

**UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

Washington, D.C. 20549

Form 8-K

**CURRENT REPORT
PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE
SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported) **March 18, 2016**

Black Hills Corporation

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

South Dakota

(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation)

001-31303

(Commission File Number)

46-0458824

(IRS Employer Identification No.)

625 Ninth Street

Rapid City, South Dakota

(Address of principal executive offices)

57709-1400

(Zip Code)

605-721-1700

(Registrants telephone number, indicating area code)

Not Applicable

(Former name or former address, if changed since last report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions (see General Instruction A.2. below):

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- Soliciting materials pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(d))
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Item 1.01 Entry into a Material Definitive Agreement.

On March 18, 2016, Black Hills Corporation, a South Dakota corporation (the “Company”), entered into an Equity Distribution Sales Agreement (the “Sales Agreement”) with Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated, Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC and Mitsubishi UFJ Securities (USA), Inc. (collectively, the “Agents”) to sell shares (the “ATM Shares”) of Common Stock having an aggregate gross sales price of up to \$200,000,000, from time to time, through an “at-the-market” equity offering program (the “ATM Program”).

The sales, if any, of the ATM Shares, may be made in sales deemed to be “at-the-market offerings” as defined in Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, including by sales made directly on or through the New York Stock Exchange, or another market for the Company’s common stock, sales made to or through a market maker other than on an exchange or otherwise, in negotiated transactions at market prices prevailing at the time of sale or at negotiated prices, or as otherwise agreed with the applicable Agent. The Sales Agreement provides for the Company to submit orders to only one Agent relating to the sale of ATM Shares on any given day. Subject to the terms and conditions of the Sales Agreement, the Agents will use their commercially reasonable efforts to sell on the Company’s behalf all of the designated ATM Shares. The Sales Agreement provides for the Company to pay the Agents a commission of up to 2% of the gross sales price per share sold through them as agent under the Sales Agreement. The Company may also sell ATM Shares under the Sales Agreement to one or more of the Agents, as principal for their own accounts, at a price per share agreed upon at the time of sale. Actual sales will depend on a variety of factors to be determined by the Company from time to time. The Company has no obligation to sell any of the ATM Shares under the Sales Agreement, and may at any time suspend solicitation and offers under the Sales Agreement.

The Sales Agreement contains representations and warranties and covenants that are customary for transactions of this type. In addition, the Company has agreed to indemnify the Agents against certain liabilities on customary terms. Some of the Agents and their affiliates have engaged in, and may in the future engage in, investment banking and other commercial dealings, including but not limited to commercial lending services, with the Company, its direct or indirect subsidiaries or its affiliates. They have received, or may in the future receive, customary fees and commissions for these transactions.

The Company intends to use the net proceeds, if any, from the ATM Program for working capital and general corporate purposes, which may include, among other things, capital expenditures, acquisitions, investments, other business opportunities and repayment or refinancing of outstanding debt.

The ATM Shares will be offered and sold pursuant to the Company's Registration Statement on Form S-3 (Registration No. 333-197895) (as amended, the "Registration Statement"), which became effective upon filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the related Prospectus dated November 16, 2015 and the Prospectus Supplement, dated March 18, 2016. Copies of the Sales Agreement and an opinion related to the ATM Shares are attached hereto as exhibits and are expressly incorporated by reference herein and into the Registration Statement. The foregoing description of the terms of the Sales Agreement is qualified in its entirety by reference to the actual terms of the Sales Agreement, which is filed as Exhibit 1.1 attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

1

Item 9.01 Financial Statements and Exhibits.

(d) Exhibits

The following exhibits are being filed herewith:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Exhibit</u>
1.1	Equity Distribution Sales Agreement dated March 18, 2016 among Black Hills Corporation and the several Agents named therein.
5.1	Opinion of Steven J. Helmers, Esq.
23.1	Consent of Steven J. Helmers, Esq. (included in Exhibit 5.1).

2

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

BLACK HILLS CORPORATION

By: /s/ Richard W. Kinzley
Richard W. Kinzley
Senior Vice President
and Chief Financial Officer

Date: March 18, 2016

3

Exhibit Index

<u>Exhibit No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
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4

Black Hills Corporation

Common Stock
(\$1.00 par value)

EQUITY DISTRIBUTION SALES AGREEMENT

March 18, 2016

Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith
Incorporated
Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC
Mitsubishi UFJ Securities (USA), Inc.

c/o Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith
Incorporated
One Bryant Park
New York, New York 10036

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Black Hills Corporation, a South Dakota corporation (the “Company”), proposes, subject to the terms and conditions stated herein, to issue and sell from time to time to or through Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated, Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC or Mitsubishi UFJ Securities (USA), Inc., as sales agent and/or principal (each, an “Agent”), shares (the “Shares”) of the Company’s common stock, \$1.00 par value (the “Common Stock”), having an aggregate gross sales price of not to exceed \$200,000,000, on the terms set forth in this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement. The Company agrees that whenever it determines to sell Shares directly to an Agent or Agents as principal it will enter into a separate written Terms Agreement (each, a “Terms Agreement”), in substantially the form of Annex I hereto, relating to such sale in accordance with Section 2(k) hereof. References herein to “this Agreement” or to matters contained “herein” or “hereunder”, or words of similar import, mean this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement and any applicable Terms Agreement.

The Company has prepared and filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) an “automatic shelf registration statement”, as defined under Rule 405 (“Rule 405”) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “1933 Act”), on Form S-3 (File No. 197895), covering the public offering and sale of certain securities of the Company, including the Shares, under the 1933 Act and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder (the “1933 Act Regulations”), which automatic shelf registration statement became effective under Rule 462(e) of the 1933 Act Regulations (“Rule 462(e)”). The “Registration Statement”, as of any time, means such registration statement as amended by Post-Effective Amendment No. 1 and any other post-effective amendments thereto at such time, including the exhibits and any schedules thereto at such time, the documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference therein at such time pursuant to Item 12 of Form S-3 under the 1933 Act and the documents otherwise deemed to be a part thereof as of such time pursuant to Rule 430B of the 1933 Act Regulations (“Rule 430B”); provided, however, that the “Registration Statement” without reference to a time means such registration statement as amended by any post-effective amendments thereto as of the time of the first contract of sale for the Shares, which time shall be considered the “new effective date” of the Registration Statement with respect to the Shares within the meaning of paragraph (f)(2) of Rule 430B (“Rule 430B(f)(2)”), including the exhibits and schedules thereto at such time, the documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference therein at such time pursuant to Item 12 of Form S-3 under the 1933 Act and the documents otherwise deemed to be a part thereof as of such time pursuant to Rule 430B. The base prospectus filed as part of such automatic shelf registration statement, as amended in the form in which it has been filed most recently with the Commission in accordance with Section 3(b) or 3(c) hereof, including the documents incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference therein pursuant to Item 12 of Form S-3 under the 1933 Act, is referred to herein as the “Base Prospectus”. Promptly after execution and delivery of this Agreement, the Company will prepare and file a prospectus supplement relating to the Shares in accordance with the provisions of Rule 424(b) of the 1933 Act Regulations (“Rule 424(b)”). Such final prospectus supplement, as amended by the prospectus supplement filed most recently

with the Commission in accordance with Section 3(b), 3(c) or 3(n) hereof, as the case may be, including the documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference therein pursuant to Item 12 of Form S-3 under the 1933 Act, is referred to herein as the “Prospectus Supplement”. The Base Prospectus, as amended by the Prospectus Supplement and any applicable pricing supplement thereto, in the form the Base Prospectus, the Prospectus Supplement and any such pricing supplement are first furnished to the Agents for use in connection with the offering and sale of Shares, are collectively referred to herein as the “Prospectus.” For purposes of this Agreement, all references to the Registration Statement, any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus or any amendment or supplement thereto shall be deemed to include the copy filed with the Commission pursuant to its Electronic Data Gathering, Analysis and Retrieval system (or any successor system) (“EDGAR”).

As used in this Agreement:

“Applicable Time” means, with respect to any offer and sale of Shares, the time immediately prior to the first contract of sale for such Shares, or such other time as agreed by the Company and the applicable Agent.

“General Disclosure Package” means each Issuer General Use Free Writing Prospectus, if any, issued prior to the Applicable Time, the most recent Prospectus filed with the Commission in accordance with Section 3(b), 3(c) or 3(n) hereof that is distributed to investors prior to the Applicable Time and the number of Shares and the initial offering price per Share, all considered together.

“Issuer Free Writing Prospectus” means any “issuer free writing prospectus,” as defined in Rule 433 of the 1933 Act Regulations (“Rule 433”), including, without limitation, any “free writing prospectus” (as defined in Rule 405) relating to the Shares that is (i) required to be filed with the Commission by the Company, (ii) a “road show that is a written communication” within the meaning of Rule 433(d)(8)(i), whether or

not required to be filed with the Commission, or (iii) exempt from filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 433(d)(5)(i) because it contains a description of the Shares or of the offering thereof that does not reflect the final terms, in each case in the form filed or required to be filed with the Commission or, if not required to be filed, in the form retained in the Company's records pursuant to Rule 433(g).

“Issuer General Use Free Writing Prospectus” means any Issuer Free Writing Prospectus approved by the Agents or, in the case of a specific offer and sale of Shares, the applicable Agent pursuant to Section 3(l) hereof that is furnished to the Agents or such Agent, as the case may be, for general distribution to investors, as evidenced by communications between the Company and the Agents or such Agent, as the case may be.

“Issuer Limited Use Free Writing Prospectus” means any Issuer Free Writing Prospectus that is not an Issuer General Use Free Writing Prospectus.

All references in this Agreement to financial statements and schedules and other information which is “contained,” “included,” “made,” “stated” or “referred to” (or other references of like import) in the Registration Statement, any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus shall be deemed to include all such financial statements and schedules and other information incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus, as the case may be, prior to the Applicable Time relating to the particular Shares; and all references in this Agreement to amendments or supplements to the Registration Statement, any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus shall be deemed to include the filing of any document under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “1934 Act”), and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder (the “1934 Act Regulations”) incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, such preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus, as the case may be, at or after the Applicable Time relating to the particular Shares.

Section 1. Representations and Warranties. The Company represents and warrants (a) to the Agents at the date of this Agreement and as of each date on which a certificate is required to be delivered pursuant to Section 3(o) hereof and (b) with respect to a specific offering and sale of Shares, to such applicable Agent(s), as of each Applicable Time and as of each Settlement Date (as defined in Section 2(h) hereof), and agrees with the Agents, as follows:

2

(i) Compliance of the Registration Statement, the Prospectus and Incorporated Documents. The Company meets the requirements for use of Form S-3 under the 1933 Act. The Registration Statement is an automatic shelf registration statement under Rule 405 and the Shares have been and remain eligible for registration by the Company on such automatic shelf registration statement. Each of the Registration Statement and any post-effective amendment thereto has become effective under the 1933 Act. No stop order suspending the effectiveness of the Registration Statement or any post-effective amendment thereto has been issued under the 1933 Act, no notice of objection of the Commission to the use of the Registration Statement or any post-effective amendment thereto pursuant to Rule 401(g)(2) of the 1933 Act Regulations (“Rule 401(g)(2)”) has been received by the Company, no order preventing or suspending the use of any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus or any amendment or supplement thereto has been issued and no proceedings for any of those purposes have been instituted, or to the Company's knowledge, contemplated by the Commission.

Each of the Registration Statement and any post-effective amendment thereto, at the time of its effectiveness and as of each deemed effective date with respect to the Agents pursuant to Rule 430B(f)(2), complied in all material respects with the requirements of the 1933 Act and the 1933 Act Regulations. Each of any preliminary prospectus and the Prospectus and any amendment or supplement thereto, at the time it was filed with the Commission, complied in all material respects with the requirements of the 1933 Act and the 1933 Act Regulations.

The documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, any preliminary prospectus and the Prospectus, when they became effective or at the time they were or hereafter are filed with the Commission, complied and will comply in all material respects with the requirements of the 1934 Act and the 1934 Act Regulations.

The representations in this Section 1(i) do not apply to statements in or omissions from any such document based upon written information furnished to the Company by any Agent, it being understood and agreed that as of the date hereof the only such information furnished by any Agent consists of the information described in Section 6(b).

(ii) Accurate Disclosure. Neither the Registration Statement nor any amendment thereto, at its effective time or at any Settlement Date, contained, contains or will contain an untrue statement of a material fact or omitted, omits or will omit to state a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary to make the statements therein not misleading. At each Applicable Time, neither (A) the General Disclosure Package nor (B) any individual Issuer Limited Use Free Writing Prospectus, when considered together with the General Disclosure Package, included, includes or will include an untrue statement of a material fact or omitted, omits or will omit to state a material fact necessary in order to make the statements therein, in the light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading. Neither the Prospectus nor any amendment or supplement thereto (including any prospectus wrapper), as of its issue date, at the time of any filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) or at any Settlement Date, included, includes or will include an untrue statement of a material fact or omitted, omits or will omit to state a material fact necessary in order to make the statements therein, in the light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading. The representations in this Section 1(ii) do not apply to statements in or omissions from any such document based upon written information furnished to the Company by any Agent, it being understood and agreed that as of the date hereof the only such information furnished by any Agent consists of the information described in Section 6(b).

(iii) Issuer Free Writing Prospectuses. No Issuer Free Writing Prospectus conflicts or will conflict with the information contained in the Registration Statement, any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus or any amendment or supplement thereto, including any document incorporated by reference therein, that has not been superseded or modified. Any offer that is a written communication relating to the Shares made prior to the initial filing of the Registration Statement by the Company or any person acting on its behalf (within the meaning, for this paragraph only, of Rule 163(c) of the 1933 Act Regulations) has been filed with the Commission in accordance with the exemption provided by Rule 163 of the 1933 Act Regulations (“Rule 163”) and otherwise complied with the requirements of Rule 163, including, without

3

limitation, the legending requirement, to qualify such offer for the exemption from Section 5(c) of the 1933 Act provided by Rule 163.

(iv) Well-Known Seasoned Issuer. (A) At the original effectiveness of the Registration Statement, (B) at the time of the most recent amendment thereto for the purposes of complying with Section 10(a)(3) of the 1933 Act (whether such amendment was by post-effective amendment, incorporated report filed pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the 1934 Act or form of prospectus), (C) at the time the Company or any person acting on its behalf (within the meaning, for this clause only, of Rule 163(c)) made any offer relating to the Shares in reliance on the exemption of Rule 163, (D) at the date of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement and any Terms Agreement, and (E) at each Applicable Time, the Company was and is a “well-known seasoned issuer,” as defined in Rule 405.

(v) Company Not Ineligible Issuer. (A) At the time of filing the Registration Statement and any post-effective amendment thereto, (B) at the earliest time thereafter that the Company or another offering participant made a *bona fide* offer (within the meaning of Rule 164(h)(2) of the 1933 Act Regulations) of the Shares, (C) at the date of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement and any Terms Agreement and (D) at each Applicable Time, the Company was not and is not an “ineligible issuer,” as defined in Rule 405, without taking account of any determination by the Commission pursuant to Rule 405 that it is not necessary that the Company be considered an ineligible issuer.

(vi) Good Standing of the Company. The Company has been duly incorporated and is existing and in good standing under the laws of the State of South Dakota, with power and authority (corporate and other) to own its properties and conduct its business as described in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus; and the Company is duly qualified to do business as a foreign corporation in good standing in all other jurisdictions in which its ownership or lease of property or the conduct of its business requires such qualification, except where the failure to be so qualified and in good standing would not, individually or in the aggregate, result in a material adverse effect on the condition (financial or otherwise), results of operations, business, properties or prospects of the Company and its subsidiaries taken as a whole (“Material Adverse Effect”).

(vii) Subsidiaries. Each subsidiary of the Company has been duly incorporated or organized, as the case may be, and is existing and in good standing under the laws of the jurisdiction of its incorporation or organization, as the case may be, with power and authority (corporate and other) to own its properties and conduct its business as described in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, except where the failure to be so qualified and in good standing would not, individually or in the aggregate, result in a Material Adverse Effect; and each subsidiary of the Company is duly qualified to do business as a foreign corporation, limited partnership, general partnership or limited liability company, as the case may be, in good standing in all other jurisdictions in which its ownership or lease of property or the conduct of its business requires such qualification, except where the failure to be so qualified and in good standing would not, individually or in the aggregate, result in a Material Adverse Effect; all of the issued and outstanding capital stock or partnership or limited liability company interests, as the case may be, of each subsidiary of the Company has been duly authorized and validly issued and, with respect to the capital stock of each subsidiary that is a corporation, is fully paid and non-assessable; and, except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, the capital stock or partnership or limited liability company interests, as the case may be, of each subsidiary owned by the Company, directly or through subsidiaries, is owned free from liens, encumbrances and defects.

(viii) The Shares. The Shares to be issued and sold by the Company hereunder have been duly authorized and, when issued and delivered to and paid for in accordance with the terms of this Agreement, will be validly issued, fully paid and non-assessable; and the issuance of the Shares is not subject to any preemptive rights, rights of first refusal or other similar rights of any securityholder of the Company or any other person or entity. The Shares to be sold hereunder will conform to the descriptions thereof in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus.

4

(ix) Capitalization. The Company has an authorized equity capitalization as set forth in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus under the heading “Capitalization”; all the outstanding shares of capital stock of the Company have been duly and validly authorized and issued and are fully paid and non-assessable and are not subject to any pre-emptive or similar rights; except as described in or expressly contemplated by the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, there are no outstanding rights (including, without limitation, pre-emptive rights), warrants or options to acquire, or instruments convertible into or exchangeable for, any shares of capital stock or other equity interest in the Company or any of its subsidiaries, or any contract, commitment, agreement, understanding or arrangement of any kind relating to the issuance of any capital stock of the Company or any such subsidiary, any such convertible or exchangeable securities or any such rights, warrants or options.

(x) NYSE. The outstanding shares of Common Stock are listed on the New York Stock Exchange (“NYSE”) and the Shares to be sold hereunder by the Company have been approved for listing, subject only to official notice of issuance on the NYSE.

(xi) No Finder’s Fee. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, there are no contracts, agreements or understandings between the Company and any person that would give rise to a valid claim against the Company or any underwriter for a brokerage commission, finder’s fee or other like payment in connection with this offering.

(xii) Registration Rights. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, there are no contracts, agreements or understandings between the Company and any person granting such person the right to require the Company to file a registration statement under the 1933 Act with respect to any securities of the Company owned or to be owned by such person or to require the Company to include such securities in the securities registered pursuant to a Registration Statement or in any securities being registered pursuant to any other registration statement filed by the Company under the 1933 Act (collectively, “registration rights”), and any person to whom the Company has granted registration rights has agreed, if necessary, not to exercise such rights.

(xiii) Absence of Further Requirements. No consent, approval, authorization, or order of, or filing or registration with, any person (including any governmental agency or body or any court) is required for the consummation of the transactions contemplated by this Agreement in connection with the offering, issuance and sale of the Shares by the Company, except such as have been obtained or made and such as may be required under state securities laws.

(xiv) Title to Property. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, the Company and its subsidiaries have good and defensible title to all interests in oil and gas properties owned by them and good and marketable title to all other real properties and all other properties and assets owned by them that are material to the Company and its subsidiaries taken as a whole, in

each case free from liens, charges, encumbrances and defects that would materially affect the value thereof or materially interfere with the use made or to be made thereof by them and, except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, the Company and its subsidiaries hold any leased real or personal property that is material to the Company and its subsidiaries taken as a whole under valid and enforceable leases with no terms or provisions that would materially interfere with the use made or to be made thereof by them.

(xv) Absence of Defaults and Conflicts Resulting from Transaction. The execution, delivery and performance of this Agreement, and the issuance and sale of the Shares and compliance with the terms and provisions thereof, will not result in a breach or violation of any of the terms and provisions of, or constitute a default or a Debt Repayment Triggering Event (as defined below) under, or result in the imposition of any lien, charge or encumbrance upon any property or assets of the Company or any of its subsidiaries pursuant to, (i) the charter or by-laws or other organizational documents of the Company or any of its subsidiaries, (ii) any statute, rule, regulation or order of any governmental agency or body or any court, domestic or foreign, having jurisdiction over the Company or any of its subsidiaries or any of their properties, or (iii) any agreement or instrument to which the Company or any of its subsidiaries is a party or

5

by which the Company or any of its subsidiaries is bound or to which any of the properties of the Company or any of its subsidiaries is subject, except, in the case of clauses (ii) and (iii), as would not, individually or in the aggregate, result in a Material Adverse Effect. A “Debt Repayment Triggering Event” means any event or condition that gives, or with the giving of notice or lapse of time would give, the holder of any note, debenture, or other evidence of indebtedness (or any person acting on such holder’s behalf) the right to require the repurchase, redemption or repayment of all or a portion of such indebtedness by the Company or any of its subsidiaries.

(xvi) Absence of Existing Defaults and Conflicts. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, neither the Company nor any of its subsidiaries is in violation of its respective charter, by-laws or organizational documents or in default (or with the giving of notice or lapse of time would be in default) under any existing obligation, agreement, covenant or condition contained in any indenture, loan agreement, mortgage, lease or other agreement or instrument to which any of them is a party or by which any of them is bound or to which any of the properties of any of them is subject, except such defaults that would not, individually or in the aggregate, result in a Material Adverse Effect.

(xvii) Authorization of Agreement. This Agreement has been duly authorized, executed and delivered by the Company.

(xviii) Possession of Licenses. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, the Company and its subsidiaries possess, and are in compliance with the terms of, all adequate certificates, authorizations, franchises, licenses and permits (“Licenses”) necessary or material to the conduct of the business now conducted or proposed in the General Disclosure Package to be conducted by them and have not received any notice of proceedings relating to the revocation or modification of any Licenses that, if determined adversely to the Company or any of its subsidiaries, would individually or in the aggregate have a Material Adverse Effect.

(xix) Absence of Labor Dispute. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, no labor dispute with the employees of the Company or any of its subsidiaries exists or, to the knowledge of the Company, is imminent that could have a Material Adverse Effect.

(xx) Possession of Intellectual Property. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, the Company and its subsidiaries own, possess, or can acquire on reasonable terms, adequate trademarks, trade names and other rights to inventions, know-how, patents, copyrights, confidential information and other intellectual property (collectively, “intellectual property rights”) necessary to conduct the business now operated by them, or presently employed by them, and have not received any notice of infringement of or conflict with asserted rights of others with respect to any intellectual property rights that, if determined adversely to the Company or any of its subsidiaries, would individually or in the aggregate have a Material Adverse Effect.

(xxi) Environmental Laws. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, neither the Company nor any of its subsidiaries is in violation of any statute, any rule, regulation, decision or order of any governmental agency or body or any court, domestic or foreign, relating to the use, disposal or release of hazardous or toxic substances or relating to the protection or restoration of the environment or human exposure to hazardous or toxic substances (collectively, “environmental laws”), owns or operates any real property contaminated with any substance that is subject to any environmental laws, is liable for any off-site disposal or contamination pursuant to any environmental laws, or is subject to any claim relating to any environmental laws, which violation, contamination, liability or claim would individually or in the aggregate have a Material Adverse Effect; and the Company is not aware of any pending investigation which might lead to such a claim.

(xxii) Accurate Disclosure. The statements in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus under the headings “Description of Capital Stock”, “Material United States Federal Income Tax Consequences to Non-U.S. Holders” and “Plan of Distribution”, insofar

6

as such statements summarize legal matters, agreements, documents or proceedings discussed therein, are accurate and fair summaries of such legal matters, agreements, documents or proceedings in all material respects and present the information required to be shown.

(xxiii) Absence of Manipulation. The Company has not taken, directly or indirectly, any action that is designed to or that has constituted or that would reasonably be expected to cause or result in the stabilization or manipulation of the price of any security of the Company to facilitate the sale or resale of any Shares.

(xxiv) Internal Controls and Compliance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. Except as set forth in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, the Company, its subsidiaries and the Company’s Board of Directors (the “Board”) are in compliance in all material respects with the SarbanesOxley Act of 2002, as amended, and all applicable rules of the NYSE. The Company maintains a system of

internal controls, including, but not limited to, disclosure controls and procedures, internal controls over accounting matters and financial reporting, an internal audit function and legal and regulatory compliance controls (collectively, “Internal Controls”) that comply in all material respects with the 1933 Act, the 1933 Act Regulations, the 1934 Act and the 1934 Act Regulations and are sufficient to provide reasonable assurances that (i) transactions are executed in accordance with management’s general or specific authorizations, (ii) transactions are recorded as necessary to permit preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States and to maintain accountability for assets, (iii) access to assets is permitted only in accordance with management’s general or specific authorization and (iv) the recorded accountability for assets is compared with the existing assets at reasonable intervals and appropriate action is taken with respect to any differences. The Internal Controls are overseen by the Audit Committee (the “Audit Committee”) of the Board in accordance with Exchange Rules. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, since the date of the filing of the Company’s most recent Annual Report on Form 10K included in the General Disclosure Package, the Company has not publicly disclosed or reported to the Audit Committee or the Board, and within the next 90 days the Company does not reasonably expect to publicly disclose or report to the Audit Committee or the Board, (i) any significant deficiency in the design or operation of Internal Controls that could adversely affect the Company’s ability to record, process, summarize and report financial data, any material weakness in Internal Controls, any material change in Internal Controls or any fraud involving management or other employees who have a significant role in Internal Controls (each, an “Internal Control Event”) or (ii) any material violation of, or failure to comply with, the 1933 Act, the 1933 Act Regulations, the 1934 Act and the 1934 Act Regulations.

(xxv) Absence of Accounting Issues. A member of the Audit Committee has confirmed to the the Company’s management that, except as set forth in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, the Audit Committee is not reviewing or investigating, and neither the Company’s independent auditors nor its internal auditors have recommended that the Audit Committee review or investigate, (i) adding to, deleting, changing the application of, or changing the Company’s disclosure with respect to, any of the Company’s material accounting policies; (ii) any matter which could result in a restatement of the Company’s financial statements for any annual or interim period during the current or prior three fiscal years; or (iii) any Internal Control Event.

(xxvi) Litigation. Except as disclosed in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, there are no pending actions, suits or proceedings (including any inquiries or investigations by any court or governmental agency or body, domestic or foreign) against or affecting the Company, any of its subsidiaries or any of their respective properties that, if determined adversely to the Company or any of its subsidiaries, would individually or in the aggregate have a Material Adverse Effect, or would materially and adversely affect the ability of the Company to perform its obligations under this Agreement, or which are otherwise material in the context of the sale of any Shares; and no such actions, suits or proceedings (including any inquiries or investigations by any court or governmental agency or body, domestic or foreign) are, to the Company’s knowledge, threatened or contemplated.

(xxvii) Financial Statements. The financial statements included in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus present fairly the financial position of the Company and its

consolidated subsidiaries as of the dates shown and their results of operations and cash flows for the periods shown, and such financial statements have been prepared in conformity with the generally accepted accounting principles in the United States applied on a consistent basis; and the schedules included in the Registration Statement present fairly the information required to be stated therein. The interactive data in extensible Business Reporting Language included or incorporated by reference in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus fairly presents the information called for in all material respects and has been prepared in all material respects in accordance with the Commission’s rules and guidelines applicable thereto.

(xxviii) No Material Adverse Change in Business. Except as disclosed in the General Disclosure Package, since the end of the period covered by the latest audited financial statements included in the General Disclosure Package (i) there has been no change, nor any development or event involving a prospective change, in the condition (financial or otherwise), results of operations, business, properties or prospects of the Company and its subsidiaries, taken as a whole that is material and adverse, (ii) there has been no dividend or distribution of any kind declared, paid or made by the Company on any class of its capital stock (other than regular quarterly cash dividends in respect of the Company’s common stock and declared and paid by the Company in the ordinary course of business) and (iii) there has been no material adverse change in the capital stock, short-term indebtedness, long-term indebtedness, net current assets or net assets of the Company and its subsidiaries.

(xxix) Investment Company Act. The Company is not and, after giving effect to the offering and sale of any Shares and the application of the proceeds thereof as described in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, will not be an “investment company” as defined in the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended.

(xxx) Ratings. No “nationally recognized statistical rating organization” as such term is defined for purposes of Rule 3(a)(62) (i) has imposed (or has informed the Company that it is considering imposing) any condition (financial or otherwise) on the Company’s retaining any rating assigned to the Company or any securities of the Company or (ii) has indicated to the Company that it is considering any downgrading in the rating of any debt securities of the Company by any such organization, or any public announcement that any such organization has under surveillance or review its rating of any debt securities of the Company (other than an announcement with positive implications of a possible upgrading, and no implication of a possible downgrading, of such rating), except as has been publicly disclosed prior to the date of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement by the applicable nationally recognized statistical rating organization.

(xxxi) Reserve Report Data. The oil and gas reserve estimates of the Company and its subsidiaries for the fiscal years ended December 31, 2013, December 31, 2014, and December 31, 2015, contained in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus are derived from reports that have been prepared by Cawley, Gillespie & Associates, Inc., and as set forth therein, such reserve estimates fairly reflect the estimated oil and gas reserves of the Company and its subsidiaries at the dates indicated therein and are in accordance with the Commission guidelines applicable thereto at the time such estimates were prepared.

(xxxii) Independent Reserve Engineers. Cawley, Gillespie & Associates, Inc. has represented to the Company that they are, and the Company believes them to be, independent reserve engineers with respect to the Company and its subsidiaries and for the periods set forth in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus.

(xxxiii) Pro Forma Financial and Other Information. The pro forma consolidated financial statements of the Company and its subsidiaries and the related notes thereto set forth in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus present fairly the information contained therein, have been prepared in accordance with Article 11 of Regulation S-X with respect to pro forma financial statements and have been properly presented on the bases described therein, and the assumptions used in the preparation thereof are reasonable and the adjustments used therein are appropriate to give effect to the transactions and circumstances referred to therein. To the Company's knowledge, the other

financial and non-financial information relating to the Acquisition included in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus presents fairly in all material respects the information shown therein.

(xxxiv) Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Within the last five years, to the Company's knowledge, none of the Company, any of its subsidiaries, any director, officer, agent, employee, controlled affiliate or other controlled person acting on behalf of the Company or any of its subsidiaries has taken any action, directly or indirectly, that would reasonably be expected to result in a violation by such persons of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977, as amended, and the rules and regulations thereunder (the "FCPA"), including, without limitation, making use of the mails or any means or instrumentality of interstate commerce corruptly in furtherance of an offer, payment, promise to pay or authorization of the payment of any money, or other property, gift, promise to give, or authorization of the giving of anything of value to any "foreign official" (as such term is defined in the FCPA) or any foreign political party or official thereof or any candidate for foreign political office, in contravention of the FCPA and the Company and its subsidiaries conduct their businesses in material compliance with the FCPA.

(xxxv) Money Laundering Laws. The operations of the Company and its subsidiaries comply in all material respects with applicable financial recordkeeping and reporting requirements of the Currency and Foreign Transactions Reporting Act of 1970, as amended, the applicable money laundering statutes of all jurisdictions in which the Company and its subsidiaries operate, the rules and regulations thereunder and any related or similar rules, regulations or guidelines, issued, administered or enforced by any governmental, regulatory or administrative authority, body or agency having jurisdiction over the Company or any of its subsidiaries or any of their respective properties, assets or operations (each, a "Governmental Entity") applicable to the Company and its subsidiaries (collectively, the "Money Laundering Laws"); and no action, suit or proceeding by or before any Governmental Entity with respect to the Money Laundering Laws is pending or, to the knowledge of the Company, threatened against the Company or any of its subsidiaries.

(xxxvi) OFAC. None of the Company, any of its subsidiaries or, to the knowledge of the Company, any director, officer, agent, employee, controlled affiliate or other controlled representative of the Company or any of its subsidiaries is an individual or entity currently the subject or target of any international economic sanctions administered or enforced by the United States Government, including, without limitation, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control, the United Nations Security Council, the European Union, Her Majesty's Treasury or other relevant sanctions authority (collectively, "Sanctions"). The Company will not use the proceeds of the sale of any Shares in violation of Sanctions.

Section 2. Sale and Delivery of Shares.

(a) Subject to the terms and conditions set forth herein, the Company agrees to issue and sell Shares through the applicable Agent acting as sales agent or directly to the applicable Agent or Agents acting as principal from time to time. Sales of the Shares, if any, through an Agent acting as sales agent or directly to an Agent or Agents acting as principal will be made by means of ordinary brokers' transactions on the NYSE or otherwise at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices.

(b) The Shares are to be sold to an Agent on an agented basis on any day (other than a day on which the NYSE is scheduled to close prior to its regular weekday closing time) (each, a "Trading Day") on which (i) the Company has instructed such Agent to make such sales and (ii) the Company has satisfied its covenants and conditions specified in Sections 4 and 5 hereof. On any Trading Day, the Company may sell Shares through only one Agent and, if it determines to do so, shall instruct the applicable Agent by telephone (confirmed promptly by telecopy or email, which confirmation will be promptly acknowledged by such Agent) as to the maximum number of Shares to be sold on such Trading Day and the minimum price per Share at which such Shares may be sold. Subject to the terms and conditions specified herein (including, without limitation, the accuracy of the representations and warranties of the Company and the performance by the Company of its covenants and other obligations, contained herein and the satisfaction of the additional conditions specified in Section 5 hereof), such Agent shall use its commercially reasonable efforts, consistent with its normal trading and sales practices, the

description of the offering in the third sentence of the second paragraph and the first and second sentences of the fourth paragraph under "Plan of Distribution" in the Prospectus and applicable law and regulations, to sell all of the Shares so designated by the Company as sales agent in accordance with such instruction. On any Trading Day, the Company shall give at least one business day's prior written notice by telecopy or email to the Agents as to any change of the Agent through whom sales of Shares as sales agent will be made. For the avoidance of doubt, the foregoing limitation shall not apply to sales solely to employees or security holders of the Company or its subsidiaries or to a trustee or other person acquiring Shares for the accounts of such persons in which either Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated, Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC or Mitsubishi UFJ Securities (USA), Inc. is acting for the Company in a capacity other than as Agent under this Agreement. Without limiting any Agent's obligations under any Terms Agreement, the Company and the Agents each acknowledge and agree that (A) there can be no assurance that any Agent will be successful in selling any Shares and (B) the Agents will not incur any liability or obligation to the Company if they fail to sell Shares for any reason other than a failure to use their respective commercially reasonable efforts, consistent with their respective normal trading and sales practices and applicable law and regulations, to sell such Shares as required by this Agreement.

(c) The Company or the Agent through whom the sale of Shares are to be made as sales agent on any Trading Day may, upon notice to the other party hereto by telephone (confirmed promptly by telecopy or email, which confirmation will be promptly acknowledged by the receiving party), suspend the offering of Shares with respect to which such Agent is acting as sales agent for any reason and at any time; provided, however, that such suspension shall not affect or impair the parties' respective obligations with respect to the Shares sold, or with respect to Shares that the Company has agreed to sell, hereunder prior to the giving of such notice.

(d) The gross sales price of any Shares sold pursuant to this Agreement by the applicable Agent acting as sales agent of the Company shall be equal to the market price prevailing on the NYSE at the time of sale for the Shares sold by such Agent or, in the discretion of such Agent but subject to the specific instructions of the Company, at prices related to prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices. The compensation payable to an Agent for sales of Shares with respect to which such Agent acts as sales agent shall be an amount, as agreed by the Company and the applicable Agent, not to exceed 2.0% of the gross sales price for such Shares. The remaining proceeds, after further deduction for any transaction fees, transfer taxes or similar taxes or fees imposed by any Governmental Entity or self-regulatory organization in respect of such sales, shall constitute the net proceeds to the Company for such sales (the “Net Proceeds”). The applicable Agent shall notify the Company as promptly as practicable if any deduction referenced in the preceding sentence will be made. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event the Company engages an Agent as sales agent for the sale of Shares that would constitute a “distribution” within the meaning of Rule 100 of Regulation M under the 1934 Act, the Company and such Agent will agree to compensation for such Agent that is customary for such sales.

(e) If acting as sales agent hereunder, the applicable Agent shall provide written confirmation to the Company following the close of trading on the NYSE on each Trading Day on which Shares are sold under this Agreement setting forth the number of Shares sold on such day, the aggregate gross sales proceeds of the Shares, the aggregate Net Proceeds to the Company and the aggregate compensation payable by the Company to such Agent with respect to such sales.

(f) Under no circumstances shall the aggregate gross sales price or number, as the case may be, of Shares offered or sold pursuant to this Agreement, or which are the subject of instructions to an Agent as sales agent pursuant to Section 2(b) hereof, exceed the aggregate gross sales price or number, as the case may be, of Shares (i) referred to in the preamble paragraph of this Agreement, as reduced by prior sales of Shares under this Agreement, (ii) available for sale under the Registration Statement or (iii) duly authorized from time to time to be issued and sold under this Agreement by the Company or approved for listing on the NYSE, and, in each case referred to in clause (ii) or (iii), notified to the Agents in writing. In addition, under no circumstances shall any Shares with respect to which the Agent acts as sales agent be offered or sold, or be the subject of instructions to an Agent as sales agent pursuant to Section 2(b) hereof, at a price lower than the minimum price therefor duly authorized from time to time by the Company and notified to the Agents in writing. The Agents shall have no responsibility for maintaining records with respect to Shares available for sale under the Registration Statement or for determining the aggregate gross sales price, number or minimum price of Shares duly authorized by the Company.

10

(g) If the Company believes that the exemptive provisions set forth in Rule 101(c)(1) of Regulation M under the 1934 Act are not satisfied with respect to the Company or the Shares, it shall promptly notify the other parties and future offers and sales of Shares through the Agents on an agented basis under this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement shall be suspended until that or other exemptive provisions have been satisfied in the judgment of each party.

(h) Settlement for sales of Shares will occur on the third business day that is also a Trading Day following the trade date on which such sales are made, unless another date shall be agreed to in writing by the Company and the applicable Agent (each such day, a “Settlement Date”). On each Settlement Date for the sale of Shares through an Agent as sales agent, such Shares shall be delivered by the Company to such Agent in book-entry form to such Agent’s account at The Depository Trust Company against payment by such Agent of the Net Proceeds from the sale of such Shares in same day funds delivered to an account designated by the Company. If the Company shall default on its obligation to deliver Shares through an Agent as sales agent on any Settlement Date, the Company shall (i) indemnify and hold such Agent harmless against any loss, claim or damage arising from or as a result of such default by the Company and (ii) pay such Agent any commission to which it would otherwise be entitled absent such default.

(i) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, the Company shall not offer or sell, or instruct an Agent to offer or sell, any Shares through an Agent as sales agent (and, by notice to the Agents given by telephone (confirmed promptly by telecopy or email), shall cancel any instructions for any such offer or sale of any Shares prior to the commencement of the periods referenced below), and the Agents shall not be obligated to make any such offer or sale of Shares, (i) during any period in which the Company is, or could be deemed to be, in possession of material non-public information or (ii) except as provided in Section 2(j) hereof, at any time during the period commencing on the 10th business day prior to the time the Company issues a press release containing, or shall otherwise publicly announce, its earnings, revenues or other operating results for a fiscal period or periods (each, an “Earnings Announcement”) through and including the time that is 24 hours after the time that the Company files a Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q or an Annual Report on Form 10-K (a “Filing Time”) that includes consolidated financial statements as of and for the same fiscal period or periods, as the case may be, covered by such Earnings Announcement.

(j) Notwithstanding clause (ii) of Section 2(i) hereof, if the Company wishes to offer or sell Shares to an Agent as sales agent at any time during the period from and including an Earnings Announcement through and including the corresponding Filing Time, the Company shall first (i) prepare and deliver to such Agent (with a copy to counsel for the Agents) a Current Report on Form 8-K that includes substantially the same financial and related information that was included in such Earnings Announcement (other than any earnings projections and similar forward-looking data and officers’ quotations) (each, an “Earnings 8-K”), in form and substance reasonably satisfactory to such Agent, and, prior to its filing, obtain the written consent of such Agent to such filing (which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld), (ii) provide such Agent with the officers’ certificate, opinions and letters of counsel and accountants’ letter specified in Section 3(o), (p) and (q), respectively, hereof, (iii) afford such Agent the opportunity to conduct a due diligence review in accordance with Section 3(t) hereof prior to filing such Earnings 8-K and (iv) file such Earnings 8-K with the Commission. For purposes of clarity, the parties hereto agree that (A) the delivery of any officers’ certificate, opinion or letter of counsel or accountants’ letter pursuant to this Section 2(j) shall not relieve the Company from any of its obligations under this Agreement with respect to any Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q or Annual Report on Form 10-K, as the case may be, including, without limitation, the obligation to deliver officers’ certificates, opinions and letters of counsel and accountants’ letters as provided in Section 3(o), (p) and (q), respectively, hereof, and (B) this Section 2(j) shall in no way affect or limit the operation of clause (i) of Section 2(i) hereof, which shall have independent application.

(k) The Agents shall not have any obligation to purchase Shares as principal, whether from the Company or otherwise, unless the Company and the applicable Agent or Agents agree as set forth below. Shares purchased from the Company by the applicable Agent or Agents, individually or in a syndicate, as principal shall be made in accordance with terms agreed upon between such Agent or Agents and the Company as evidenced by a Terms Agreement. The applicable Agent’s or Agents’ commitment to purchase Shares from the Company as principal shall be deemed to have been made on the basis of the accuracy of the representations and warranties of the Company, and performance by the Company of its covenants and other obligations, herein contained and shall be subject to the terms and conditions herein set forth. At the time of each Terms Agreement, the applicable Agent

or Agents shall specify the requirements, if any, for the officers' certificate, opinions and letters of counsel and accountants' letter pursuant to Section 3(o), (p) and (q), respectively, hereof. In the event of a conflict between the terms of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement and a Terms Agreement, the terms of such Terms Agreement shall control.

Section 3. Covenants. The Company agrees with the Agents:

(a) *Compliance with Securities Regulations and Commission Requests*. The Company, subject to Section 3(b) and 3(c) hereof, will comply with the requirements of Rule 430B, and will notify the Agents immediately, and confirm the notice in writing, (i) when any post-effective amendment to the Registration Statement or any new registration statement relating to the Shares shall become effective or any amendment or supplement to the Prospectus shall have been filed (other than an amendment or supplement providing solely for the determination of the terms of an offering of securities unless related to an offering of Shares, as to which the Company will only be obligated to notify the applicable Agent or Agents), (ii) of the receipt of any comments from the Commission, (iii) of any request by the Commission for any amendment to the Registration Statement or any amendment or supplement to the Prospectus, including any document incorporated by reference therein, or for additional information, (iv) of the issuance by the Commission of any stop order suspending the effectiveness of the Registration Statement or any post-effective amendment thereto or any notice of objection to the use of the Registration Statement or any post-effective amendment thereto pursuant to Rule 401(g)(2) or of the issuance of any order preventing or suspending the use of any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus or any amendment or supplement thereto, or of the suspension of the qualification of any Shares for offering or sale in any jurisdiction, or of the initiation or threatening of any proceedings for any of such purposes or of any examination pursuant to Section 8(d) or 8(e) of the 1933 Act concerning the Registration Statement and (v) if the Company becomes the subject of a proceeding under Section 8A of the 1933 Act in connection with any offering of Shares. In connection with a Terms Agreement, the Company will prepare and file with the Commission, subject to Section 3(c) hereof, a pricing supplement with respect to the offer and sale of Shares covered by such Terms Agreement. The Company will effect all filings required under Rule 424(b), in the manner and within the time period required by Rule 424(b) (without reliance on Rule 424(b)(8)), and will take such steps as it deems necessary to ascertain promptly whether the form of prospectus transmitted for filing under Rule 424(b) was received for filing by the Commission and, in the event that it was not, it will promptly file such prospectus. The Company will make every reasonable effort to prevent the issuance of any stop, prevention or suspension order and, if any such order is issued, to obtain the lifting thereof at the earliest possible moment. In the event of any issuance of a notice of objection, by the Commission, the Company shall take all necessary action to permit offers and sales of Shares by or through the Agents, including, without limitation, amending the Registration Statement or filing a new shelf registration statement relating thereto. The Company shall pay the required Commission filing fees relating to the Shares prior to the time the initial Prospectus Supplement is filed with the Commission or the time any subsequent Prospectus Supplement that increases gross offering price or number of Shares that may offered and sold under this Agreement from that referenced in the immediately preceding Prospectus Supplement filed with the Commission.

(b) *Continued Compliance with Securities Laws*. The Company will comply with the 1933 Act, the 1933 Act Regulations, the 1934 Act and the 1934 Act Regulations so as to permit the completion of sales of Shares as contemplated in this Agreement and in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus. If any event shall occur or condition shall exist as a result of which it is necessary, in the opinion of counsel for the Agents or counsel to the Company, to (i) amend the Registration Statement in order that the Registration Statement will not include an untrue statement of a material fact or omit to state a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary to make the statements therein not misleading, (ii) amend or supplement the General Disclosure Package or the Prospectus in order that the General Disclosure Package or the Prospectus, as the case may be, will not include any untrue statement of a material fact or omit to state a material fact necessary in order to make the statements therein not misleading in the light of the circumstances existing at the time it is delivered to a purchaser or (iii) amend the Registration Statement or amend or supplement the General Disclosure Package or the Prospectus, as the case may be, including, without limitation, the filing of any document incorporated by reference therein, in order to comply with the requirements of the 1933 Act, the 1933 Act Regulations, the 1934 Act or the 1934 Act Regulations, the Company will promptly (A) give the Agents or, in the case of an offer and sale of Shares to the applicable Agent or Agents as principal, such Agent or Agents written notice of such event or condition, (B) prepare any amendment or supplement as may be necessary to correct such statement or omission or to comply with such requirements and, a reasonable amount of time prior to any proposed filing or use, furnish the

Agents or such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, with copies of any such amendment or supplement and (C) file with the Commission any such amendment or supplement and use its commercially reasonable efforts to have any amendment to the Registration Statement declared effective by the Commission as soon as possible if the Company is no longer eligible to file an automatic shelf registration statement; provided, however, that the Company shall not file or use any such amendment or supplement to which the Agents or such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, or counsel for the Agents shall reasonably object.

(c) *Filing or Use of Amendments and Supplements*. The Company will give the Agents or, in the case of an offer and sale of Shares to the applicable Agent or Agents as principal, such Agent or Agents written notice of its intention to file or use (i) any amendment to the Registration Statement or any amendment or supplement to the General Disclosure Package or the Prospectus (other than an amendment or supplement thereto relating solely to the offering of securities unless related to an offering of Shares), whether pursuant to the 1933 Act, the 1934 Act or otherwise, (ii) any new Prospectus Supplement that includes information in addition to the information referred to in Section 3(n) hereof or (iii) a pricing supplement disclosing the offer and sale of Shares covered by a Terms Agreement, will furnish the Agents or such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, with copies of any such document a reasonable amount of time prior to such proposed filing or use, as the case may be, and will not file or use any such document to which the Agents or such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, or counsel for the Agents shall reasonably object.

(d) *Delivery of Registration Statements*. The Company has furnished or will deliver to the Agents and counsel for the Agents, without charge, signed copies of the Registration Statement as originally filed and each amendment thereto (including exhibits filed therewith or incorporated by reference therein and documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference therein) and signed copies of all consents and certificates of experts. The signed copies of the Registration Statement and each amendment thereto furnished to the Agents and counsel for the Agents will be identical to the electronically transmitted copies thereof filed with the Commission pursuant to EDGAR, except to the extent permitted by Regulation S-T.

(e) *Delivery of Prospectuses*. The Company will furnish to the Agents or, in the case of an offer and sale of Shares to the applicable Agent or Agents as principal, such Agent or Agents, without charge, upon execution of this Agreement and thereafter during the period in which a prospectus is (or, but for the exception afforded by Rule 172 of the 1933 Act Regulations ("Rule 172"), would be) required by the 1933 Act to be delivered in connection with any offer or sale of Shares, such number of copies of the Prospectus (as amended or supplemented) as the Agents or such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, may reasonably request. The Company will also furnish, upon request of the Agents or such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, copies of the Prospectus

(as amended or supplemented) to each exchange or market on which sales of Shares were made as may be required by the rules and regulations of such exchange or market. The Prospectus and any amendments or supplements thereto furnished in accordance with this Section will be identical to the electronically transmitted copies thereof filed with the Commission pursuant to EDGAR, except to the extent permitted by Regulation S-T.

(f) *Reporting Requirements.* The Company, during the period in which a prospectus is (or, but for the exception afforded by Rule 172, would be) required by the 1933 Act to be delivered in connection with any offer or sale of Shares, will file all documents required to be filed with the Commission pursuant to the 1934 Act within the time periods prescribed by, and meeting the requirements of, the 1934 Act and the 1934 Act Regulations. Additionally, the Company shall report the use of the net proceeds from the sale of any Shares as may be required under the 1933 Act and the 1933 Act Regulations, including, if applicable, Rule 463 of the 1933 Act Regulations.

(g) *Blue Sky Qualifications.* The Company will use its commercially reasonable efforts, in cooperation with the Agents or, in the case of an offer and sale of Shares to the applicable Agent or Agents as principal, such Agent or Agents to qualify the Shares for offering and sale under the applicable securities laws of such states and non-U.S. jurisdictions as the Agents or such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, may, from time to time, designate in consultation with the Company and to maintain such qualifications in effect so long as required to complete the sale of the Shares contemplated by this Agreement; provided, however, that the Company shall not be obligated to file any general consent to service of process or to qualify as a foreign corporation or as a dealer in securities in any jurisdiction in which it is not so qualified or to subject itself to taxation in respect of doing business in any jurisdiction in which it is not otherwise so subject.

13

(h) *Earnings Statement.* The Company will timely file such reports pursuant to the 1934 Act as are necessary in order to make generally available to its securityholders as soon as practicable an earnings statement for the purposes of, and to provide to the Agents the benefits contemplated by, the last paragraph of Section 11(a) of the 1933 Act.

(i) *Use of Proceeds.* The Company will use the net proceeds received by it from the sale of the Shares pursuant to this Agreement in the manner specified in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus under “Use of Proceeds.”

(j) *Listing.* The Company will use its commercially reasonable efforts to effect and maintain the listing of the Shares on, and satisfy the requirements of, the NYSE.

(k) *Notice of Certain Actions.* At any time that sales of the Shares have been made but not settled or at any time the Company has outstanding with an Agent any instructions to sell Shares but such instructions have not been fulfilled or cancelled, the Company will not, without the prior written consent of the Agents, unless it gives the Agents at least three business days’ prior written notice, (i) directly or indirectly offer, pledge, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant to purchase or otherwise transfer or dispose of any shares of Common Stock or any securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for shares of Common Stock or file any registration statement under the 1933 Act with respect to any of the foregoing or (ii) enter into any swap or any other agreement or transaction that transfers, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, the economic consequence of ownership of the Common Stock, whether any such swap, agreement or transaction described in clause (i) or (ii) above is to be settled by delivery of Common Stock or such other securities, in cash or otherwise. The foregoing sentence shall not apply to (A) the Shares to be sold hereunder, (B) any shares of Common Stock issued by the Company upon the exercise of an option or warrant or the settlement or conversion of a security outstanding on the date hereof (or subsequently issued in compliance herewith) and referred to in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, (C) any shares of Common Stock issued or options to purchase Common Stock or other equity incentive awards granted pursuant to existing employee benefit plans of the Company referred to in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus or (D) any shares of Common Stock issued pursuant to any non-employee director stock plan or dividend reinvestment plan referred to in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus. Upon receipt of any written notice contemplated above, an Agent may suspend its activity under this Agreement for such period of time as deemed appropriate by such Agent.

(l) *Issuer Free Writing Prospectuses.* The Company agrees that, unless it obtains the prior written consent of the applicable Agent, it will not make any offer relating to the Shares that would constitute an Issuer Free Writing Prospectus or that would otherwise constitute a “free writing prospectus,” or a portion thereof, required to be filed by the Company with the Commission or retained by the Company under Rule 433. The Company represents that it has treated or agrees that it will treat each such free writing prospectus consented to by the Company and the applicable Agent as an “issuer free writing prospectus,” as defined in Rule 433, and that it will comply with the applicable requirements of Rule 433 with respect thereto, including timely filing with the Commission where required, legending and record keeping. If at any time following issuance of an Issuer Free Writing Prospectus any event shall occur or condition shall exist as a result of which such Issuer Free Writing Prospectus conflicted or would conflict with the information contained in the Registration Statement, any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus or included or would include an untrue statement of a material fact or omitted or would omit to state a material fact necessary in order to make the statements therein, in the light of the circumstances existing at that subsequent time, not misleading, the Company will promptly notify the applicable Agent and will promptly amend or supplement, at its own expense, such Issuer Free Writing Prospectus to eliminate or correct such conflict, untrue statement or omission.

(m) *No Stabilization or Manipulation.* The Company agrees that neither it nor any affiliate of the Company will take, directly or indirectly, any action which is designed, or would be expected, to cause or result in, or which constitutes, the stabilization or manipulation of the price of any security of the Company to facilitate the sale or resale of any Shares or to result in a violation of Regulation M under the 1934 Act.

(n) *Update of Activity under this Agreement.* The Company shall disclose (i) in each Annual Report on Form 10-K or Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the Company in respect of any fiscal quarterly period

14

(which, in the case of an Annual Report on Form 10-K, would mean the last quarterly period of the fiscal year) in which sales of Shares were made by or through an Agent under this Agreement (each date on which any such document or amendment thereto is filed, a “Company Periodic Report Date”), or (ii) to the extent required by applicable law and/or interpretations of the Commission, in Prospectus Supplements for each such fiscal quarterly period, the number of Shares sold by or through the Agents under this Agreement during such fiscal quarterly period and the net proceeds received by the Company and the aggregate compensation paid by the Company to the Agents with respect to such sales.

(o) *Delivery of Future Officers' Certificates.* Upon commencement of the offering of Shares under this Agreement, (A) each time Shares are delivered to the applicable Agent or Agents as principal on a Settlement Date, (B) promptly after each (i) date on which the Registration Statement shall be amended or a new registration statement relating to the Shares shall become effective or the Prospectus shall be amended or supplemented (other than (1) by an amendment or supplement providing solely for the determination of the terms of securities, including the Shares, (2) in connection with the filing of a Prospectus Supplement that contains solely the information referred to in Section 3(n) hereof, or (3) in connection with the filing of any Current Report on Form 8-K (other than an Earnings 8-K and any other Current Report on Form 8-K which contains financial statements, supporting schedules or other financial data, including any Current Report on Form 8-K under Item 2.02 of such form that is considered "filed" under the 1934 Act) (each such date, a "Registration Statement Amendment Date"), (ii) date on which an Earnings 8-K shall be filed with the Commission as contemplated by Section 2(j) hereof (a "Company Earnings Report Date") and (iii) Company Periodic Report Date, and (C) promptly after each reasonable request by the Agents (each date of any such request by the Agents, a "Request Date" and together with any Registration Statement Amendment Date, Company Earnings Report Date or Company Periodic Report Date, a "Representation Date"), the Company will furnish or cause to be furnished to the Agents or, in the case of clause (A) above, the applicable Agent an officers' certificate, dated such Settlement Date or such Representation Date, as the case may be, in form and substance reasonably satisfactory to the Agents, or, in the case of clause (A) above, such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, to the effect that the statements contained in the officers' certificate referred to in Section 5(f) hereof that was last furnished to the Agents or, in the case of clause (A) above, such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, are true and correct as of the date of such certificate as though made at and as of the date of such certificate (except that such statements shall be deemed to relate to the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus as amended and supplemented at the date of such certificate) or, in lieu of such certificate, a certificate of the same tenor as the certificate referred to in Section 5(f) hereof that, but modified as necessary to relate to the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus as amended and supplemented at the date of such certificate. The requirement to provide a certificate pursuant to clause (B) of the first sentence of this Section 3(o) shall be waived for any Representation Date occurring at a time at which no instruction to the Agents to sell Shares pursuant to Section 2(b) has been delivered by the Company or is pending. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Company subsequently decides to sell Shares following any Representation Date when the Company relied on such waiver and did not provide the Agents a certificate pursuant to clause (B) of the first sentence of this Section 3(o), then before the Company instructs the Agents to sell Shares pursuant to Section 2(b), the Company shall promptly provide the Agents such certificate. As used in this Section 3(o), to the extent there shall be a sale of Shares on or following any Representation Date, "promptly" shall be deemed to be on or prior to the Applicable Time for such sale.

(p) *Delivery of Future Opinions and Letters of Counsel.* Upon commencement of the offering of Shares under this Agreement, (A) each time Shares are delivered to the applicable Agent or Agents as principal on a Settlement Date and (B) promptly after each Representation Date, the Company will furnish or cause to be furnished to the Agents or, in the case of clause (A) above, the applicable Agent or Agents the written opinions and letters of each of counsel to the Company (who shall be reasonably acceptable to the Agents) or, in the case of clause (A) above, such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, and counsel to the Agents, dated such Settlement Date or such Representation Date, as the case may be, in form and substance reasonably satisfactory to the Agents, or, in the case of clause (A) above, such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, of the same tenor as the respective opinions and letters referred to in Section 5(b) and 5(c), as applicable, hereof but modified as necessary to relate to the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus as amended and supplemented to the date of such opinion and letter or, in lieu of any such opinion and letter, counsel last furnishing such opinion and letter to the Agents or, in the case of clause (A) above, such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, shall furnish the Agents or, in the case of clause (A) above, such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, with a letter substantially to the effect that the Agents or, in the case of clause (A) above, such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, may rely on

15

such counsel's last opinion and letter to the same extent as though each were dated the date of such letter authorizing reliance (except that statements in such last opinion and letter shall be deemed to relate to the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus as amended and supplemented to the date of such letter authorizing reliance). The requirement to provide an opinion pursuant to clause (B) of the first sentence of this Section 3(p) shall be waived for any Representation Date occurring at a time at which no instruction to the Agents to sell Shares pursuant to Section 2(b) has been delivered by the Company or is pending. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Company subsequently decides to sell Shares following any Representation Date when the Company relied on such waiver and did not provide the Agents an opinion pursuant to clause (B) of the first sentence of this Section 3(p), then before the Company instructs any Agent to sell Shares pursuant to Section 2(b), the Company shall promptly provide the Agents such opinion. As used in this Section 3(p), to the extent there shall be a sale of Shares on or following any Representation Date, "promptly" shall be deemed to be on or prior to the Applicable Time for such sale.

(q) *Delivery of Future Accountants' and Reserve Engineers' Letters.* Upon commencement of the offering of Shares under this Agreement, (A) each time Shares are delivered to the applicable Agent or Agents as principal on a Settlement Date and (B) promptly after each Representation Date, the Company will cause its independent accountants and reserve engineers to furnish to the Agents or, in the case of clause (A) above, the applicable Agent or Agents a letter, dated such Settlement Date or such Representation Date, as the case may be, in form and substance reasonably satisfactory to the Agents, or, in the case of clause (A) above, such Agent or Agents, as the case may be, of the same tenor as the letters referred to in Section 5(d) hereof but modified as necessary to relate to the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus as amended and supplemented to the date of such letter; *provided, however*, that such letter shall be required from KPMG LLP only to the extent new or modified information audited or reviewed by such firm has been included in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package or the Prospectus since the most recent prior delivery of a letter from such firm under this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement. The requirement to provide such letters pursuant to clause (B) of the first sentence of this Section 3(q) shall be waived for any Representation Date occurring at a time at which no instruction to the Agents to sell Shares pursuant to Section 2(b) has been delivered by the Company or is pending. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Company subsequently decides to sell Shares following any Representation Date when the Company relied on such waiver and did not provide the Agents such letters pursuant to clause (B) of the first sentence of this Section 3(p), then before the Company instructs any Agent to sell Shares pursuant to Section 2(b), the Company shall promptly provide the Agents such opinion. As used in this paragraph, to the extent there shall be a sale of Shares on or following any Representation Date, "promptly" shall be deemed to be on or prior to the Applicable Time for such sale.

(r) *Trading in the Common Stock.* The Company consents to the Agents trading in the Company's Common Stock for their own respective accounts and for the accounts of their respective clients at the same time as sales of Shares occur pursuant to this Agreement; *provided* that the Company is not responsible for the compliance by the Agents with applicable laws and regulations (including Regulation M) that apply to such Agents with respect to any such trading. For the avoidance of doubt, the representations, warranties and covenants of the Company in this Agreement are made solely with respect to the offering of the Shares hereunder and do not apply to such trading.

(s) *Non-Consummation Offer.* If, to the knowledge of the Company, any filing required by Rule 424 in connection with an offering of Shares shall not have been made, the Company will offer to any person who has agreed to purchase Shares from or through an Agent the right to refuse to purchase

and pay for such Shares.

(t) *Due Diligence Review.* The Company will cooperate with any due diligence review reasonably requested by the Agents or counsel for the Agents, after consultation with the Company, in connections with offers and sales of Shares from time to time, including, without limitation, and upon reasonable notice, providing information and making available documents and appropriate corporate officers, during regular business hours and at the Company's principal offices.

(u) *Renewal Deadline.* If, immediately prior to the third anniversary of the initial effective date of the Registration Statement (the "Renewal Deadline"), this Agreement is still in effect, the Company will promptly file, if it is eligible to do so, a new automatic shelf registration statement relating to the Shares, in a form and substance satisfactory to the Agents. If, at the time the Company intends to file such a new automatic shelf registration

16

statement, it is not eligible to do so, the Company will, prior to the Renewal Deadline, (i) promptly notify the Agents, (ii) promptly file a new registration statement on the proper form relating to the Shares, in a form and substance satisfactory to the Agents, (iii) use its commercially reasonable efforts to cause such new registration statement to be declared effective within 60 days after the Renewal Deadline and (iv) promptly notify the Agents of such effectiveness. The Company will take all other action necessary or appropriate to permit the offering and sale of the Shares to continue as contemplated in the expired Registration Statement. References herein to the "Registration Statement" shall include such new registration statement or such new shelf registration statement, as the case may be.

(v) *Ceasing Eligibility For Use of Registration Statement.* If, at any time, during the term of this Agreement, the Company receives a notice from the Commission pursuant to Rule 401(g)(2) or otherwise ceases to be eligible to use the Registration Statement, the Company will (i) promptly notify the Agents, (ii) promptly file a new shelf registration statement or post-effective amendment on the proper form relating to such Shares, in form and substance satisfactory to the Agents, (iii) use its commercially reasonable efforts to cause such new shelf registration statement or post-effective amendment to be declared effective as soon as practicable and (iv) promptly notify the Agents of such effectiveness. The Company will take all other action necessary or appropriate to permit the offering and sale of the Shares to continue as contemplated in the Registration Statement that was the subject of the Rule 401(g)(2) notice or for which the Company has otherwise become ineligible. References herein to the "Registration Statement" shall include such new registration statement or post-effective amendment, as the case may be.

Section 4. Payment of Expenses.

(a) *Expenses.* The Company will pay or cause to be paid all expenses incident to the performance of their obligations under this Agreement, including (i) the preparation and filing of the Registration Statement (including financial statements and exhibits) as originally filed and each amendment thereto, (ii) the preparation and delivery to the Agents of such number of copies of any preliminary prospectus, any Issuer Free Writing Prospectus and the Prospectus and any amendments or supplements thereto as reasonably requested by the Agents, (iii) the preparation, issuance and delivery of any certificates for the Shares, including any stock or other transfer taxes and any stamp or other duties payable upon the sale, issuance or delivery of the Shares to the Agents, (iv) the fees and disbursements of the Company's counsel, accountants and other advisors, (v) the qualification of the Shares under securities laws in accordance with the provisions of Section 3(g) hereof, including filing fees and the reasonable fees and disbursements of counsel for the Agents in connection therewith and in connection with the preparation of the Blue Sky Survey and any supplement thereto (such fees and disbursements of counsel for the Agents not to exceed \$15,000), (vi) the fees and expenses of any transfer agent or registrar for the Shares, (vii) the costs and expenses of the Company relating to investor presentations on any "road show" undertaken in connection with the marketing of the Shares, (viii) the filing fees incident to, and the reasonable fees and disbursements of counsel for the Agents in connection with, the review by FINRA of the terms of sales of Shares (such fees and disbursements of counsel for the Agents not to exceed \$20,000), and (ix) the fees and expenses incurred in connection with the listing of the Shares on the NYSE.

(b) If an aggregate offering price of Shares of at least \$60,000,000.00 have not been offered and sold under this Agreement by September 18, 2017 (or such earlier date on which the Company terminates this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement), the Company shall reimburse the Agents for all of their reasonable and documented out-of-pocket expenses, including the reasonable fees and disbursements of counsel for the Agents incurred in connection with this Agreement.

Section 5. Conditions of Agents' Obligations. The obligations of the Agents hereunder are subject to the accuracy of the representations and warranties of the Company contained herein or in certificates of any officer of the Company or any of its subsidiaries delivered pursuant to the provisions hereof at each Representation Date, to the performance by the Company of its covenants and other obligations hereunder, and to the following further conditions:

(a) *Effectiveness of Registration Statement and Filing of Prospectus.* The Company shall have filed the Registration Statement with the Commission not earlier than three years prior to the date hereof and the Registration Statement became effective upon filing in accordance with Rule 462(e). The Company shall have filed with the Commission the Prospectus on or prior to the date of this Agreement and any subsequent Base Prospectus

17

or Prospectus Supplement prior to any Applicable Time and related Settlement Date, as applicable, in each case in the manner and within the time period required by Rule 424(b), and each Issuer Free Writing Prospectus, if any, in the manner and within the time period required by Rule 433. No stop order suspending the effectiveness of the Registration Statement or any post-effective amendment thereto has been issued under the 1933 Act, no notice of objection of the Commission to the use of the Registration Statement or any post-effective amendment thereto pursuant to Rule 401(g)(2) has been received by the Company, no order preventing or suspending the use of any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus or any amendment or supplement thereto has been issued and no proceedings for any of those purposes have been instituted or, to the Company's knowledge, contemplated by the Commission. The Company shall have complied with any and all requests for additional information on the part of the Commission to the reasonable satisfaction of the Agents. The Company shall have paid the required Commission filing fees relating to the Shares as specified in Section 3(a) hereof.

(b) *Opinion of Counsel for the Agents.* On the date of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement, the Agents shall have received the favorable written opinion or opinions of Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, counsel for the Agents, dated such date, with respect to such matters as the Agents may reasonably request. In giving such opinion or opinions, such counsel may rely, as to all matters governed by the laws of jurisdictions other than the laws of

the State of New York, the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware and the federal securities laws of the United States, upon the opinions of counsel satisfactory to the Agents. Such counsel may also state that, insofar as such opinion involves factual matters, they have relied, to the extent they deem proper, upon certificates of officers and other representatives of the Company and its subsidiaries and certificates of public officials.

(c) *Opinion of In-House Counsel and Company Counsel.* On the date of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement, the Agents shall have received the favorable written opinion or opinions of (i) the General Counsel of the Company and (ii) Faegre Baker Daniels LLP, counsel to the Company, each dated such date, to the effect set forth in Exhibit A and Exhibit B hereto, respectively, and to such further effect as the Agents may reasonably request.

(d) *Accountants' and Reserve Engineers' Letters.* On the date of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement, the Agents shall have received (i) letters from Deloitte & Touche LLP and KPMG LLP, each dated such date, in form and substance satisfactory to the Agents, containing statements and information of the type ordinarily included in accountants' "comfort letters" to underwriters with respect to the financial statements and other financial information included in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus or any amendment or supplement thereto and substantially in the forms of Exhibit C and Exhibit D hereto, respectively and (ii) a letter from Cawley, Gillespie & Associates, Inc., dated such date, in form and substance satisfactory to the Agents, containing statements and information with respect to the estimated oil and gas reserves of the Company and its subsidiaries and substantially in the form of Exhibit E hereto.

(e) *Officer's Certificate on Size of ATM Program.* On the date of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement, the Company shall have furnished to the Agents a certificate of an executive officer of the Company, dated such date, in a form satisfactory to the Agents, stating the minimum gross sales price per share for sales of Shares pursuant to this Agreement and the maximum number of Shares that may be issued and sold pursuant to this Agreement or, alternatively, the maximum gross proceeds from such sales, as duly authorized by the Company's board of directors or a duly authorized committee thereof, and specify the number of Shares that have been approved for listing subject to official notice of issuance, on the NYSE.

(f) *Officers' Certificate for the Company.* On the date of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement, there shall not have been, since the date of the latest audited financial statements included in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus or since the respective dates as of which information is given in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package and the Prospectus, any Material Adverse Effect, and the Agents shall have received a certificate of the Chief Financial Officer or Chief Accounting Officer of the Company and of the General Counsel of the Company, dated such date, to the effect that (A) there has been no such Material Adverse Effect, (B) the representations and warranties of the Company in this Agreement are true and correct with the same force and effect as though expressly made on and as of such date, (C) the Company has complied with all agreements and satisfied all conditions on its part to be performed or satisfied on or prior to such date and (iv) no stop order suspending the effectiveness of the Registration Statement or any post-effective amendment thereto has been issued under the 1933 Act, no notice of objection of the Commission to the use of the

18

Registration Statement or any post-effective amendment thereto pursuant to Rule 401(g)(2) has been received by the Company, no order preventing or suspending the use of any preliminary prospectus or the Prospectus or any amendment or supplement thereto has been issued and no proceedings for any of those purposes have been instituted, to their knowledge, contemplated by the Commission.

(g) *Listing.* The Shares shall have been approved for listing, subject to official notice of issuance, on the NYSE.

(h) *Additional Documents.* On the date of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement, counsel for the Agents shall have been furnished with such documents and opinions as they may reasonably require for the purpose of enabling them to render the opinions or make the statements reasonably requested by the Agents, or in order to reasonably evidence the accuracy of any of the representations or warranties, or the fulfillment of any of the covenants, obligations or conditions, contained herein; and all proceedings taken by the Company in connection with the issuance and sale of the Shares as contemplated herein shall be reasonably satisfactory in form and substance to the Agents and counsel for the Agents.

(i) *Termination of this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement.* If any condition specified in this Section shall not have been fulfilled when and as required to be fulfilled, this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement may be terminated by the applicable Agent by notice to the Company at any time, and any such termination shall be without liability of any party to any other party except the provisions of Sections 1, 3(h), 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13 and 14 hereof shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding such termination. For the avoidance of doubt, in the event of any such termination by an Agent, this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement will continue to remain in full force and effect with respect to the other Agents.

Section 6. Indemnification.

(a) *Indemnification of the Agents.* The Company will indemnify and hold harmless each Agent, its partners, members, directors, officers, employees, agents, affiliates and each person, if any, who controls such Agent within the meaning of Section 15 of the Act or Section 20 of the Exchange Act (each, an "Indemnified Party"), against any and all losses, claims, damages or liabilities, joint or several, to which such Indemnified Party may become subject, under the 1933 Act, the 1934 Act, other federal or state statutory law or regulation or otherwise, insofar as such losses, claims, damages or liabilities (or actions in respect thereof) arise out of or are based upon any untrue statement or alleged untrue statement of any material fact contained in any part of the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package, the Prospectus or any Issuer Free Writing Prospectus, or arise out of or are based upon the omission or alleged omission of a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary to make the statements therein not misleading, and will reimburse each Indemnified Party for any legal or other expenses reasonably incurred by such Indemnified Party in connection with investigating or defending against any loss, claim, damage, liability, action, litigation, investigation or proceeding whatsoever (whether or not such Indemnified Party is a party thereto), whether threatened or commenced, and in connection with the enforcement of this provision with respect to any of the above as such expenses are incurred; provided, however, that the Company will not be liable in any such case to the extent that any such loss, claim, damage or liability arises out of or is based upon an untrue statement or alleged untrue statement in or omission or alleged omission from any of such documents in reliance upon and in conformity with written information furnished to the Company by any specifically for use therein, it being understood and agreed that as of the date hereof the only such information furnished by any Agent consists of the information described in subsection (b) below.

(b) *Indemnification of Company.* Each Agent will severally and not jointly indemnify and hold harmless the Company, each of its directors and each of its officers who signs a Registration Statement and each person, if any, who controls the Company within the meaning of Section 15 of the Act or Section 20 of the Exchange Act (each, an "Agent Indemnified Party"), against any losses, claims, damages or liabilities to which such Agent Indemnified Party may become subject, under the 1933 Act, the 1934 Act, other federal or state statutory law or regulation or otherwise, insofar as such losses, claims, damages or liabilities (or actions in respect thereof) arise out of or are based upon any untrue statement or alleged untrue statement of any material fact

extent, that such untrue statement or alleged untrue statement or omission or alleged omission was made in reliance upon and in conformity with written information furnished to the Company by such Agent specifically for use therein, and will reimburse any legal or other expenses reasonably incurred by such Agent Indemnified Party in connection with investigating or defending against any such loss, claim, damage, liability, action, litigation, investigation or proceeding whatsoever (whether or not such Agent Indemnified Party is a party thereto), whether threatened or commenced, based upon any such untrue statement or omission, or any such alleged untrue statement or omission as such expenses are incurred, it being understood and agreed that as of the date hereof the only such information furnished by any Agent consists of the following information in the Prospectus: the third sentence of the second paragraph and the first and second sentences of the fourth paragraph under the caption "Plan of Distribution".

(c) *Actions against Parties; Notification.* Promptly after receipt by an indemnified party under this Section of notice of the commencement of any action, such indemnified party will, if a claim in respect thereof is to be made against the indemnifying party under subsection (a) or (b) above, notify the indemnifying party of the commencement thereof; but the failure to notify the indemnifying party shall not relieve it from any liability that it may have under subsection (a) or (b) above except to the extent that it has been materially prejudiced (through the forfeiture of substantive rights or defenses) by such failure; and provided further that the failure to notify the indemnifying party shall not relieve it from any liability that it may have to an indemnified party otherwise than under subsection (a) or (b) above. In case any such action is brought against any indemnified party and it notifies the indemnifying party of the commencement thereof, the indemnifying party will be entitled to participate therein and, to the extent that it may wish, jointly with any other indemnifying party similarly notified, to assume the defense thereof, with counsel satisfactory to such indemnified party (who shall not, except with the consent of the indemnified party, be counsel to the indemnifying party), and after notice from the indemnifying party to such indemnified party of its election so to assume the defense thereof, the indemnifying party will not be liable to such indemnified party under this Section for any legal or other expenses subsequently incurred by such indemnified party in connection with the defense thereof other than reasonable costs of investigation. No indemnifying party shall, without the prior written consent of the indemnified party, effect any settlement of any pending or threatened action in respect of which any indemnified party is or could have been a party and indemnity could have been sought hereunder by such indemnified party unless such settlement (i) includes an unconditional release of such indemnified party from all liability on any claims that are the subject matter of such action and (ii) does not include a statement as to, or an admission of, fault, culpability or a failure to act by or on behalf of an indemnified party.

(d) Insofar as this indemnity agreement may permit indemnification for liabilities under the 1933 Act of an Agent or any person who is a member or partner of an Agent or who controls an Agent within the meaning of Section 15 of the 1933 Act or Section 20 of the 1934 Act and who is a director or officer of the Company or controls the Company within the meaning of Section 15 of the 1933 Act or Section 20 of the 1934 Act, such indemnity agreement is subject to the undertaking of the Company in the Registration Statement under Item 17 thereof.

Section 7. Contribution. If the indemnification provided for in Section 6 is unavailable or insufficient to hold harmless an indemnified party under subsection (a) or (b) of such Section 6, then each indemnifying party shall contribute to the amount paid or payable by such indemnified party as a result of the losses, claims, damages or liabilities referred to in subsection (a) or (b) of such Section 6 (i) in such proportion as is appropriate to reflect the relative benefits received by the Company on the one hand and the applicable Agent or Agents on the other from the offering of the Shares or (ii) if the allocation provided by clause (i) above is not permitted by applicable law, in such proportion as is appropriate to reflect not only the relative benefits referred to in clause (i) above but also the relative fault of the Company on the one hand and the applicable Agent or Agents on the other in connection with the statements or omissions which resulted in such losses, claims, damages or liabilities as well as any other relevant equitable considerations. The relative benefits received by the Company on the one hand and the applicable Agent or Agents on the other shall be deemed to be in the same proportion as the total net proceeds from the offering (before deducting expenses) received by the Company bear to the total discounts and commissions received by the applicable Agent or Agents. The relative fault shall be determined by reference to, among other things, whether the untrue or alleged untrue statement of a material fact or the omission or alleged omission to state a material fact relates to information supplied by the Company or the applicable Agent or Agents and the parties' relative intent, knowledge, access to information and opportunity to correct or prevent such untrue statement or omission. The amount paid by an indemnified party as a result of the losses, claims, damages or liabilities referred to in the first sentence of this Section 7 shall be deemed to include any legal or other expenses reasonably incurred by such

indemnified party in connection with investigating or defending any action or claim which is the subject of this Section 7. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section 7, no Agent shall be required to contribute any amount in excess of the amount by which the total price at which the Shares distributed by it to the public were offered to the public exceeds the amount of any damages which such Agent has otherwise been required to pay by reason of such untrue or alleged untrue statement or omission or alleged omission. No person guilty of fraudulent misrepresentation (within the meaning of Section 11(f) of the 1933 Act) shall be entitled to contribution from any person who was not guilty of such fraudulent misrepresentation. The Agents' obligations in this Section 7 to contribute are several in proportion to their respective underwriting obligations and not joint. The Company and the Agents agree that it would not be just and equitable if contribution pursuant to this Section 7 were determined by pro rata allocation (even if the Agents were treated as one entity for such purpose) or by any other method of allocation which does not take account of the equitable considerations referred to in this Section 7.

Section 8. Representations, Warranties and Agreements to Survive. All representations, warranties and agreements contained in this Agreement or in certificates of officers of the Company or any of its subsidiaries submitted pursuant hereto, shall remain operative and in full force and effect regardless of (i) any investigation made by or on behalf of an Agent or its Affiliates, selling agents, officers or directors or any person controlling such Agent, or the Company or its officers or directors, or any person controlling the Company and (ii) delivery of and payment for the Shares.

Section 9. Termination.

(a) This Equity Distribution Sales Agreement may be terminated for any reason, at any time, by either the Company or an Agent, solely as to itself, at any time. For the avoidance of doubt, in the event of any termination of this Agreement by an Agent, this Equity Distribution Sales Agreement will still remain in full force and effect with respect to the Company and the non-terminating Agent. This Equity Distribution Sales Agreement will automatically terminate following the sale of Shares having an aggregate gross sales price of \$200,000,000.

(b) The applicable Agent or Agents may terminate a Terms Agreement to which it is or they are a party, at any time at or prior to the Settlement Date, (i) if there has been, in the judgment of such Agent or Agents, since the time of execution of such Terms Agreement or since the respective dates as of which information is given in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package or the Prospectus, any Material Adverse Effect, or (ii) if there has occurred any material adverse change in the financial markets in the United States or the international financial markets, any outbreak of hostilities or escalation thereof or other calamity or crisis or any change or development involving a prospective change in national or international political, financial or economic conditions, in each case the effect of which is such as to make it, in the judgment of such Agent or Agents, impracticable or inadvisable to proceed with the completion of the offering of Shares contemplated by such Terms Agreement or to enforce contracts for the sale of such Shares, or (iii) if trading in any securities of the Company has been suspended or materially limited by the Commission or the NYSE, or (iv) if trading generally on the NYSE, the NYSE Amex or NASDAQ has been suspended or materially limited, or minimum or maximum prices for trading have been fixed, or maximum ranges for prices have been required, by any of said exchanges or by order of the Commission, FINRA or any other Governmental Entity, or (v) if a material disruption has occurred in commercial banking or securities settlement or clearance services in the United States or with respect to the systems of Clearstream Banking, société anonyme, or Euroclear Bank, S.A./N.V., in Europe, or (vi) if a banking moratorium has been declared by either Federal or New York authorities.

(c) If the Company and two or more Agents enter into a Terms Agreement pursuant to which such Agents agree to purchase Shares from the Company as principal and one or more of such Agents shall fail at the Settlement Date to purchase the Shares which it or they are obligated to purchase (the “Defaulted Shares”), then the nondefaulting Agents shall have the right, within 24 hours thereafter, to make arrangements for one of them or one or more other Agents or underwriters to purchase all, but not less than all, of the Defaulted Shares in such amounts as may be agreed upon and upon the terms herein set forth; provided, however, that if such arrangements shall not have been completed within such 24-hour period, then:

(i) if the number of Defaulted Shares does not exceed 10% of the number of Shares to be so purchased by all of such Agents on the Settlement Date, the nondefaulting Agents shall be obligated,

21

severally and not jointly, to purchase the full amount thereof in the proportions that their respective initial purchase obligation bears to the purchase obligations of all nondefaulting Agents; or

(ii) if the number of Defaulted Shares exceeds 10% of the number of Shares to be so purchased by all of such Agents on the Settlement Date, such Terms Agreement shall terminate without liability on the part of any nondefaulting Agent.

No action taken pursuant to this Section 9(c) shall relieve any defaulting Agent from liability in respect of its default. In the event of any such default which does not result in a termination of such Terms Agreement, either the nondefaulting Agents or the Company shall have the right to postpone the Settlement Date for a period not exceeding seven days in order to effect any required changes in the Registration Statement, the General Disclosure Package or the Prospectus or in any other documents or arrangements.

(d) In the event of any termination under this Section 9, neither party will have any liability to the other party hereto, except that (i) the Agents shall be entitled to any commissions earned in accordance with Section 2(b) hereof, (ii) if at the time of termination (a) an Agent shall own any Shares purchased by it as principal or (b) an offer to purchase any Shares has been accepted by the Company but the Settlement Date has not occurred, the covenants set forth in Section 3 hereof shall remain in effect until such Shares are resold or so delivered, as the case may be, and (iii) the covenant set forth in Section 3(h) hereof, the provisions of Section 4 hereof, the indemnity and contribution agreements set forth in Sections 6 and 7 hereof, and the provisions of Sections 8, 12, 13 and 14 hereof shall remain in effect.

Section 10. Notices. All notices and other communications hereunder shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been duly given if mailed or transmitted by any standard form of telecommunication. Notices to the Agents shall be directed to them c/o Merrill Lynch, One Bryant Park, New York, New York 10036, Attention: Syndicate Department (facsimile: (646) 855-3073), with a copy to ECM Legal, Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC, 1585 Broadway, New York, New York 10036, Attention: Equity Syndicate Desk (facsimile: (212) 230-8730), with a copy to the Legal Department, and Mitsubishi UFJ Securities (USA), Inc., 1221 Avenue of the Americas, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10020-1001, Attention: Capital Markets Group; and notices to the Company shall be directed to it at 625 Ninth Street, Rapid City, SD 57709, Attention: Steven J. Helmers, Esq., General Counsel.

Section 11. No Advisory or Fiduciary Relationship. The Company acknowledges and agrees that (a) each purchase and sale of Shares pursuant to this Agreement, including the determination of the respective initial public offering prices of Shares, if any, and any related discounts and commissions, is an arm’s-length commercial transaction between the Company, on the one hand, and the applicable Agent, on the other hand, (b) the Agents have not assumed and will not assume any advisory or fiduciary responsibility in favor of the Company or any of its subsidiaries or other affiliates with respect to any offering of Shares or the process leading thereto (irrespective of whether the applicable Agent has advised or is currently advising the Company or any of its subsidiaries or other affiliates on other matters) or any other obligation to the Company except the obligations expressly set forth in this Agreement, (c) the Agents and their respective affiliates may be engaged in a broad range of transactions that involve interests that differ from those of the Company, and (d) the Agents have not provided any legal, accounting, financial, regulatory or tax advice to the Company or any other person or entity with respect to any offering of Shares and the Company has consulted its own respective legal, accounting, financial, regulatory and tax advisors to the extent it deemed appropriate.

Section 12. Parties. This Agreement shall each inure to the benefit of and be binding upon the Agents and the Company and their respective successors. This Agreement shall each inure to the benefit of and be binding upon BofAML Securities, Inc. as an assignee to the Agent without prior written consent of any party. Nothing expressed or mentioned in this Agreement is intended or shall be construed to give any person, firm or corporation, other than the Agents, their respective Affiliates and selling agents, the Company and their respective successors and the controlling persons and officers and directors referred to in Sections 6 and 7 and their heirs and legal representatives, any legal or equitable right, remedy or claim under or in respect of this Agreement or any provision herein contained. This Agreement and all conditions and provisions hereof are intended to be for the sole and exclusive benefit of the Agents, their respective Affiliates and selling agents, the Company and their respective successors, and said controlling persons and officers and directors and their heirs and legal representatives, and for the benefit of

22

no other person, firm or corporation. No purchaser of Shares shall be deemed to be a successor by reason merely of such purchase.

Section 13. GOVERNING LAW. THIS AGREEMENT AND ANY CLAIM, CONTROVERSY OR DISPUTE ARISING UNDER OR RELATED TO THIS AGREEMENT SHALL BE GOVERNED BY, AND CONSTRUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS OF, THE STATE OF NEW YORK WITHOUT REGARD TO ITS CHOICE OF LAW PROVISIONS.

Section 14. Consent to Jurisdiction; Waiver of Immunity. Each of the Company and the Agent agrees that any legal suit, action or proceeding arising out of or based upon this Agreement or the transactions contemplated hereby ("Related Proceedings") shall be instituted in (i) the federal courts of the United States of America located in the City and County of New York, Borough of Manhattan or (ii) the courts of the State of New York located in the City and County of New York, Borough of Manhattan (collectively, the "Specified Courts"), and irrevocably submits to the exclusive jurisdiction (except for proceedings instituted in regard to the enforcement of a judgment of any Specified Court (a "Related Judgment"), as to which such jurisdiction is non-exclusive) of the Specified Courts in any such suit, action or proceeding. Service of any process, summons, notice or document by mail to a party's address set forth in Section 11 hereof shall be effective service of process upon such party for any suit, action or proceeding brought in any Specified Court. Each of the Company and the Agents irrevocably and unconditionally waives any objection to the laying of venue of any suit, action or proceeding in the Specified Courts and irrevocably and unconditionally waives and agrees not to plead or claim in any Specified Court that any such suit, action or proceeding brought in any Specified Court has been brought in an inconvenient forum.

Section 15. TIME. TIME SHALL BE OF THE ESSENCE OF THIS AGREEMENT. EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE SET FORTH HEREIN, SPECIFIED TIMES OF DAY REFER TO NEW YORK CITY TIME.

Section 16. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which shall be deemed to be an original, but all such counterparts shall together constitute one and the same Agreement.

Section 17. Effect of Headings. The Section headings herein are for convenience only and shall not affect the construction hereof.

23

If the foregoing is in accordance with your understanding of our agreement, please sign and return to the Company a counterpart hereof, whereupon this instrument, along with all counterparts, will become a binding agreement between the Agents and the Company in accordance with its terms.

Very truly yours,

Black Hills Corporation

By: /s/ Richard W. Kinzley

Name: Richard W. Kinzley

Title: Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

Accepted as of the date hereof:

Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith
Incorporated

By: /s/ Jason Satsky

Name: Jason Satsky

Title: Managing Director

Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC

By: /s/ Edward Molloy

Name: Edward Molloy

Title: Managing Director

Mitsubishi UFJ Securities (USA), Inc.

By: /s/ David McMillan

Name: David McMillan

Title: Managing Director

24

Annex I

Black Hills Corporation

Common Stock
(\$1.00 par value)

TERMS AGREEMENT

[ADDRESS OF AGENT[S]]

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Black Hills Corporation, a South Dakota corporation (the “Company”), proposes, on the basis of the representations and warranties, and subject to the terms and conditions, stated herein and in the Equity Distribution Sales Agreement, dated March 18, 2016 (the “Sales Agreement”), between the Company and the agents party thereto, to issue and sell to [·] and [·] as principal for resale ([collectively,] the “Underwriter[s]”), and the Underwriter[s severally] agree[s] to purchase from the Company the shares of Common Stock specified in the Schedule A hereto (the “[Initial] Securities”) [·], and to grant to the Underwriter[s] the option to purchase the additional shares of Common Stock specified in the Schedule A hereto (the “Option Securities”, and together with the Initial Securities, the “Securities”)*, [in each case]* on the terms specified in Schedule A hereto. Capitalized terms but and not defined herein have the respective meanings ascribed thereto in the Sales Agreement.

[The Company grants an option to the Underwriter[s, severally and not jointly,]to purchase up to an additional [·] Option Securities at the price per share set forth in Schedule A hereto, less an amount per share equal to any dividends or distributions declared by the Company and payable on the Initial Securities but not payable on the Option Securities. The option hereby granted may be exercised for 30 days after the date hereof and may be exercised in whole or in part at any time from time to time upon notice by the Underwriter[s] to the Company setting forth the number of Option Securities as to which the [several] Underwriter[s] [is][are] then exercising the option and the time and date of payment and delivery for such Option Securities. Any such time and date of delivery (a “Date of Delivery”) shall be determined by the Underwriter[s], but shall not be later than seven full business days after the exercise of said option, nor in any event prior to the Settlement Date (as defined below). [If the option is exercised as to all or any portion of the Option Securities, each of the Underwriters, acting severally and not jointly, will purchase that proportion of the total number of Option Securities then being purchased which the number of Initial Securities set forth in Schedule A hereto opposite the name of such Underwriter bears to the total number of Initial Securities, subject, in each case, to such adjustments as [·] in its sole discretion shall make to eliminate any sales or purchases of fractional shares. For purposes of clarity, the parties hereto agree that the officers’ certificate, opinions and letter of counsel and accountants’ letter referred to in Section 3(o), (p) and (q), respectively, of the Sales Agreement are required to be delivered by or on behalf of the Company on the Settlement Date.]]*

Payment of the purchase price for, and delivery of certificates for, the Initial Securities shall be made at the offices of [insert name and address of counsel to the Underwriter[s]], or at such other place as shall be agreed upon by the Underwriter[s] and the Company, at 9:00 A.M. (New York City time) on the third (or fourth, if the pricing occurs after 4:30 P.M. (New York City time) on any given day) business day after the date hereof (unless postponed in accordance with the provisions of Section 9(c) of the Sales Agreement), or such other time not later than ten business days after such date as shall be agreed upon by the Underwriter[s] and the Company (such time and date of payment and delivery being herein called “Settlement Date”).

In addition, in the event that any or all of the Option Securities are purchased by the Underwriter[s], payment of the purchase price for, and delivery of certificates for, such Option Securities shall be made at the above-mentioned offices, or at such other place as shall be agreed upon by the Underwriter[s] and the Company, on each Date of Delivery as specified in the notice from the Underwriter[s] to the Company.

Payment shall be made to the Company by wire transfer of immediately available funds to a bank account designated by the Company against delivery to the Underwriter[s] for their respective accounts for the Securities to be purchased by them). [It is understood that each Underwriter has authorized [·] as representative of the Underwriters, for its account, to accept delivery of, receipt for, and make payment of the purchase price for, the Initial Securities and the Option Securities, if any, which it has agreed to purchase. [·], individually and not as representative of the Underwriters, may (but shall not be obligated to) make payment of the purchase price for the Initial Securities or the Option Securities, if any, to be purchased by any Underwriter whose funds have not been received by the Settlement Date or the relevant Date of Delivery, as the case may be, but such payment shall not relieve such Underwriter from its obligations hereunder.]

Each of the provisions of the Sales Agreement not related solely to the Agent, as agent of the Company, is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety, and shall be deemed to be part of this Terms Agreement to the same extent as if each such provision had been set forth in full herein. Each of the representations and warranties set forth in the Sales Agreement shall be deemed to have been made at and as of the date of this Terms Agreement [and] [·] the Applicable Time [and any Date of Delivery].

If the foregoing is in accordance with your understanding of our agreement, please sign and return to the Company a counterpart hereof, whereupon this instrument, along with all counterparts, will become a binding agreement between the Underwriter[s] and the Company in accordance with its terms.

THIS TERMS AGREEMENT AND ANY CLAIM, CONTROVERSY OR DISPUTE ARISING UNDER OR RELATED TO THIS TERMS AGREEMENT SHALL BE GOVERNED BY, AND CONSTRUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH, THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK WITHOUT REGARD TO ITS CHOICE OF LAW PROVISIONS.

Very truly yours,

Black Hills Corporation

By: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____

Accepted as of the date hereof:

[Underwriter[s]]

By: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____

* Include only if the Underwriter[s][has][have] an option to purchase additional shares of Common Stock from the Company.



Steven J. Helmers
 Sr. Vice President — General Counsel
 Steve.Helmers@blackhillscorp.com

PO Box 1400
 Rapid City, SD 57709-1400
 P: 605.721.2303
 F: 605.721.2597

March 18, 2016

Black Hills Corporation
 625 Ninth Street
 Rapid City, South Dakota 57701

Gentlemen:

I am Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer of Black Hills Corporation, a South Dakota corporation (the “Company”), and I have acted as counsel for the Company in connection with (i) the preparation of a Registration Statement on Form S-3 (File No. 333-197895) (as amended, the “Registration Statement”), with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “Act”) and (ii) the Prospectus Supplement dated March 18, 2016 to the Prospectus dated November 16, 2015 relating to the offer and sale from time to time by the Company under the Registration Statement of up to shares (the “Common Shares”) of Common Stock of the Company, par value \$1.00 per share (the “Common Stock”) having an aggregate gross sales price of up to \$200,000,000.

The Common Shares are to be issued under the Articles of Incorporation, as amended, of the Company (the “Articles of Incorporation”) and distributed pursuant to the Equity Distribution Sales Agreement dated March 18, 2016 (the “Sales Agreement”) by and among the Company and the financial institutions named therein as “Agents.”

I have examined or am otherwise familiar with the Registration Statement, the Sales Agreement, the Articles of Incorporation and the Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Company and such other documents, records and instruments as I have deemed necessary or appropriate for the purposes of the opinions set forth herein.

Based upon and subject to the foregoing and the qualifications set forth in Annex I attached hereto, I am of the opinion that the Common Shares have been duly authorized and, when delivered to and paid for pursuant to the Sales Agreement, will be duly and validly issued, fully paid, and nonassessable.

My opinions set forth herein are limited to the laws of the State of South Dakota (the “Covered Laws”), and I express no opinion as to the effect of any other laws. In rendering opinions as to the Covered Laws, I have only considered the applicability of statutes, rules, regulations and judicial decisions that a lawyer practicing in such jurisdiction (the “Opining Jurisdictions”) exercising customary professional diligence would reasonably recognize as being directly applicable to the Company or the transactions contemplated by the Sales Agreement.

I hereby consent to the filing of this opinion as Exhibit 5.1 to the Current Report and thereby incorporated by reference into the Registration Statement without implying or admitting that I am an “expert” within the meaning of the Act, or other rules and regulations of the Commission issued thereunder with respect to any part of the Registration Statement, including this exhibit.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Steven J. Helmers
 Steven J. Helmers, Senior Vice President,
 General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer

2

Annex I

In rendering the accompanying opinion letter, I wish to advise you of the following additional qualifications to which such opinion letter is subject:

(a) I have relied upon representations made by the Company in the Sales Agreement, the assumptions set forth below as to the matters referred therein, and upon certificates of, and information provided by, officers and employees of the Company reasonably believed by me to be appropriate sources of information, as to the accuracy of such factual matters, in each case without independent verification thereof or other investigation.

(c) I have relied, without investigation, upon the following assumptions: (i) natural persons who are involved on behalf of the Company have sufficient legal capacity to enter into and perform, on behalf of the Company, the transaction in question and to carry out their role in the transaction; (ii) the Sales Agreement has been, and any instruments related to delivery of the Common Shares will be, be duly authorized,

executed and delivered by each party thereto (other than the Company); (iii) all statutes, judicial and administrative decisions, and rules and regulations of governmental agencies, constituting the Covered Laws, are publicly available to lawyers practicing in the Opining Jurisdictions; (iv) all relevant statutes, rules, regulations or agency actions are constitutional and valid unless a reported decision in the Opining Jurisdictions has specifically addressed but not resolved, or has established, its unconstitutionality or invalidity; (v) the Company will not in the future take any discretionary action (including a decision not to act) permitted under the Sales Agreement that would result in a violation of law or constitute a breach or default under any other agreement, order or regulation; (vi) the Company will obtain all permits and governmental approvals required in the future, and take all future actions similarly required, relevant to the performance of the Sales Agreement; (vii) all parties to the transaction will act in accordance with, and will refrain from taking any action that is forbidden by, the terms and conditions of the Sales Agreement and (viii) the officers of the Company will cause the offering of the Common Shares to be conducted in accordance with the limitations imposed from time to time by or pursuant to the resolutions of the Company's board of directors (or relevant committee thereof).

(c) The opinions herein expressed are limited to the specific issues addressed and to facts and laws existing on the date hereof. In rendering these opinions, I do not undertake to advise you with respect to any other matter or of any change in such facts and laws or in the interpretation thereof which may occur after the date hereof.