)]
Notional	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000
Weighted average fixed interest rate	4.97 %	4.97 %	4.97 %
Maximum terms in years	1.75	2.00	2.75
Derivative liabilities, current	$3,342	$3,340	$3,498
Derivative liabilities, non-current	$2,143	$2,680	$4,805

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(a) These swaps are designated to borrowings on our Revolving Credit Facility, and are priced using three-month LIBOR, matching the floating portion of the related borrowings.

Based on March 31, 2015, market interest rates and balances related to our interest rate swaps, a loss of approximately $3.3 million would be realized, reported in pre-tax earnings and reclassified from AOCI during the next 12 months. Estimated and actual realized gains or losses will change during future periods as market interest rates change.

Cash Flow Hedges

The impacts of cash flow hedges on our Condensed Consolidated Statements of Income (Loss) were as follows (in thousands):

Three Months Ended March 31, 2015

Derivatives in Cash Flow Hedging Relationships	Amount of Gain/(Loss) Recognized in AOCI Derivative (Effective Portion)	Location of Gain/(Loss) Reclassified from AOCI into Income (Effective Portion)	Amount of Reclassified Gain/(Loss) from AOCI into Income (Effective Portion)	Location of Gain/(Loss) Recognized in Income on Derivative (Ineffective Portion)	Amount of Gain/(Loss) Recognized in Income on Derivative (Ineffective Portion)
Interest rate swaps	$(886)	Interest expense	$1,437		$—
Commodity derivatives	3,764	Revenue	(3,932)		—
Total	$2,878		$(2,495)		$—

Three Months Ended March 31, 2014

Derivatives in Cash Flow Hedging Relationships	Amount of Gain/(Loss) Recognized in AOCI Derivative (Effective Portion)	Location of Gain/(Loss) Reclassified from AOCI into Income (Effective Portion)	Amount of Reclassified Gain/(Loss) from AOCI into Income (Effective Portion)	Location of Gain/(Loss) Recognized in Income on Derivative (Ineffective Portion)	Amount of Gain/(Loss) Recognized in Income on Derivative (Ineffective Portion)
Interest rate swaps	$(91)	Interest expense	$(894)		$—
Commodity derivatives	(3,473)	Revenue	(311)		—
Total	$(3,564)		$(1,205)		$—

(9) FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

Derivative Financial Instruments

The accounting guidance for fair value measurements requires certain disclosures about assets and liabilities measured at fair value. This guidance establishes a hierarchical framework for disclosing the observability of the inputs utilized in measuring assets and liabilities at fair value. Assets and liabilities are classified in their entirety based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Our assessment of the significance of a particular input to the fair value measurement requires judgment and may affect the placement within the fair value hierarchy levels. We record transfers, if necessary, between levels at the end of the reporting period for all of our financial instruments. For additional information see Notes 1, 8, 9 and 10 to the Consolidated Financial Statements included in our 2014 Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the SEC.

Transfers into Level 3, if any, occur when significant inputs used to value the derivative instruments become less observable such as a significant decrease in the frequency and volume in which the instrument is traded, negatively impacting the availability of observable pricing inputs. Transfers out of Level 3, if any, occur when the significant inputs become more observable, such as when the time between the valuation date and the delivery date of a transaction becomes shorter, positively impacting the availability of observable pricing inputs.

Valuation Methodologies for Derivatives

Oil and Gas Segment:

- The commodity contracts for our Oil and Gas segment are valued using the market approach and include exchange-traded futures and basis swaps. Fair value was derived using exchange quoted settlement prices from third party brokers for similar instruments as to quantity and timing. The prices are then validated through third-party sources and therefore support Level 2 disclosure.

Utilities Segments:

- The commodity contracts for our Utilities Segments, valued using the market approach, include exchange-traded futures, options and basis swaps (Level 2) for natural gas contracts. For Level 2 assets and liabilities, fair value was derived using broker quotes validated by the Chicago Mercantile Exchange pricing for similar instruments.

Corporate Activities:

- The interest rate swaps are valued using the market approach. We establish fair value by obtaining price quotes directly from the counterparty which are based on the floating three-month LIBOR curve for the term of the contract. The fair value obtained from the counterparty is then validated by utilizing a nationally recognized service that obtains observable inputs to compute fair value for the same instrument. In addition, the fair value for the interest rate swap derivatives includes a CVA component. The CVA considers the fair value of the interest rate swap and the probability of default based on the life of the contract. For the probability of a default component, we utilize observable inputs supporting a Level 2 disclosure by using our credit default spread, if available, or a generic credit default spread curve that takes into account our credit ratings.

Recurring Fair Value Measurements

There have been no significant transfers between Level 1 and Level 2 derivative balances. Amounts included in cash collateral and counterparty netting in the following tables represent the impact of legally enforceable master netting agreements that allow us to settle positive and negative positions, netting of asset and liability positions permitted in accordance with accounting standards for offsetting as well as cash collateral posted with the same counterparties.

The following tables set forth by level within the fair value hierarchy our gross assets and gross liabilities and related offsetting as permitted by GAAP that were accounted for at fair value on a recurring basis for derivative instruments. A discussion of fair value of financial instruments is included in Note 10:

	As of March 31, 2015				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Cash Collateral and Counterparty Netting	Total
	(in thousands)				
Assets:					
Commodity derivatives — Oil and Gas					
Options -- Oil	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—
Basis Swaps -- Oil	—	8,096	—	(8,096)	—
Options -- Gas	—	—	—	—	—
Basis Swaps -- Gas	—	6,526	—	(6,526)	—
Commodity derivatives — Utilities	—	1,184	—	(1,184)	—
Total	$—	$15,806	$—	$(15,806)	$—
Liabilities:					
Commodity derivatives — Oil and Gas					
Options -- Oil	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—
Basis Swaps -- Oil	—	2	—	(2)	—
Options -- Gas	—	—	—	—	—
Basis Swaps -- Gas	—	256	—	(256)	—
Commodity derivatives — Utilities	—	22,002	—	(22,002)	—
Interest rate swaps	—	5,485	—	—	5,485
Total	$—	$27,745	$—	$(22,260)	$5,485

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	As of December 31, 2014				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Cash Collateral and Counterparty Netting	Total
	(in thousands)				
Assets:					
Commodity derivatives — Oil and Gas					
Options -- Oil	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—
Basis Swaps -- Oil	—	8,599	—	(8,599)	—
Options -- Gas	—	—	—	—	—
Basis Swaps -- Gas	—	6,558	—	(6,558)	—
Commodity derivatives —Utilities	—	2,389	—	(2,389)	—
Total	$—	$17,546	$—	$(17,546)	$—
Liabilities:					
Commodity derivatives — Oil and Gas					
Options -- Oil	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—
Basis Swaps -- Oil	—	—	—	—	—
Options -- Gas	—	—	—	—	—
Basis Swaps -- Gas	—	473	—	(473)	—
Commodity derivatives — Utilities	—	19,303	—	(19,303)	—
Interest rate swaps	—	6,020	—	—	6,020
Total	$—	$25,796	$—	$(19,776)	$6,020

	As of March 31, 2014				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Cash Collateral and Counterparty Netting	Total
	(in thousands)				
Assets:					
Commodity derivatives — Oil and Gas					
Options -- Oil	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—
Basis Swaps -- Oil	—	7	—	(7)	—
Options -- Gas	—	—	—	—	—
Basis Swaps -- Gas	—	490	—	(490)	—
Commodity derivatives — Utilities	—	3,226	—	(1,380)	1,846
Total	$—	$3,723	$—	$(1,877)	$1,846
Liabilities:					
Commodity derivatives — Oil and Gas					
Options -- Oil	$—	$—	$—	$—	$—
Basis Swaps -- Oil	—	1,983	—	(1,983)	—
Options -- Gas	—	—	—	—	—
Basis Swaps -- Gas	—	2,114	—	(2,114)	—
Commodity derivatives — Utilities	—	6,919	—	(6,919)	—
Interest rate swaps	—	8,303	—	—	8,303
Total	$—	$19,319	$—	$(11,016)	$8,303

Fair Value Measures by Balance Sheet Classification

As required by accounting standards for derivatives and hedges, fair values within the following tables are presented on a gross basis reflecting the netting of asset and liability positions permitted in accordance with accounting standards for offsetting and under terms of our master netting agreements and the impact of legally enforceable master netting agreements that allow us to settle positive and negative positions; however, the amounts do not include net cash collateral on deposit in margin accounts at March 31, 2015, December 31, 2014, and March 31, 2014, to collateralize certain financial instruments, which are included in Derivative assets and/or Derivative liabilities. Therefore, the balances are not indicative of either our actual credit exposure or net economic exposure. Additionally, the amounts below will not agree with the amounts presented on our Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets, nor will they correspond to the fair value measurements presented in Note 8.

The following tables present the fair value and balance sheet classification of our derivative instruments (in thousands):
As of March 31, 2015

	Balance Sheet Location	Fair Value of Asset Derivatives	Fair Value of Liability Derivatives
Derivatives designated as hedges:			
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — current	$9,989	$—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — non-current	4,633	—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — current	—	126
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	132
Interest rate swaps	Derivative liabilities — current	—	3,342
Interest rate swaps	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	2,143
Total derivatives designated as hedges		$14,622	$5,743
Derivatives not designated as hedges:			
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — current	$—	$—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — non-current	—	—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — current	—	7,530
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	13,288
Total derivatives not designated as hedges		$—	$20,818

As of December 31, 2014

	Balance Sheet Location	Fair Value of Asset Derivatives	Fair Value of Liability Derivatives
Derivatives designated as hedges:			
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — current	$10,391	$—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — non-current	4,766	—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — current	—	185
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	288
Interest rate swaps	Derivative liabilities — current	—	3,340
Interest rate swaps	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	2,680
Total derivatives designated as hedges		$15,157	$6,493
Derivatives not designated as hedges:			

Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — current	$—	$—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — non-current	—	—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — current	—	8,032
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	8,882
Total derivatives not designated as hedges		$—	$16,914

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As of March 31, 2014

	Balance Sheet Location	Fair Value of Asset Derivatives	Fair Value of Liability Derivatives
Derivatives designated as hedges:			
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — current	$30	$—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — non-current	466	—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — current	—	3,187
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	910
Interest rate swaps	Derivative liabilities — current	—	3,498
Interest rate swaps	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	4,805
Total derivatives designated as hedges		$496	$12,400
Derivatives not designated as hedges:			
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — current	$1,846	$—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative assets — non-current	—	—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — current	—	—
Commodity derivatives	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	5,539
Interest rate swaps	Derivative liabilities — current	—	—
Interest rate swaps	Derivative liabilities — non-current	—	—
Total derivatives not designated as hedges		$1,846	$5,539

(10) FAIR VALUE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The estimated fair values of our financial instruments, excluding derivatives which are presented in Note 9, were as follows (in thousands) as of:

	March 31, 2015		December 31, 2014		March 31, 2014	
	Carrying Amount	Fair Value	Carrying Amount	Fair Value	Carrying Amount	Fair Value
Cash and cash equivalents [(a)]	$63,385	$63,385	$21,218	$21,218	$17,641	$17,641
Restricted cash and equivalents [(a)]	$2,191	$2,191	$2,056	$2,056	$2	$2
Notes payable [(a)]	$102,600	$102,600	$75,000	$75,000	$100,000	$100,000
Long-term debt, including current maturities [(b)]	$1,542,658	$1,767,113	$1,542,589	$1,734,555	$1,396,949	$1,541,727

(a) Carrying value approximates fair value due to either the short-term length of maturity or variable interest rates that approximate prevailing market rates, and therefore is classified in Level 1 in the fair value hierarchy.

(b) Long-term debt is valued based on observable inputs available either directly or indirectly for similar liabilities in active markets and therefore is classified in Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy.

(11) OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (LOSS)

The components of the reclassification adjustments, net of tax, included in Other Comprehensive Income (Loss) for the periods were as follows (in thousands):

	Location on the Condensed Consolidated Statements of Income (Loss)	Amount Reclassified from AOCI Three Months Ended March 31, 2015	March 31, 2014
Gains (losses) on cash flow hedges:			
Interest rate swaps	Interest expense	$1,437	$894
Commodity contracts	Revenue	(3,932)	311
		(2,495)	1,205
Income tax	Income tax benefit (expense)	1,254	(425)
Reclassification adjustments related to cash flow hedges, net of tax		$(1,241)	$780
Amortization of defined benefit plans:			
Prior service cost	Utilities - Operations and maintenance	$(27)	$(25)
	Non-regulated energy operations and maintenance	(28)	12
Actuarial gain (loss)	Utilities - Operations and maintenance	454	157
	Non-regulated energy operations and maintenance	251	85
		650	229
Income tax	Income tax benefit (expense)	(228)	(81)
		$422	$148

Reclassification adjustments related to defined benefit plans, net of tax

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Balances by classification included within Accumulated other comprehensive income (loss) on the accompanying Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets are as follows (in thousands):

	Derivatives Designated as Cash Flow Hedges	Employee Benefit Plans	Total
Balance as of December 31, 2013	$(7,133)	$(10,289)	$(17,422)
Other comprehensive income (loss), net of tax	(1,478)	311	(1,167)
Balance as of March 31, 2014	$(8,611)	$(9,978)	$(18,589)
Balance as of December 31, 2014	$5,093	$(20,137)	$(15,044)
Other comprehensive income (loss), net of tax	595	395	990
Balance as of March 31, 2015	$5,688	$(19,742)	$(14,054)

(12) SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE OF CASH FLOW INFORMATION

Three months ended	March 31, 2015	March 31, 2014
	(in thousands)	
Non-cash investing and financing activities from continuing operations—		
Property, plant and equipment acquired with accrued liabilities	$33,534	$40,939
Increase (decrease) in capitalized assets associated with asset retirement obligations	$—	$(2,785)
Cash (paid) refunded during the period for continuing operations—		
Interest (net of amounts capitalized)	$(10,909)	$(11,452)
Income taxes, net	$(2)	$4

(13) EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS

Defined Benefit Pension Plans

The components of net periodic benefit cost for the Defined Benefit Pension Plans were as follows (in thousands):

	Three Months Ended March 31,	
	2015	2014
Service cost	$1,494	$1,362
Interest cost	3,880	3,963
Expected return on plan assets	(4,867)	(4,516)
Prior service cost	15	16
Net loss (gain)	2,759	1,201
Net periodic benefit cost	$3,281	$2,026

Defined Benefit Postretirement Healthcare Plans

The components of net periodic benefit cost for the Defined Benefit Postretirement Healthcare Plans were as follows (in thousands):

	Three Months Ended March 31,	
	2015	2014
Service cost	$464	$425
Interest cost	450	479
Expected return on plan assets	(33)	(21)
Prior service cost (benefit)	(107)	(107)
Net loss (gain)	102	40
Net periodic benefit cost	$876	$816

Supplemental Non-qualified Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution Plans

The components of net periodic benefit cost for the Supplemental Non-qualified Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution Plans were as follows (in thousands):

	Three Months Ended March 31,	
	2015	2014
Service cost	$491	$374
Interest cost	364	362
Prior service cost	1	1
Net loss (gain)	270	124
Net periodic benefit cost	$1,126	$861

Contributions

We anticipate that we will make contributions to the benefit plans during 2015 and 2016. Contributions to the Defined Benefit Pension Plans are cash contributions made directly to the Pension Plan Trust accounts. Contributions to the Healthcare and Supplemental Plan are made in the form of benefit payments. Contributions and anticipated contributions are as follows (in thousands):

	Contributions Made	Additional Contributions	Contributions
	Three Months Ended March 31, 2015	Anticipated for 2015	Anticipated for 2016
Defined Benefit Pension Plans	$—	$10,200	$10,200
Non-pension Defined Benefit Postretirement Healthcare Plans	$939	$2,816	$4,026
Supplemental Non-qualified Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution Plans	$372	$1,115	$1,544

(14) COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

There have been no significant changes to commitments and contingencies from those previously disclosed in Note 18 of our Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements in our 2014 Annual Report on Form 10-K except for those described below.

Oil Creek Fire

On June 29, 2012, a forest and grassland fire occurred in the western Black Hills of Wyoming. A fire investigator retained by the Weston County Fire Protection District concluded that the fire was caused by the failure of a transmission structure owned, operated and maintained by Black Hills Power. On April 16, 2013, a large group of private landowners filed suit in the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming. There are approximately 36 Plaintiff groups (including property jointly owned by multiple family members or entities), or approximately 73 individually named private plaintiffs. In addition, the State of Wyoming has intervened in the lawsuit. Both the private landowners and the State of Wyoming assert claims for damages against Black Hills Power. The claims include allegations of negligence, negligence per se, common law nuisance and trespass. In addition to claims for compensatory damages, the lawsuit seeks recovery of punitive damages. We have denied and will vigorously defend all claims arising out of the fire. We cannot predict the outcome of expert investigation, the viability of alleged claims or the outcome of the litigation.

Civil litigation of this kind, however, is likely to lead to settlement negotiations, including negotiations prompted by pre-trial civil court procedures. We believe such negotiations would effect a settlement of all claims. Regardless of whether the litigation is determined at trial or through settlement, we expect to incur significant investigation, legal and expert services expenses associated with the litigation. We maintain insurance coverage to limit our exposure to losses due to civil liability claims, and related litigation expense, and we will pursue recoveries to the maximum extent available under the policies. The deductible applicable to some types of claims arising out of this fire is $1.0 million. Based upon information currently available, we believe that a loss associated with settlement of pending claims is probable. Accordingly, we recorded a loss contingency liability related to these claims and we recorded a receivable for costs we believe are reimbursable and probable of recovery under our insurance coverage. Both of these entries reflect our reasonable estimate of probable future litigation expense and settlement costs; we did not base these contingencies on any determination that it is probable we would be found liable for these claims were they to be litigated.

Given the uncertainty of litigation, however, a loss related to the fire, the litigation and related claims in excess of the loss we have determined to be probable is reasonably possible. We cannot reasonably estimate the amount of such possible loss because expert investigations and our review of damage claim documentation are ongoing, and there are significant factual and legal issues to be resolved. Further claims may be presented by these claimants and other parties. We have received claims seeking recovery for fire suppression, reclamation and rehabilitation costs, damage to fencing and other personal property, alleged injury to timber, grass or hay, livestock and related operations, and diminished value of real estate. Based on the legal standard for measuring damages that we believe applies to this matter, we estimate the current total claims to be approximately $55 million; however the actual amount of allowed claims and any loss will depend on the resolution of certain factual and legal issues. We are not yet able to reasonably estimate the amount of any reasonable possible losses in excess of the amount we have accrued. Based upon information currently available, however, management does not expect the outcome of the claims to have a material adverse effect upon our consolidated financial condition, results of operations or cash flows.

Dividend Restrictions

Our Revolving Credit Facility and other debt obligations contain restrictions on the payment of cash dividends upon a default or event of default. As of March 31, 2015, we were in compliance with the debt covenants.

Due to our holding company structure, substantially all of our operating cash flows are provided by dividends paid or distributions made by our subsidiaries. The cash to pay dividends to our stockholders is derived from these cash flows. As a result, certain statutory limitations or regulatory or financing agreements could affect the levels of distributions allowed to be made by our subsidiaries. The following restrictions on distributions from our subsidiaries existed at March 31, 2015:

- Our utilities are generally limited to the amount of dividends allowed to be paid to us as a utility holding company under the Federal Power Act and settlement agreements with state regulatory jurisdictions. As of March 31, 2015, the restricted net assets at our Utilities Group were approximately $338 million.

ITEM 2. MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL CONDITION AND RESULTS OF OPERATIONS

We are a growth-oriented, vertically-integrated energy company operating principally in the United States with two major business groups — Utilities and Non-regulated Energy. We report our business groups in the following financial segments:

Business Group	Financial Segment
Utilities	Electric Utilities Gas Utilities
Non-regulated Energy	Power Generation Coal Mining Oil and Gas

Our Utilities Group consists of our Electric and Gas Utilities segments. Our Electric Utilities segment generates, transmits and distributes electricity to approximately 205,400 customers in South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado and Montana; and also distributes natural gas to approximately 36,000 Cheyenne Light customers in Wyoming. Our Gas Utilities serve approximately 543,200 natural gas customers in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska. Our Non-regulated Energy Group consists of our Power Generation, Coal Mining and Oil and Gas segments. Our Power Generation segment produces electric power from our generating plants and sells the electric capacity and energy principally to our utilities under long-term contracts. Our Coal Mining segment produces coal at our coal mine near Gillette, Wyoming and sells the coal primarily to on-site, mine-mouth power generation facilities. Our Oil and Gas segment engages in exploration, development and production of crude oil and natural gas, primarily in the Rocky Mountain region.

Certain industries in which we operate are highly seasonal, and revenue from, and certain expenses for, such operations may fluctuate significantly among quarterly periods. Demand for electricity and natural gas is sensitive to seasonal cooling, heating and industrial load requirements, as well as changes in market prices. In particular, the normal peak usage season for electric utilities is June through August while the normal peak usage season for gas utilities is November through March. Significant earnings variances can be expected between the Gas Utilities segment's peak and off-peak seasons. Due to this seasonal nature, our results of operations for the three months ended March 31, 2015 and 2014, and our financial condition as of March 31, 2015, December 31, 2014 and March 31, 2014, are not necessarily indicative of the results of operations and financial condition to be expected as of or for any other period or for the entire year.
See Forward-Looking Information in the Liquidity and Capital Resources section of this Item 2, beginning on Page 53.

The following business group and segment information does not include inter-company eliminations. Minor differences in amounts may result due to rounding. All amounts are presented on a pre-tax basis unless otherwise indicated.

Results of Operations

Executive Summary, Significant Events and Overview

Three Months Ended March 31, 2015 Compared to Three Months Ended March 31, 2014. Net income (loss) for the three months ended March 31, 2015 was $48 million, or $1.07 per share, compared to Net income (loss) of $48 million, or $1.08 per share, reported for the same period in 2014.

The following table summarizes select financial results by operating segment and details significant items (in thousands):

	Three Months Ended March 31,		
	2015	2014	Variance
Revenue			
Utilities	$424,049	$441,439	$(17,390)
Non-regulated Energy	49,875	52,696	(2,821)
Inter-company eliminations	(31,937)	(33,966)	2,029
	$441,987	$460,169	$(18,182)
Net income (loss)			
Electric Utilities	$18,929	$14,575	$4,354
Gas Utilities	22,212	24,698	(2,486)
Utilities	41,141	39,273	1,868
Power Generation	8,145	8,073	72
Coal Mining	3,010	2,464	546
Oil and Gas	(5,071)	(2,022)	(3,049)
Non-regulated Energy	6,084	8,515	(2,431)
Corporate activities and eliminations	669	330	339
Net income (loss)	$47,894	$48,118	$(224)

Overview of Business Segments and Corporate Activity

Utilities Group

- Gas Utilities experienced milder weather during the three months ended March 31, 2015 compared to the three months ended March 31, 2014. Heating degree days were 9% lower for the three months ended March 31, 2015, compared to the same period in 2014. Heating degree days for the three months ended March 31, 2015 were 4% higher than normal, compared to 14% higher than normal for the same period in 2014.

- On April 15, 2015, we filed a request for approval with the WPSC of our $17 million purchase agreement to acquire Energy West, Wyoming, a deal previously announced on October 14, 2014. Energy West is a gas utility serving approximately 6,700 customers, in Cody, Ralston, and Meeteetse, Wyoming. The purchase also includes a 30 mile gas transmission pipeline and a 42 mile gas gathering pipeline, both located near the utility service territory. A hearing is scheduled with the WPSC on May 14, 2015. We have requested approval from the WPSC to close on the acquisition on June 1, 2015.

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On March 16, 2015, we announced plans to build a new corporate headquarters in Rapid City that will consolidate our approximately 500 employees in Rapid City from five locations into one. The investment in the new corporate headquarters will be approximately $70 million and will support all our businesses. The cost of the facility will replace existing expenses of our five facilities throughout Rapid City. Construction will begin in the second quarter of 2015 with completion expected in 2017.

- On March 2, 2015, the SDPUC issued an order approving a rate stipulation and agreement authorizing an annual electric revenue increase for Black Hills Power of $6.9 million. The agreement was a Global Settlement and did not stipulate return on equity and capital structure. The SDPUC's decision provides Black Hills Power a return on its investment in Cheyenne Prairie and associated infrastructure, and provides recovery of its share of operating expenses for this natural gas fired facility. Black Hills Power implemented interim rates on October 1, 2014, coinciding with Cheyenne Prairie's commercial operation date. Final rates were approved on April 1, 2015, effective October 1, 2014.

- In January 2015, Colorado Electric implemented new rates in accordance with the CPUC approval received on December 19, 2014 for an annual electric revenue increase of $3.1 million. The approval also allowed a 9.83% return on equity and a capital structure of 49.83% equity and 50.17% debt, as well as approving implementation of a construction financing rider. This approval allows Colorado Electric to recover increased operating expenses and infrastructure investments, including those for the Busch Ranch Wind Farm, placed in service late 2012. The implementation of the rider also allows Colorado Electric to recover a return on the construction costs for a $65 million natural gas-fired combustion turbine that will replace the retired W.N. Clark power plant.

- In January 2015, Kansas Gas implemented new base rates in accordance with the rate request approval received on December 16, 2014 from the KCC to increase base rates by $5.2 million. This increase in base rates allows Kansas Gas to recover infrastructure and increased operating costs.

- On July 22, 2014, Black Hills Power filed a CPCN with the WPSC to construct the Wyoming portion of a $54 million, 230-kV, 144 mile-long transmission line that would connect the Teckla Substation in northeast Wyoming, to the Lange Substation near Rapid City, South Dakota. We are awaiting approval of the CPCN from the WPSC. Black Hills Power received approval on November 6, 2014 from the SDPUC for a permit to construct the South Dakota portion of this line. Assuming timely receipt of remaining approvals, Black Hills Power plans to commence construction in the third quarter of 2015.

- On May 5, 2014, Colorado Electric issued an all-source generation request, including up to 60 megawatts of eligible renewable energy resources to serve its customers in southern Colorado. Our power generation segment submitted solar and wind bids in response to the request. An independent evaluator submitted a report to the CPUC confirming the ranking of the bids. On February 27, 2015 the Commission determined that none of the renewable bids were cost effective. Colorado Electric submitted a request for reconsideration on March 19, 2015. On April 16, 2015, the Commission deliberated these requests filed by the company and various parties to the initial decision. The Commission declined to change its decision. In their written order, the commission noted precedent allowing utilities to secure new bid pricing. Colorado Electric, at it's discretion, has sixty days to renegotiate bids and submit a revised contract or contacts for approval. Colorado Electric is currently reviewing its options.

Non-regulated Energy Group

- Our Oil and Gas segment was impacted by lower commodity prices for crude oil and natural gas for the three months ended March 31, 2015 compared to the same period in 2014. The average hedged price received for natural gas decreased by 34% for the three months ended March 31, 2015 compared to the same period in 2014. The average hedged price received for oil decreased by 26% for the three months ended March 31, 2015 compared to the same period in 2014. Oil and Gas production volumes increased 23% for the three months ended March 31, 2015 compared to the same period in 2014.

- We review the carrying value of our natural gas and oil properties under the full cost accounting rules of the SEC on a quarterly basis, known as a ceiling test. We did not record a ceiling test impairment for the three months ended March 31, 2015. However, using our current reserves information, a ceiling impairment charge could occur in 2015 if commodity prices for crude oil and natural gas remain at current low levels.

- Our southern Piceance Basin drilling program continued with three Mancos Shale wells placed on production (one in January 2015 and two in February 2015). Production results to date from these wells have been favorable, and exceeded our expectations.

- Our Oil and Gas segment contracted for two additional drilling rigs to support drilling operations in the southern Piceance Basin. Drilling operations are ongoing for 10 additional horizontal wells on three separate surface pads. Due to the partial carryover of 2014 planned Mancos and other drilling capital to 2015, and the addition of one more Mancos well to the 2015 drilling plan, we have increased our planned 2015 capital expenditures to $167 million from $123 million.

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Corporate Activities

- On April 13, 2015, we entered into a new $300 million unsecured term loan. The loan has a two-year term with a maturity date of April 12, 2017. Proceeds of the term note were used to repay the existing $275 million term note due June 19, 2015.

Operating Results

A discussion of operating results from our segments and Corporate activities follows.

Utilities Group

We report two segments within the Utilities Group: Electric Utilities and Gas Utilities. The Electric Utilities segment includes the regulated electric operations of Black Hills Power, Colorado Electric and the regulated electric and natural gas operations of Cheyenne Light. The Gas Utilities segment includes the regulated natural gas utility operations of Black Hills Energy in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska.

Non-GAAP Financial Measure

The following discussion includes financial information prepared in accordance with GAAP, as well as another financial measure, gross margin, that is considered a "non-GAAP financial measure." Generally, a non-GAAP financial measure is a numerical measure of a company's financial performance, financial position or cash flows that excludes (or includes) amounts that are included in (or excluded from) the most directly comparable measure calculated and presented in accordance with GAAP. Gross margin (revenue less cost of sales) is a non-GAAP financial measure due to the exclusion of depreciation from the measure. The presentation of gross margin is intended to supplement investors' understanding of our operating performance.

Gross margin for our Electric Utilities is calculated as operating revenue less cost of fuel, purchased power and cost of natural gas sold to the gas utility customers of Cheyenne Light. Gross margin for our Gas Utilities is calculated as operating revenues less cost of natural gas sold. Our gross margin is impacted by the fluctuations in power purchases and natural gas and other fuel supply costs. However, while these fluctuating costs impact gross margin as a percentage of revenue, they only impact total gross margin if the costs cannot be passed through to our customers.

Our gross margin measure may not be comparable to other companies' gross margin measure. Furthermore, this measure is not intended to replace operating income as determined in accordance with GAAP as an indicator of operating performance.

Electric Utilities

	Three Months Ended March 31,		
	2015	2014	Variance
	(in thousands)		
Revenue — electric	$169,917		