

## Midstream/MLP Energy

## 4Q23 Earnings wrap: MLP yield hunting, M&amp;A speculation &amp; volatile C-Corp moves

Price Objective Change

## It's a wrap: Despite volatility we stick with LT FCF growth

M&A speculation, yield hunting, and outsized moves on short-term catalysts all were factors for 4Q midstream earnings. But we still prefer moderate long-term growth with strong FCF conversion. OKE is our top C-Corp pick, with the ability to execute its 4-year \$2bn repurchase program in half the time while ET remains our top MLP pick with continued growth and strong existing income with a 9%/14% dividend/FCF yield.

## Yield hunting for MLPs &amp; volatile moves for C-Corp prints

C-Corp prints caused volatile moves, as investors played for catalysts. Following TRGP's update showing moderated '25+ capex, the stock has o/p the AMNA 6% while WMB u/p the AMNA 2% following its release, on lower than expected '25 EBITDA, but has performed in-line since then, even with CHK/CTRA announcing lower gas activity. This indicates a lack of LO only ownership in C-Corps, in our view. And MLPs have generally performed better, with retail ownership drawn in by outsized yields. We believe a FCF yield approach, rather than a div. yield approach, is more appropriate for valuation. WES has received support for its 52% distribution increase, and now trades at a lower FCF yield than larger caps: ET/MPLX/PAA, which have significantly more coverage.

## Back to old school midstream? Dropdowns &amp; full payouts

Sponsor driven MLPs are bringing back some characteristics of traditional MLPs. Both MPLX (9% yield) and WES (10%) are growing distributions, despite already trading at the highest div. yields in the group. And we believe MPLX could buy assets, like MPC's interest in the Gray Oak pipeline, from its sponsor through a cash drop-down that is accretive to both entities, using the >2 turn EV/EBITDA discrepancy between MPC/MPLX. Then, WES increased its distribution 52%, outspending FCF in '24 to fund the distribution and still plans to continue increases, despite uncertain producer activity.

## Small-cap midstream has a M&amp;A premium built in

Industry consolidation in energy continues, but we do not expect midstream to consolidate at the same pace as upstream. But large cap C-corps are facing cash taxes in '25+ causing many to speculate buying a MLP or C-Corp with NOLs, like ETRN, to defer paying cash taxes. ETRN noted it is exploring strategic options, OXY is looking to fund its Crownquest acquisition, with its stake in WES reportedly possibly for sale, and PAA continues to be viewed as a take-out target, despite it strategically acquiring assets to grow standalone. We see unique issues for each of these companies to merge into larger entities, but believe a floor is placed on valuation, given the possibility of consolidation.

## ETRN/KMI/MPLX/OKE/PAA/TRGP Estimate &amp; PO changes

We fully update our estimates through '26 and revise our POs for our coverage universe, with only KNTK & KGS yet to report. We increase POs for the following: OKE (higher terminal growth), PAA (lower WACC from de-leveraging), MPLX (focus on growth), TRGP (lower LT growth capex), and WES (better than expected '24 guide & asset sales to de-lever). We lower our PO for KMI on weaker '25+ estimates. Our ratings are unchanged. We detail catalysts for each stock in the report, with a focus on M&A and asset package transactions.

**BofA Securities does and seeks to do business with issuers covered in its research reports. As a result, investors should be aware that the firm may have a conflict of interest that could affect the objectivity of this report. Investors should consider this report as only a single factor in making their investment decision. Refer to important disclosures on page 28 to 31. Analyst Certification on page 27. Price Objective Basis/Risk on page 25.**

12664863

Timestamp: 28 February 2024 06:16AM EST

28 February 2024

Equity  
Americas  
Master Limited Partnerships

**Neel Mitra, CFA**  
Research Analyst  
BofAS  
+1 713 247 6801  
[indraneel.mitra@bofa.com](mailto:indraneel.mitra@bofa.com)

**Lauren LeGros**  
Research Analyst  
BofAS  
+1 713 409 2491  
[lauren.legros@bofa.com](mailto:lauren.legros@bofa.com)

**Paul Armentor, CFA**  
Research Analyst  
BofAS  
[paul.armentor@bofa.com](mailto:paul.armentor@bofa.com)

## Exhibit 1: BofA POs

MLPs have generally performed better than C-Corps

Ticker	Rating	New PO	Old PO
<b>C-Corp</b>			
ETRN	Underperform	\$9	\$9
KMI	Neutral	\$18	\$19
OKE	Buy	\$86	\$83
PAGP	Neutral	\$18	\$17
TRGP	Buy	\$109	\$104
WMB	Buy	\$40	\$40
<b>MLP</b>			
EPD	Buy	\$31	\$31
ET	Buy	\$18	\$18
MPLX	Underperform	\$38	\$36
PAA	Neutral	\$18	\$17
WES	Underperform	\$30	\$27

Source: BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Glossary

AMNA: Alerian Midstream Energy Index<sup>SM</sup>

C-Corp: C-Corporation

# Contents

---

Updated POs and Estimates	3
Equitrans Midstream Corp. (ETRN)	3
Kinder Morgan (KMI)	6
MPLX LP (MPLX)	10
Oneok, Inc. (OKE)	14
Plains All American Pipeline (PAA)	15
Targa Resources Corp. (TRGP)	18
Western Midstream Partners LP (WES)	21

# Updated POs and Estimates

## Exhibit 2: BofA Updated POs and Estimates

We are above consensus in '24 / '25 / by 0.5% / 1.3%

2024								2025			2026		
Ticker	Price	New PO	Rating	EBITDA (\$mm)				EBITDA (\$mm)			EBITDA (\$mm)		
				BofAe	Cons.	Guidance	BofA v. Cons.	BofAe	Cons.	BofA v. Cons.	BofAe	Cons.	BofA v. Cons.
C-Corp													
KMI	\$17.17	\$18	Neutral	\$8,052	\$8,103	\$8,160	-0.6%	\$8,128	\$8,278	-1.8%	\$8,385	\$8,431	-0.5%
ETRN	\$10.42	\$9	Underperform	\$1,274	\$1,329	\$1,235-\$1,315	-4.1%	\$1,504	\$1,439	4.5%	\$1,532	\$1,468	4.4%
OKE	\$74.37	\$86	Buy	\$6,246	\$6,064	\$5,900-\$6,300	3.0%	\$6,548	\$6,348	3.2%	\$6,947	\$6,325	9.8%
PAGP	\$17.11	\$18	Neutral	\$2,719	\$2,664	NA	2.1%	\$2,661	\$2,696	-1.3%	\$2,651	\$2,655	-0.1%
TRGP	\$97.08	\$109	Buy	\$3,811	\$3,825	\$3,700-\$3,900	-0.4%	\$4,150	\$4,219	-1.6%	\$4,459	\$4,413	1.0%
WMB	\$35.04	\$40	Buy	\$6,991	\$6,988	\$6,800-\$7,100	0.0%	\$7,481	\$7,465	0.2%	\$7,658	\$7,810	-1.9%
MLPs													
EPD	\$27.61	\$31	Buy	\$9,790	\$9,765	NA	0.3%	\$10,077	\$10,127	-0.5%	\$10,281	\$10,555	-2.6%
ET	\$14.69	\$18	Buy	\$14,757	\$14,851	\$14,500-\$14,800	-0.6%	\$15,395	\$15,332	0.4%	\$15,910	\$15,945	-0.2%
MPLX	\$39.37	\$38	Underperform	\$6,415	\$6,483	NA	-1.0%	\$6,623	\$6,668	-0.7%	\$6,652	\$6,840	-2.8%
PAA	\$16.36	\$18	Neutral	\$2,719	\$2,685	\$2,625-\$2,725	1.3%	\$2,661	\$2,690	-1.1%	\$2,651	\$2,620	1.2%
WES	\$34.04	\$30	Underperform	\$2,330	\$2,304	\$2,200-\$2,400	1.1%	\$2,403	\$2,397	0.3%	\$2,470	\$2,453	0.7%

Source: Visible Alpha, Bloomberg, BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Exhibit 3: EV/EBITDA multiples

C-Corps are trading at a premium to MLPs

		BofA Comparable EV/EBITDA Multiples				Cons EV/EBITDA Multiples				BofA FCF Yield (Levered)				Cons FCF Yield (Levered)			
Company Name	Ticker	2023A/E	2024E	2025E	2026E	2023A/E	2024E	2025E	2026E	2023A/E	2024E	2025E	2026E	2023A/E	2024E	2025E	2026E
C-Corp																	
Kinder Morgan	KMI	10.1x	9.6x	9.5x	9.2x	10.0x	9.4x	9.2x	9.1x	10.4%	6.9%	8.4%	8.9%	7.3%	7.7%	8.7%	9.4%
Equitrans Midstream	ETRN	11.5x	9.5x	8.1x	7.9x	11.7x	9.1x	8.4x	8.3x	-2.8%	-0.4%	15.2%	15.6%	-4.4%	5.5%	15.6%	16.0%
ONEOK	OKE	12.5x	10.7x	10.1x	9.6x	13.0x	11.1x	10.6x	10.6x	5.9%	6.6%	9.4%	10.0%	5.6%	6.4%	8.0%	9.0%
Targa Resources	TRGP	9.8x	9.1x	8.4x	7.8x	9.9x	9.1x	8.2x	7.9x	-2.4%	2.3%	7.9%	8.0%	2.8%	2.8%	6.5%	8.8%
The Williams Companies	WMB	10.1x	9.5x	8.9x	8.7x	9.8x	9.5x	8.9x	8.5x	7.9%	5.9%	7.5%	7.3%	6.0%	5.8%	7.5%	8.7%
Average		10.3x	9.1x	8.4x	8.1x	10.3x	9.1x	8.6x	8.3x	3.3%	6.2%	10.5%	10.2%	3.0%	6.6%	8.9%	10.9%
MLPs																	
Enterprise Products Partners	EPD	9.9x	9.4x	9.1x	9.0x	9.8x	9.3x	9.0x	8.6x	7.0%	6.8%	8.6%	9.8%	7.2%	7.3%	8.8%	11.2%
Energy Transfer	ET	7.9x	7.2x	6.9x	6.6x	7.1x	6.5x	6.3x	6.0x	13.7%	14.2%	13.9%	14.7%	11.5%	15.0%	15.8%	16.5%
MPLX LP	MPLX	9.7x	9.5x	9.2x	9.1x	9.8x	9.4x	9.1x	8.9x	10.2%	11.1%	10.9%	10.6%	10.7%	11.1%	11.7%	12.7%
Plains All American Pipeline	PAA	7.9x	7.8x	8.0x	8.0x	8.3x	8.2x	8.2x	8.4x	14.3%	12.9%	13.3%	15.7%	12.6%	14.0%	14.0%	13.1%
Western Midstream Partners	WES	9.7x	8.6x	8.3x	8.1x	9.8x	8.7x	8.4x	8.2x	7.2%	8.5%	10.6%	11.1%	7.1%	9.3%	11.7%	11.8%
Average		9.0x	8.5x	8.3x	8.2x	8.9x	8.4x	8.2x	8.0x	10.5%	10.7%	11.5%	12.4%	9.8%	11.4%	12.4%	13.1%

Source: Bloomberg, BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Equitrans Midstream Corp. (ETRN)

### MVP in-service delayed into June with \$400mm new costs

ETRN underperformed the AMNA ~0.4% on February 20<sup>th</sup>, as MVP is delayed into 2Q, costs rise ~\$400mm, and as a result, '24 guidance comes in lower than pre-release expectations. Offsetting the MVP delay was ETRN retaining its M&A premium as it noted its board of directors "has been engaged in a process with third parties that have expressed interest in strategic transactions." We believe most investors are aware that ETRN is a willing seller, at the right price, so this statement by ETRN should not have been an incremental upside surprise that offset the MVP delay. We reiterate our Underweight rating and \$9 PO, as ETRN has the highest debt levels in midstream with flat free cash flows post MVP complete with cash G&P rates falling. At its current price of \$10.44 (2/26) (7.7x '25 EBITDA), we see few opportunities for an acquiror to transact, at market, with an equity deal. We attribute this to 1) ETRN's high leverage (5.1x EBITDA, excluding project financing) 2) declining cash gathering rates and 3) a new



owner likely needing to invest capital in the existing gathering system to meet EQT's requirements. And the likely most logical potential strategic partner, WMB, already receives the benefits of MVP, with the pipeline dead-ending into Transco at Station 165. As such, Transco receives the volumes and will ultimately be able to expand capacity to move ~2 Bcf/d of MVP sourced gas to regulated utilities like Duke and Dominion.

### **MVP delayed by weather with heightened labor costs**

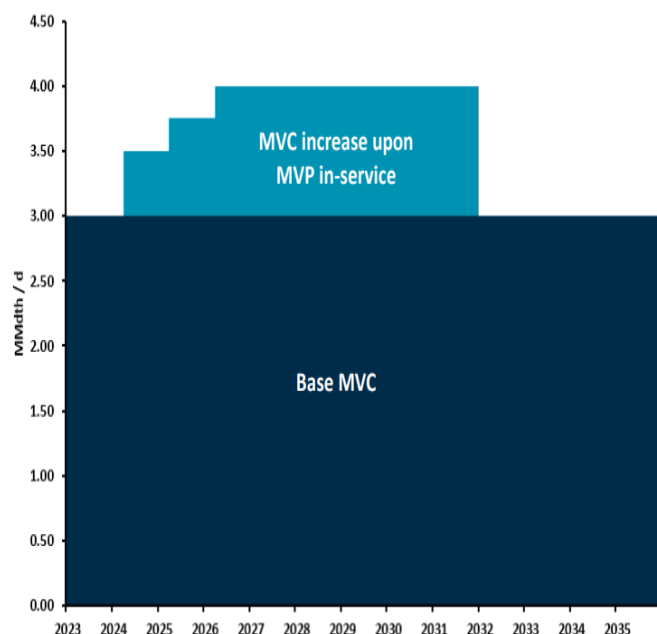
ETRN pushed MVP's target in-service date to June with an estimated total project cost of \$7.57-7.63bn. Up until recently, the project was on track to complete in 1Q24, but unforeseen construction issues and challenging weather conditions, including precipitation well above 20-year averages, in January caused the delay. ETRN considered winter weather in its initial forecast, but the conditions were worse and longer than anticipated. As a result, heightened headcount had to be maintained for longer. As of February 15th, 300 miles of pipe were installed with less than 4 miles remaining. Of 428 water crossings left when construction resumed in '23, only 13 crossings are left. There are 3 remaining bores out of 9, including the Appalachian Trail crossing and Roanoke River crossing. The first 77 miles are purged and packed and 180 miles have been hydro-tested. The remaining construction is the most difficult, and ETRN noted there could be further delays. However, once construction is complete, only commissioning work remains before the pipe is put into service, which requires less labor and has minimal impact from weather. Once in service, MVP will deliver low-cost Marcellus and Utica natural gas to the southeast demand markets. MVP, Hammerhead, and the Equitrans Expansion project are expected to contribute \$305mm of annual incremental Adj EBITDA, with \$220mm attributed directly to MVP.

### **Increase gathering volumes offset by lower cash rates**

ETRN expects to see mid-single-digit growth in earnings once MVP comes online. On a GAAP basis, this is true as gathering volumes step up once MVP comes online, as gathering minimum volume commitments (MVCs) with EQT step up through '26. And presumably, another step up once the MVP expansion (500 MMcf/d) is sanctioned. But cash rates decline meaningfully between '24 -'25 and then see another meaningful step down from '27-'28. At the same time, ETRN expects to see overall Northeast growth from MVP debottlenecking the basin. But as we have noted several times, MVP can only flow ~200 MMcf/d until Transco expands capacity North and South of Station 165, as Transco dead-ends into the pipeline. And that is not scheduled to occur until ~'28.

**Exhibit 4: MVP Step-Up Effective with MVP In-Service**

Gathering MVCs with EQT step up through '26 once MVP comes online

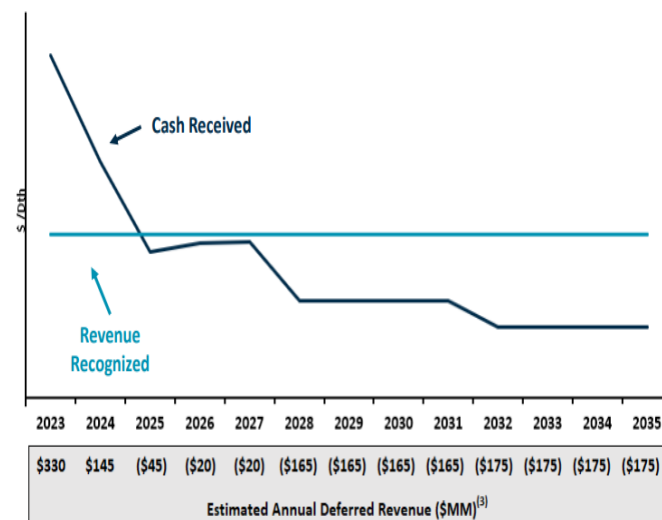


Source: Company presentation

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 5: EQT Global GGA Accounting Treatment**

Deferred revenue is recognized when cash received exceeds revenue



Source: Company presentation

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**ETRN targets '28 ISD for downsized Southgate project**

In late December '23, the MVP Southgate project was redesigned and ETRN negotiated with the original customer, Public Service Company of North Carolina (PSNC), and an investment grade utility company to agree to a shorter route of 31 miles from the same starting point, but ending at new delivery points in Rockingham County, NC. The project is expected to cost \$370mm gross, excluding past expenses for the original project, and ETRN maintains 47.2% interest, or about \$175mm net. NextEra owns a similar interest. Most of the capital spend is expected to occur in '27 and ETRN expects a 5-6x build multiple, landing annual EBITDA at \$62mm-\$74mm. The project obviously requires FERC approval.

**Exhibit 6: ETRN New/Old Estimates**

We update our '24/'25/ EBITDA estimates by -7%/-1%

BofA vs Consensus Estimates	2024E	2025E	2026E
BofA EBITDA New (\$mm)	\$1,274	\$1,504	\$1,532
BofA EBITDA Old (\$mm)	\$1,364	\$1,526	
BofA % Change	-7%	-1%	NA
Consensus EBITDA (\$mm)	\$1,329	\$1,439	\$1,468
<b>BofA % Difference vs. Consensus</b>	<b>-4%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>

Source: BofA Global Research, Bloomberg, Company report

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 7: ETRN price objective**

We maintain our PO for ETRN at \$9

**12 MONTH PRICE OBJECTIVE PRICE TARGET**

2020 EBITDA (\$mm)	1,438
2021 EBITDA (\$mm)	1,012
2022 EBITDA (\$mm)	1,071
2023 EBITDA (\$mm)	1,057
2024 EBITDA (\$ mm)	1,274
2025 EBITDA (\$ mm)	1,504
2026 EBITDA (\$ mm)	1,532

25 EV/EBITDA Multiple 7.7x

EV (\$mm) 11,548

Current Net Debt (\$mm) =	6,088
Divestitures (\$mm) =	
FCF Thru YE24 (\$mm) =	-280
Adjusted YE24 Net Debt (\$mm) =	6,368
Preferreds (\$mm) =	682

Equity Value (\$mm) 3,901

**\$/Shr \$9.00**

Source: BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Kinder Morgan (KMI)

### PM Summary: 4Q miss & not the preferred nat. gas stock

On Thursday, 1/18, KMI (-1.4%) underperformed the AMNA (0.0%) after reporting Adj EBITDA of \$1,925mm (3% miss vs. Consensus) and seemingly a lack of operating leverage. Ahead of the call on January 17<sup>th</sup>, after the close, KMI was seeing some long only interest after a year of underperforming its closest peer WMB. See our [investor day preview note](#). We still see investors viewing WMB as the natural gas levered stock to own vs. KMI. Our KMI '24/'25 /'26 EBITDA estimates are \$8,052mm/\$8,128mm/\$8,385mm and our PO is lowered to \$18, on lower estimates. We remain Neutral on KMI, as we see it fairly priced, with WMB the preferred gas equity in midstream.

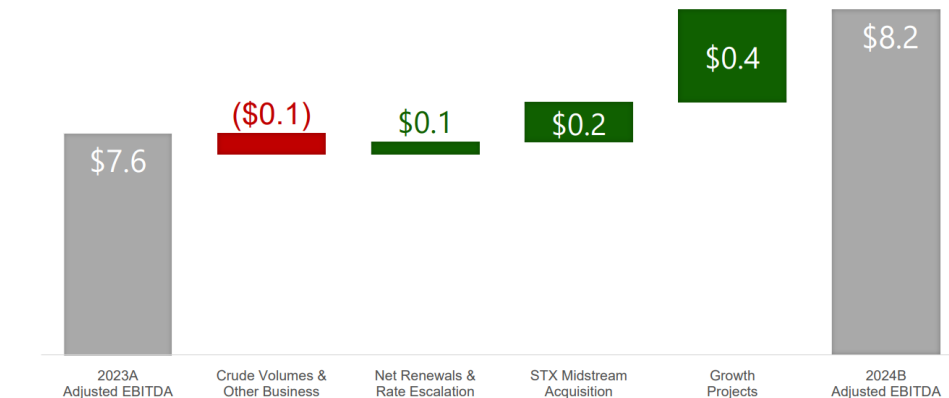
### Base business flat with low capital efficiency

Incremental y/y EBITDA is due to growth capex and acquisitions rather than base business growth. Base business is to remain flat and operating leverage is lacking with limited "internal hedges" as EOR decline cancels out improving natural gas fundamentals.

**Exhibit 8: EBITDA Growth '23 to '24**

Base business EBITDA is flat with growth from investments

\$ Billions



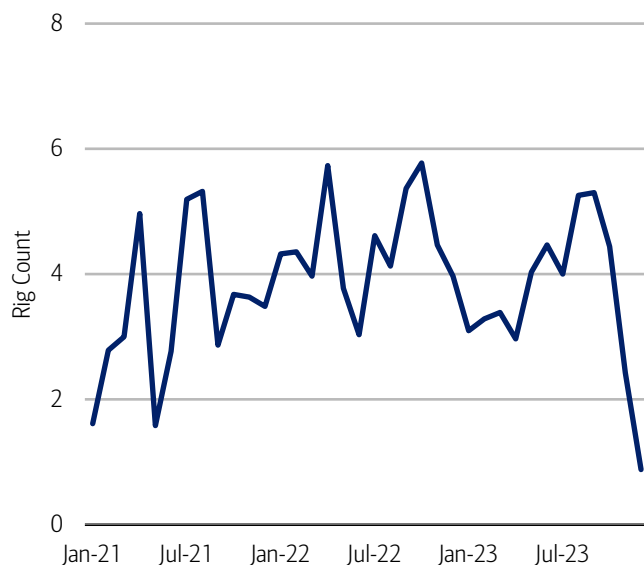
Source: Company presentation

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Despite improving fundamentals and a 10% improvement in gathering volumes y/y in '24, KMI noted that gathering volumes in '24 would be flat relative to 4Q23. In this gas price environment, we expect to see more rigs dropped in the gas regions although frac fleets in the Haynesville rose in 4Q23 as operators completed more wells. We see further activity reductions with front month gas trading at <\$2/Mcf, and possible shut-ins if prices stay at this level over a prolonged time. Note the 27% 4Q sequential increase in Kinderhawk volumes was attributable to completions timing with higher 4Q frac fleets deployed across the basin. The Kinderhawk rig count has decreased 4 rigs (to 1 rig) from high of 5 rigs in September '23.

**Exhibit 9: KMI Haynesville Rig Count**

Rig count on KMI's Haynesville system has dropped off significantly

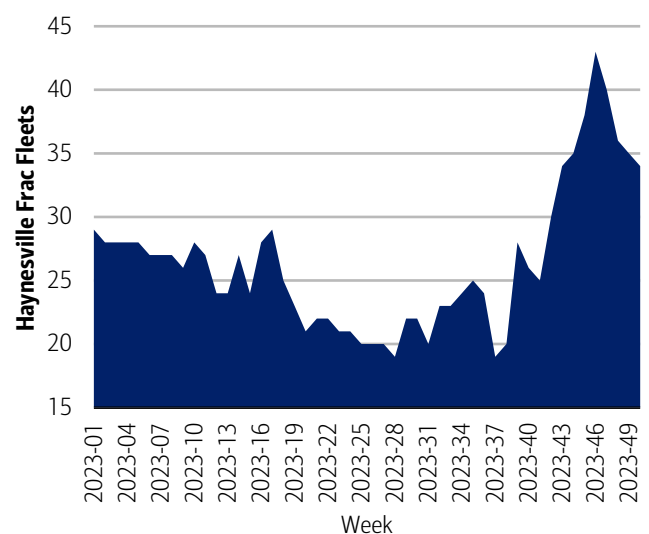


Source: East Daley

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 10: Total Haynesville Frac Fleets by Week**

Frac fleets rose in 4Q as operators completed more wells



Source: Rystad

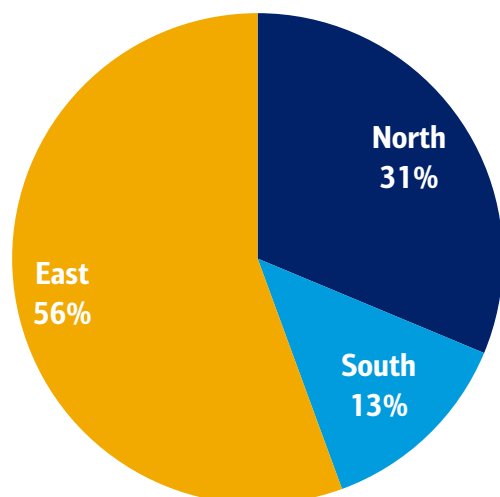
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Southeast short gas as production moves to LNG corridor

KMI noted that the Southeast will be short gas as it is directed toward the LNG corridor, but we think this is a reason to own ET who owns 65% of eastbound egress out of the Haynesville or WMB which can direct gas on Transco to the SE region. We believe it will take time for KMI to move more towards the midstream business and away from ancillary services to compete with ET and WMB. Our ['24 Year Ahead](#) outlines that 56% of the direct available egress out of the basin is eastbound, with ET controlling 52% of the available outbound egress.

### Exhibit 11: Haynesville Egress by Direction

Pull from southeast utilities is primary demand sink

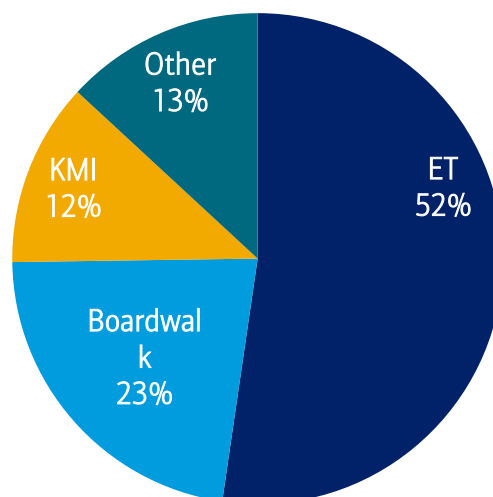


Source: East Daley, BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

### Exhibit 12: Haynesville Egress by Company

ET owns the majority of Haynesville egress



Source: East Daley, BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

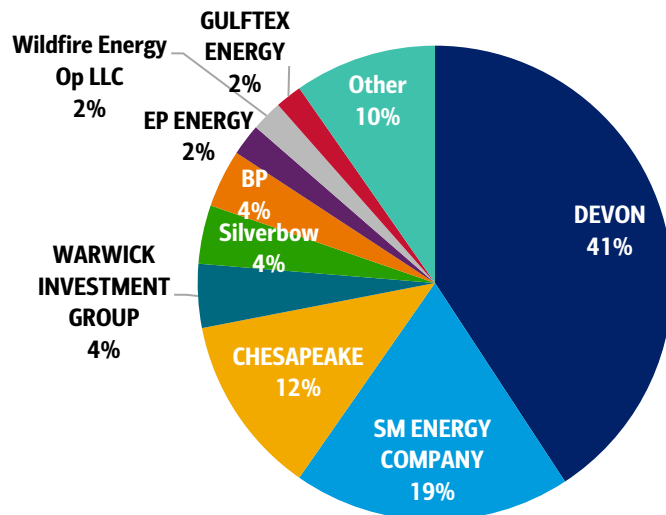
## GCX expansion adds Permian gas to blend with EF gas

KMI is adding to its Eagle Ford position with the [STX acquisition](#) to move more gas from the basin to demand centers, which include across the border to Mexico and Texas Gulf Coast LNG facilities. It notes it can see Eagle Ford gas ramp up 2.5 Bcf/d by 2030 vs. 3<sup>rd</sup> party forecasts of 0.5 Bcf/d, driven by dry gas drilling in Webb County. But even if gas prices rebound, we see many smaller, private producers in the area that are unlikely to meaningfully increase production, up to KMI's expectations.



**Exhibit 13: KMI Eagle Ford Producers**

There are several small players on KMI's Eagle Ford system



Source: East Daley, BofA Global Research

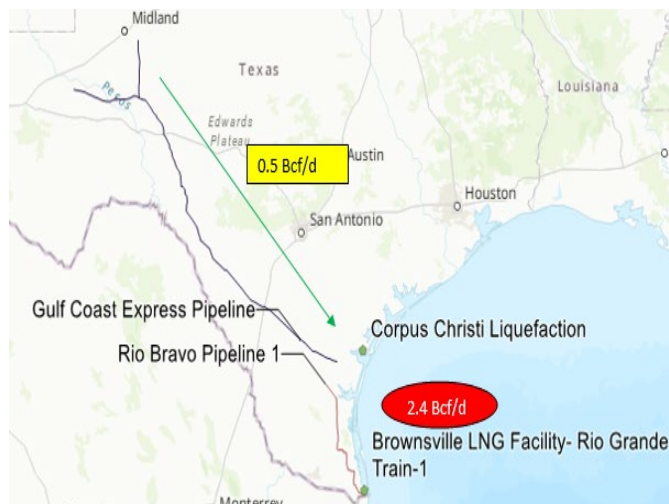
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**GCX expansion needed to upsize LT nitrogen blending synergies**

The GCX expansion is still a work-in-progress, as commercial discussions are still ongoing. The 2.0 Bcf/d pipeline will likely expand by 500 MMcf/d, now that more gas is needed in South Texas. Favorable economics and low nitrogen content in the Eagle Ford are expected to support increasing production growth in the basin. GCX expansion needs to be fully sanctioned for KMI to realize nitrogen blending [STX synergies](#), but bullet lines from Katy to STX are competing for market share, to move Permian-sourced gas to Katy (through PHP and Matterhorn), and down to Agua Dulce.

**Exhibit 14: GCX Pipeline**

The GCX pipeline must be sanctioned for KMI to realize synergies



Source: S&P Global

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 15: Permian gas takeaway options**

Bullet lines from Katy to South Texas are another option



Source: S&P Capital Markets

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 16: KMI New/Old Estimates**

We update our '24/'25/ EBITDA estimates by 0%/-1%

BofA vs Consensus Estimates	2024E	2025E	2026E
BofA EBITDA New (\$mm)	\$8,052	\$8,128	\$8,385
BofA EBITDA Old (\$mm)	\$8,067	\$8,203	
BofA % Change	0%	-1%	NA
Consensus EBITDA (\$mm)	\$8,103	\$8,278	\$8,431
<b>BofA % Difference vs. Consensus</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>-1%</b>

Source: BofA Global Research, Bloomberg, Company report

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 17: KMI price objective**

We lower our PO for KMI to \$18

**12 MONTH PRICE OBJECTIVE PRICE TARGET**

\$mm except per share

<b>2020 EBITDA</b>	<b>6,962</b>
<b>2021 EBITDA</b>	<b>7,946</b>
<b>2022 EBITDA</b>	<b>7,516</b>
'22 Net NCI Adjustments	(39)
<b>2022 Comparable EBITDA</b>	<b>7,477</b>
<b>2023 EBITDA</b>	<b>7,561</b>
'23 Net NCI Adjustments	(56)
<b>2023 Comparable EBITDA</b>	<b>7,505</b>
<b>2024 EBITDA</b>	<b>8,052</b>
'24 Net NCI Adjustments	(68)
<b>2024 Comparable EBITDA</b>	<b>7,984</b>
<b>2025 EBITDA</b>	<b>8,128</b>
<b>2026 EBITDA</b>	<b>8,385</b>
<b>EV/EBITDA Multiple</b>	<b>9.3x</b>

EV 75,263

Current Net Debt	32,033
+ Proportional JV Debt	2,400
+ Acquisitions	0
- FCF, after distro thru YE24	96
= Adjusted YE24 Net Debt	34,529

Equity Value	40,734
<b>\$/Shr</b>	<b>\$18.00</b>

Source: BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## MPLX LP (MPLX)

**PM Summary: 4Q23 solid beat, but reiterate Underperform**

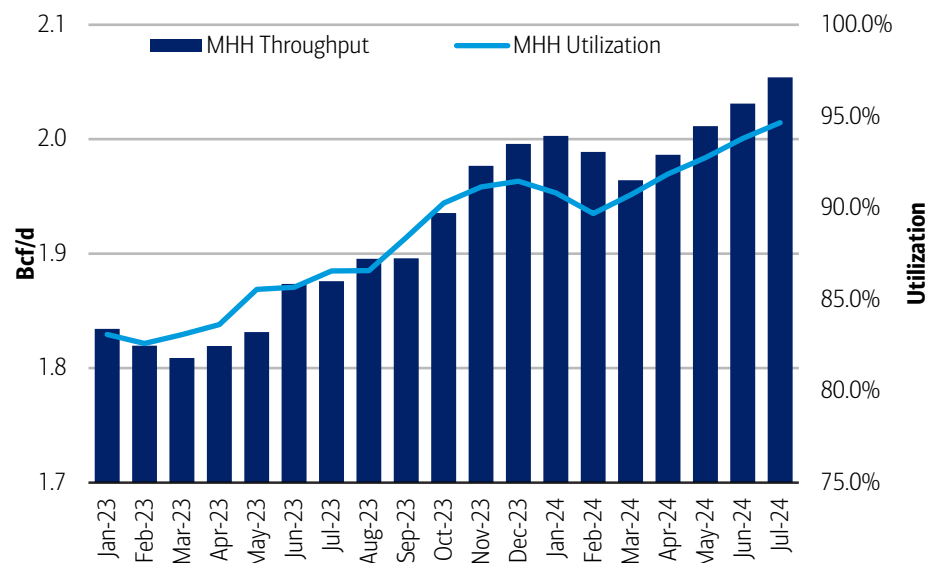
MPLX modestly o/p (+1.2% vs. AMNA) after solidly beating consensus / BofA estimates by 4%/6% and increasing distributions 10% YoY in FY23 ([see our 4Q23 report](#)). In L&S, lower crude and product volumes offset by higher rates (+12%) highlighted the beat, after FERC indexing in July lifted rates by 13% (~20% of L&S includes FERC-regulated pipes). Our '24/'25/'26 EBITDA estimates move to \$6,415mm/\$6,623mm/\$6,652mm. We maintain our Underperform rating but our PO moves up to \$38 PO (8.7x '25E EBITDA) on higher estimates. We see lack of structural growth on the L&S segment and see lack of scale in G&P in the Permian. Sponsor supported transactions could be favorable but are limited to only a few assets.

**Marcellus grew in 4Q with Harmon Creek II nearing ISD**

MPLX operates 6 complexes in the Marcellus, including its newest processing facility, Harmon Creek II. Together, processing capacity in Appalachia is 6.5 Bcf/d. We group MPLX's Majorsville, Houston and Harmon Creek II processing facilities as one unit/system (2.2 Bcf/d) given their interconnectivity. The MHH system is currently ~92% utilized and is expected to reach ~95% utilization by 2Q24, as the Harmon Creek expansion comes online. MPLX has done a nice job taking some market share and growing volumes across its system.

**Exhibit 18: MPLX MHH System Volumes**

MHH system utilization expected to reach 95% by ~2Q24



Source: East Daley

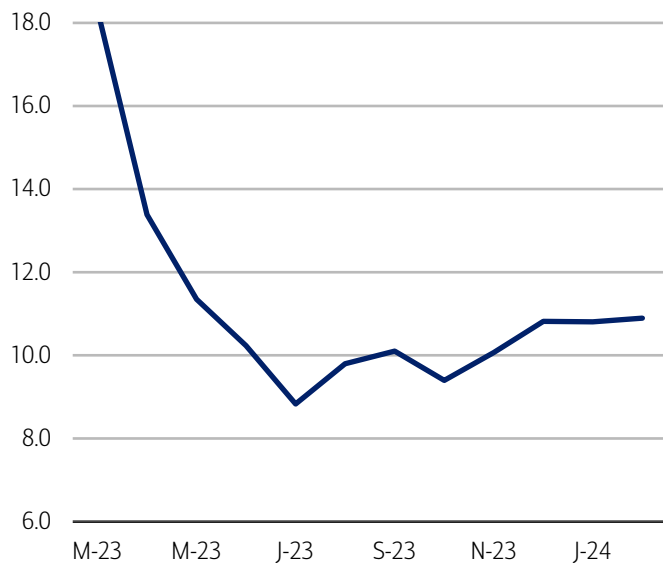
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**But we believe 4Q growth was from timing as rig counts trend down**

MPLX noted that production is growing in the Marcellus from 1) more activity and 2) increasing takeaway. But with the 12-month strip under <\$2/Mcf, several producers, like CHK and CTRA, have noted they are dramatically limiting production until prices increase. We also believe that SWN, by staying within cash flow, will limit activity. So, we think 4Q saw the benefit of timing of completions, more so than a secular trend upwards in Marcellus growth.

**Exhibit 19: MPLX NE rig count**

Rig count likely to see continued declines in price environment

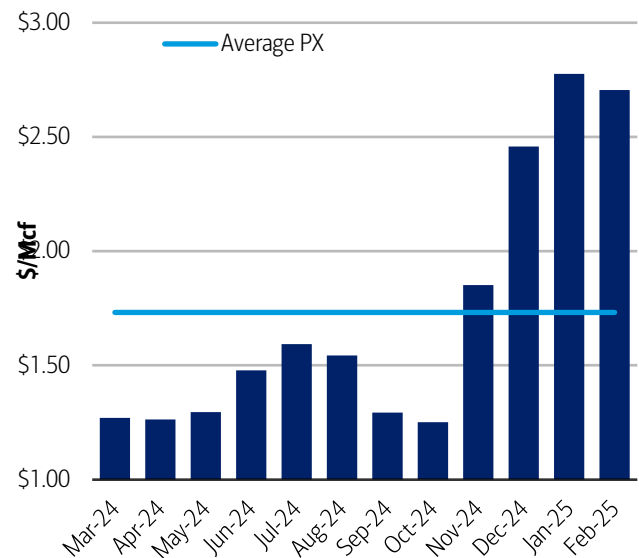


Source: East Daley

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 20: 12-month Dominion South gas price**

Average \$1.73/Mcf



Source: Bloomberg

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Is the Utica the early stages of a condensate surge?**

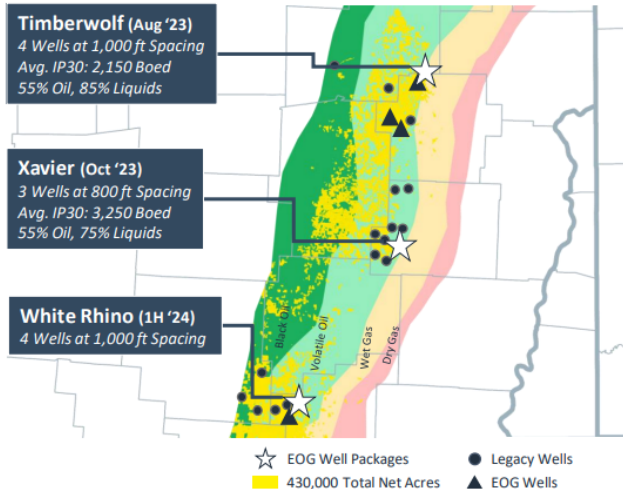
EOG is targeting the Utica for condensate/NGL window. Initial results have been encouraging with 80% liquids (55% oil, 25% NGLs and only 20% dry gas). And they believe they have gas takeaway out of the basin, as Ohio gas has more outlets than the Marcellus. Our understanding is that DTM is building a new G&P system for EOG, but Blue Racer, MPLX, and WMB could benefit from latent processing in the area. This play lacks scale and will take years to be material volumes, but it needs close monitoring.

**Exhibit 21: EOG Utica buildout**

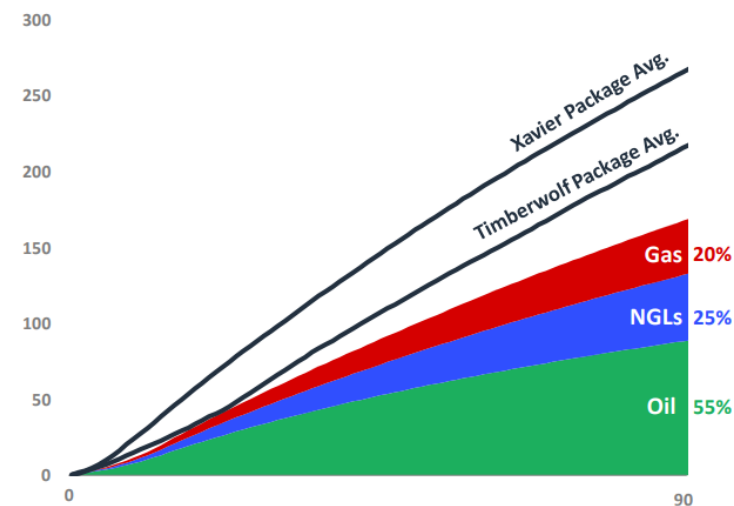
Liquids based drilling could spur major midstream growth in Utica

## Strong Utica Results Confirm Premium Play

### 20 Net Completions Planned in 2024 vs 6 Net Completions in 2023

**Utica Package Results****Utica Type Curve & Package Performance**

90 Day Cumulative Production, MBoe



Source: Company presentation

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Sponsor drop-downs? MPC still has midstream assets**

We believe MPC could still drop-down assets to MPLX to take advantage of the multiple discrepancy between MPC and MPLX and, ultimately, increase FCF, which MPLX can return to MPC through distribution. Note MPC trades at 6.0/6.5x consensus '24/'25 EBITDA vs. MPLX at 9.5x/9.2x consensus '24/'25 EBITDA, so cash transactions between the entities can be negotiated that are accretive to both entities. The following assets are still in the MPC portfolio available for drop-down:

- Capline: 33% interest
- Gray Oak: 25%
- LOOP: 10%
- Some remaining Jones Act tankers

**Exhibit 22: MPLX New/Old Estimates**

We update our '24/'25/ EBITDA estimates by 4%/4%

BofA vs Consensus Estimates	2024E	2025E	2026E
BofA EBITDA New (\$mm)	\$6,415	\$6,623	\$6,652
BofA EBITDA Old (\$mm)	\$6,182	\$6,374	
BofA % Change	4%	4%	NA
Consensus EBITDA (\$mm)	\$6,483	\$6,668	\$6,840
<b>BofA % Difference vs. Consensus</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>-3%</b>

Source: BofA Global Research, Bloomberg, Company report

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 23: MPLX price objective**

We raise our PO for MPLX to \$38

**12 MONTH PRICE OBJECTIVE PRICE TARGET**

\$mn except per unit

2020 EBITDA (\$mn)	5,211
2021 EBITDA (\$mn)	5,560
2022 EBITDA (\$mn)	5,775
2023 EBITDA (\$mn)	6,269
2024 EBITDA (\$mn)	6,415
2025 EBITDA (\$mn)	6,623
2026 EBITDA (\$mn)	6,652

EV/EBITDA Multiple 8.7x

EV (\$mn) 57,491

Preferreds (\$mn) = 975  
Current Net Debt (\$mn) = 19,383  
FCFaD Thru YE24 (\$mn) = 981  
Adjusted YE24 Net Debt (\$mn) = 18,402

Equity Value (\$mn)	38,114
<b>\$/Unit</b>	<b>\$38.00</b>

Source: BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Oneok, Inc. (OKE)

### PM Summary: Conservative guide; OKE a FCF machine

OKE [reported](#) 4Q23 Adj. EBITDA of \$1,514mm, which was +3%/-3% relative to cons/BofA. More importantly, OKE introduced '24 EBITDA guidance with a wide range from \$5,900mm-\$6,300mm (midpoint: \$6.1bn). This is a conservative guide, assuming only \$175mm of annual run-rate synergies, presumably with \$100mm of that corporate G&A cuts, meaning OKE still can realize a potential ~\$600mm of run-rate annual synergies. And we think that the largest number of synergies come from butane blending in the refined products segment, which OKE understandably is hesitant to overcommunicate commercial strategies. See our [upgrade](#) for details around the butane blending opportunity. As such, our revised '24 estimate is still towards the top end of the range and we see a meaningful increase in '25+ EBITDA. Our '24/'25/'26 estimates move to \$6,246mm/\$6,548mm/\$6,947mm. And our PO moves up to \$86, as we now assume a flat terminal growth rate (previously in decline) with a 7% WACC. OKE is our top C-Corp pick.

### Awash in cash: \$2bn buyback can be completed in 2 years

OKE noted its plans for dividends and share repurchases to trend towards a target of 75%-85% of CFFO after capex over the next four years. This capital return framework includes 3-4% annual dividend growth and the \$2bn share repurchase authorization to be largely utilized over the next four years. Companies that have increased cash return, especially through outsized distributions, like MPLX and WES have significantly outperformed this earnings season, regardless of the go forward ability to sustain growth. OKE is in the opposite position with significantly more cash to return, than it has announced. OKE is already below its target leverage ratio of <3.5x. We believe, growing the dividend 4% in '24 and '25, OKE has enough discretionary cash to complete the authorized buyback by the end of '25. And between '26-'30, OKE can generate an additional \$6bn of discretionary FCF after dividend.

**Exhibit 24: OKE New/Old Estimates**

We update our '24/'25/ EBITDA estimates by -1%/-1%

BofA vs Consensus Estimates	2024E	2025E	2026E
BofA EBITDA New (\$mm)	\$6,246	\$6,548	\$6,947
BofA EBITDA Old (\$mm)	\$6,290	\$6,628	
BofA % Change	-1%	-1%	NA
Consensus EBITDA (\$mm)	\$6,062	\$6,345	\$6,309
<b>BofA % Difference vs. Consensus</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>10%</b>

Source: BofA Global Research, Bloomberg, Company report

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 25: OKE price objective**

We raise our PO for OKE to \$86

**12 MONTH PRICE OBJECTIVE PRICE TARGET**

\$mn except per share

<b>2020 EBITDA (\$mn)</b>	<b>2,724</b>
<b>2021 EBITDA (\$mn)</b>	<b>3,380</b>
<b>2022 EBITDA (\$mn)</b>	<b>3,620</b>
<b>2023 EBITDA (\$mn)</b>	<b>5,243</b>
<b>2024 EBITDA (\$mn)</b>	<b>6,246</b>
<b>2025 EBITDA (\$mn)</b>	<b>6,548</b>
<b>2026 EBITDA (\$mn)</b>	<b>6,947</b>

**EV/EBITDA Multiple** **11.2x****EV (\$mn)** **73,481**

Current Net Debt (\$mn) =	21,688
FCFaD Thru YE24 (\$mn) =	719
Adjusted YE24 Net Debt (\$mn) =	20,969

Equity Value (\$mn) 52,512

**\$/Shr** **\$86.00**

Source: BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Plains All American Pipeline (PAA)

### PM Summary: 9% EBITDA beat + slower activity guidance

On Friday, 2/9, PAA (+0.33%) outperformed the AMNA (-0.10%) after reporting a strong 9% EBITDA beat driven by a 35% beat in the NGL segment ([Plains All American Pipeline, L.P.: Strong 4Q, frac spreads a '24 tailwind, Cactus I re-contracting timeline key 09 February 2024](#)). We still believe PAA is fairly valued after a strong '23 run given its flat EBITDA over the next 3 years. Our EBITDA estimates are \$2,719mm/\$2,661mm/\$2,651mm for '24/'25/'26 and our PO moves to \$18, as we lower PAA's WACC given its declining leverage ratio. PAA provided '24 growth capex expectations of \$375mm, consistent with \$325mm in '23, and it includes growth projects like Permian wellhead/CDP connections and debottlenecking and NGL optimization.

### Permian growth expectations – All Delaware, Midland flat

PAA released its basin wide '24 exit-to-exit Permian basin crude expectation range of 200-300 Mbpd compared to its 4Q22 release estimate for '23 of 500 Mbpd. Rig count is down to 300-320, with efficiencies partially offsetting lower activity. This is generally consistent with our expectation that Permian crude grows 275 Mbpd in '24. Interestingly, PAA further breaks out Permian expectations noting flat Midland production and all incremental growth from the Delaware. Recent consolidation in the basin supports PAA's Midland assumptions. The Midland merger between FANG (public) and Endeavor (private) indicates that consolidated growth is slowing. Prior to the merger, FANG was running 14 rigs and Endeavor was running 12 rigs, and together they will be down to 20 to 22 rigs longer-term. But at the same time, XOM noted it would accelerate PXD growth through cube style drilling. We seek clarity on PAA's assumptions for Midland here.



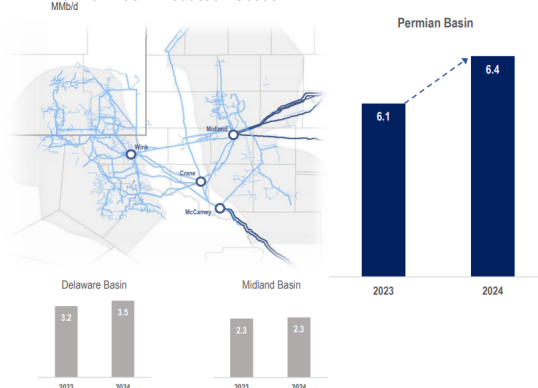
**Exhibit 26: Permian Basin Activity Summary**

Production growth will primarily come from the Delaware Basin

**Permian Basin Growth Continues**

*Current activity, demonstrated performance & constructive commodity prices driving growth*

## 2024 Forecast Assumptions

Permian Basin Production Outlook<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) Source: PAA Estimates, Energen. Based on an assumed 2023 exit production level of ~6.1 MMbbl/d

Source: Company presentation

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Downstream JV interests following FANG – Endeavor deal?**

PAA outperformed the AMNA 1% the trading day following the FANG-Endeavor announcement. One reason could be that the transaction will likely lead to some midstream divestitures on the downstream side, which, if acquired by PAA, could enhance its Permian-to-water integrated crude position. Remember, PAA has been adding bolt-on positions on the Permian gathering side. Recently, PAA acquired FANG’s remaining interest in OMOG (43%) for \$225mm. We believe PAA’s long term goal is to supply enough crude at a hub, like Crane, such that it can direct barrels down its pipelines, like an integrated NGL player. But PAA needs more downstream interest. PAA and FANG have been shown to have a working interest and FANG owns 4% of Wink to Webster and 10% of EPIC, both of which could modestly benefit PAA in creating a balanced, integrated position.

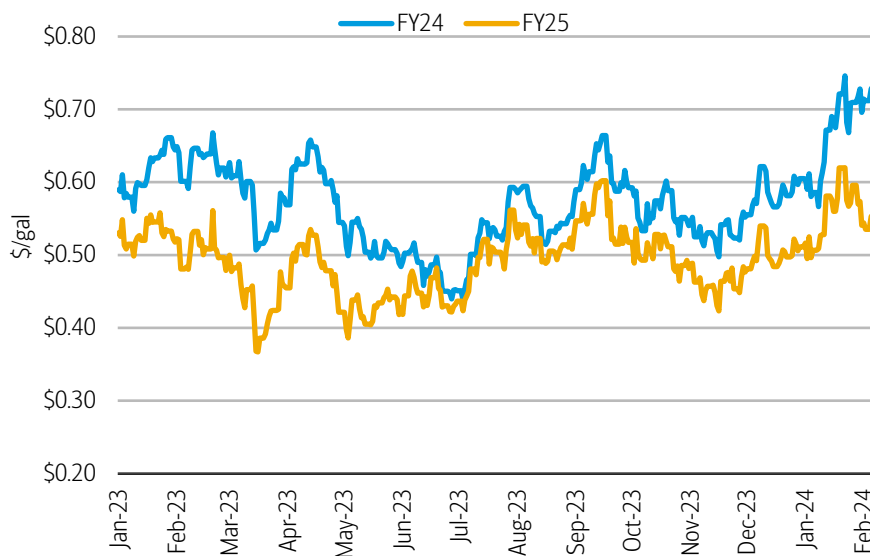
**90% hedged at mid \$0.60/gal among rising frac spreads**

PAA also noted that it is 90% hedged in the C3 product market at mid \$0.60/gal range. We assume a realized ’24 frac spread of 66c/gal. This is higher than our prior assumption that PAA would realize a 60c/gal frac spread for ’24, as the C3+/AECO frac spread pushed higher at the beginning of the year, as propane inventories fell with weather issues and AECO gas sold off. So, with every 1c/gal change in frac spreads equaling \$7.5mm in EBITDA, our ’24 NGL EBITDA assumption increases \$45mm from our last update. Note that the C3+ market is heavily backwarddated, with the benefit of low inventories fading in 2H24. The forward ’25 frac spread is 55c/gal.



**Exhibit 27: AECO frac spread FY24 and FY25**

The AECO frac spread is backwardated, rising in '24 but lower in '25



Source: Bloomberg, BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Re-contracting Cactus I in '25 in progress**

PAA noted that it is progressing in re-contracting Cactus I but did not provide much color on the rates or timeline. It did note that takeaway in the Permian is full and that it is focusing on third party partners that have a hand in export takeaway. The balance between contracting and marketing opportunities is important, and on the Corpus Christi pipes PAA is focused on partnering with exporters. PAA said it would provide more color around the re-contracting later this year. A 3-5 year contract at ~\$1.25/bbl would be an incremental positive, as the '25 Midland-MEH spread is currently trading at ~50c/bbl.

**Exhibit 28: PAA New/Old Estimates**

We update our '24/'25 EBITDA estimates by 2%/1%

BofA vs Consensus Estimates	2024E	2025E	2026E
BofA EBITDA New (\$mm)	\$2,719	\$2,661	\$2,651
BofA EBITDA Old (\$mm)	\$2,678	\$2,630	
BofA % Change	2%	1%	NA
Consensus EBITDA (\$mm)	\$2,691	\$2,698	\$2,620
<b>BofA % Difference vs. Consensus</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

Source: BofA Global Research, Bloomberg, Company report

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 29: PAA price objective**

We raise our PO for PAA to \$18

**12 MONTH PRICE OBJECTIVE PRICE TARGET**

\$mn except per share

<b>2020 EBITDA, comparable (\$mm)</b>	<b>2,655</b>
<b>2021 EBITDA, comparable (\$mm)</b>	<b>2,347</b>
<b>2022 EBITDA, comparable (\$mm)</b>	<b>2,595</b>
<b>2023 EBITDA, comparable (\$mm)</b>	<b>2,789</b>
<b>2024 EBITDA, comparable (\$mm)</b>	<b>2,807</b>
<b>2025 EBITDA, comparable (\$mm)</b>	<b>2,749</b>
<b>2026 EBITDA, comparable (\$mm)</b>	<b>2,737</b>

EV/EBITDA Multiple on '25 **8.4x**EV (\$mm) **23,089**

Current Net Debt (\$mm) =	7,301
FCFaD (\$mm) =	317
Adjusted YE24 Net Debt (\$mm) =	7,618
Preferreds (\$mm) =	2,853

Equity Value (\$mm)	12,618
<b>\$/Shr</b>	<b>\$18.00</b>

Source: BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Targa Resources Corp (TRGP)



### PM Summary: Capex step-down leads to '25 FCF inflection

On Thursday, 2/15, TRGP (+5.6%) [outperformed](#) the AMNA (+2.5%) after 1) providing '24 EBITDA in line with Cons, 2) providing lower y/y '25 growth capex of \$1.4bn (-42% y/y) and 3) a conservative \$1.7bn run rate capex rate. TRGP was a battleground stock ahead of the print. We were positive once '24 EBITDA estimates were reset, as we expected a step change in '25 run-rate capex. And given that investors are comfortable with '25 EBITDA around the ~\$4.2bn level, TRGP is still a growth stock, but with FCF inflection, one that will attract new income investors over time. We reiterate our Buy and our PO moves up to \$109 PO, as we apply TRGP's run-rate growth capex forecast through our DCF in '26+. Our '24/'25/'26 estimates are \$3,811mm/\$4,150mm/\$4,459mm.

## '24 growth capex \$2.4bn with step down in '25+

### Exhibit 30: TRGP capital spending outlook

Capex steps down post-'25 to \$1.7bn (\$1.4bn in '25)

		Estimated Growth Capex to Maintain Current Volumes <sup>(1)</sup>	Estimated Growth Capex to Support Continued Permian Growth <sup>(2)</sup>
 <b>Gathering &amp; Processing</b>	Maintain Volumes	~\$250MM	~\$250MM
	Field Growth & Other	–	~\$450MM
	Plant Growth	–	~\$400MM
 <b>Logistics &amp; Transportation</b>	Connects, etc.	~\$50MM	~\$50MM
	NGL Transport, Frac & Exports	–	~\$550MM
<b>Total</b>		<b>~\$300MM</b>	<b>~\$1,700MM</b>

Source: Company presentation

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

'24 growth capex is expected to be \$2.4bn at the midpoint and will step down to \$1.4bn in '25 with a \$1.7bn run rate beyond '25. In '24, we note 6 projects that are to be put in-service. These include the Wildcat II Plant, Roadrunner II Plant, Greenwood II Plant, GCF restart, Train 9 fractionator and the Daytona NGL pipeline. '25 in-service projects include the Bull Moose Plant and Train 10 fractionator. TRGP also noted that \$300mm of capital in maintenance mode.

### \$1.7bn run rate growth capex could be lower with lower L&T spend

TRGP's run-rate growth capex estimate past '25 is \$1.7bn. \$550mm is included for growth from the L&T segment. We know that TRGP expects to bring online a fractionator (cost ~\$500mm) every other year. So that accounts for \$250mm a year for NGL transportation and Galena Park export expansion. Another Galena Park expansion would likely be one-time and well-received.

### NGL pipeline overbuild creates a fight for volumes lowering rates

So, in our view, the majority of discretionary L&T spend comes from expanding the NGL pipeline system. But as we outlined in our [Midstream/MLP Energy: Year Ahead 2024: Prefer large-caps, FCF inflection stories as commodities weaken 05 January 2024](#), the Permian will see an NGL pipeline overbuild in '25 with Daytona, Bahia, MPLX's BANGL expansion, and OKE's Westex expansion. Pipe utilization decreases from 95% in 4Q24 to 70% in 2Q25.

### But TRGP can avoid the pricing war given its high G&P/T&F ratio

So, this means transportation rates will decrease as larger players like EPD, OKE, and even ET compete for volumes, as their transportation capacity significantly exceeds their G&P volumes.

But TRGP built their system from the wellhead, especially in the Midland Basin where almost all volumes are closed loop, meaning TRGP directs the barrel through its downstream system. Its Delaware system has more in-kind volumes, where producers can direct their volumes to 3<sup>rd</sup> party pipelines. Even so, we see TRGP's

G&P/Transportation ratio at 95% and believe ~65%-70% of Grand Prix are sourced with TRGP G&P volumes.

### And not spend material capex for NGL pipe expansions through 2030

Other players like EPD and ET need to chase 3<sup>rd</sup> party volumes because they are short G&P relative to their pipe capacity. But TRGP is balanced through the end of the decade and can generally avoid expanding Grand Prix/Daytona with lower rate 3<sup>rd</sup> party volumes. So, we believe TRGP can avoid the “discretionary” \$300mm L&T spend annually, for the most part, if it avoids chasing 3<sup>rd</sup> party volumes. This 1) allows TRGP to continue to return cash to shareholders and 2) keeps TRGP’s ROIC high.

### Export growth with expansion and daylight restriction lift

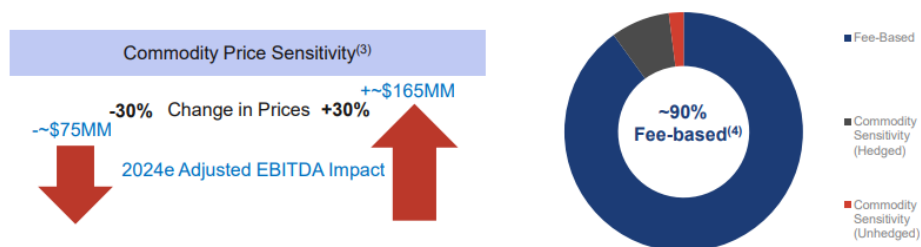
TRGP reported over 13 MMBbl/month of LPG exports in 4Q, which included nice growth from both propane and butanes. The first benefit came from the Galena Park expansion that increased refrigeration capacity and therefore increased the ability to load vessels faster. TRGP noted that further Galena Park expansions are a possibility, but that it will continue to observe the G&P business to assess the need. The second benefit came from the nighttime transit restriction being lifted that probably resulted in a 5-10% volume uplift that was also able to benefit from spot activity. TRGP noted that the nighttime transit benefit was initiated in November and was not in effect for the full quarter, so there could be more upside available.

### More fee-based components targeted in G&P business

90% of TRGP’s G&P volumes were fee-based or with a fee floor at the end of ‘23. Waha and NGL prices were 64% and 34% lower y/y in ‘23, respectively, which resulted in a meaningful benefit from fee floor margins across 10 of 12 months. So, TRGP is very protected from downward commodity prices, but also positioned to benefit from higher commodity prices as well. A 30% move higher in commodity prices would increase full-year Adj. EBITDA by around \$165mm, while a 30% decrease would reduce Adj. EBITDA by around \$75mm. TRGP noted that it is not fighting for fees to fill up existing capacity, but that it can always look for opportunities to expand or loop around its existing system.

#### Exhibit 31: Fee-based vs Commodity exposed

90% of G&P volumes are fee-based



Source: Company presentation

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

### 1Q Adj EBITDA to be lower than 4Q23, then inc. q/q in ‘24

TRGP noted on the call that it expects 1Q24 Adj. EBITDA to be lower sequentially due to volumes across its systems being impacted by very cold winter weather and operating expenses increasing in anticipation of system expansions across both segments. It then expects Adj EBITDA to increase sequentially throughout the year, benefitting from volume increases across its systems.

**Exhibit 32: TRGP New/Old Estimates**

We update our '24/'25 EBITDA estimates by 1%/0%

BofA vs Consensus Estimates	2024E	2025E	2026E
BofA EBITDA New (\$mm)	\$3,811	\$4,150	\$4,459
BofA EBITDA Old (\$mm)	\$3,773	\$4,162	
BofA % Change	1%	0%	NA
Consensus EBITDA (\$mm)	\$3,825	\$4,216	\$4,413
<b>BofA vs. Consensus</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>1%</b>

Source: BofA Global Research, Bloomberg, Company report

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 33: TRGP price objective**

We raise our PO for TRGP to \$109

**12 MONTH PRICE OBJECTIVE PRICE TARGET**

\$mm except per share

<b>2020 EBITDA</b>	<b>1,637</b>
<b>2021 EBITDA</b>	<b>2,052</b>
<b>2022 EBITDA</b>	<b>2,901</b>
<b>2023 EBITDA</b>	<b>3,530</b>
<b>2024 EBITDA</b>	<b>3,811</b>
<b>2025 EBITDA</b>	<b>4,150</b>
<b>2026 EBITDA</b>	<b>4,459</b>

EV/EBITDA Multiple 9.0x

EV (\$mm) 37,459

Current Net Debt (\$mm) = 12,813  
FCFaD Thru YE24 (\$mm) = -164  
Adjusted YE24 Net Debt (\$mm) = 12,977

Equity Value (\$mm)	24,481
<b>\$/Shr</b>	<b>\$109.00</b>

Source: BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Western Midstream Partners LP (WES)

### Solid '24 guide, distribution increase & de-levering

WES underperformed the AMNA (-3.5%) on 2/21, the trading day following its 4Q release. WES beat 4Q expectations by 3%, largely due to better-than-expected rich gas and crude volumes and rates (cost of service). More importantly, WES guided '24 EBITDA to \$2.2bn - \$2.4bn (midpoint: \$2.3bn), which is in-line with both cons/BofA. But this excludes the EBITDA from the 5 assets that WES is selling for \$790mm at a 9.6x multiple or ~\$80mm. Assuming some of the assets close later in 1Q, the EBITDA impact could be slightly less, but including those assets would put WES at \$2.4bn for its guide, which beats expectations. We think the asset sales make strategic sense, as they are non-core, and allow WES to de-lever to ~3x by year-end, all else equal. Lastly, WES increased its quarterly distribution 52% starting in 3Q, which puts its coverage ratio at 1.4x, the lowest in midstream. We do not believe stocks should trade on dividend yield (more below). We reiterate our Underweight rating, but our PO increases from \$27 to \$30/unit (8.0x '25 EBITDA) on higher than expected '24+ EBITDA, and the accretive asset sales. As we explain below, we see '24 as a strong year for EBITDA from the Meritage acquisition, flush OXY Delaware production and the DJ no longer in decline. But from '24, we see only modest growth with only 51% of EBITDA coming from the Permian. And we believe M&A is unlikely to occur at current market prices. Our '24/'25 EBITDA estimates move to \$2,330mm/\$2,403mm.

### Should WES be rewarded for its distribution increase?

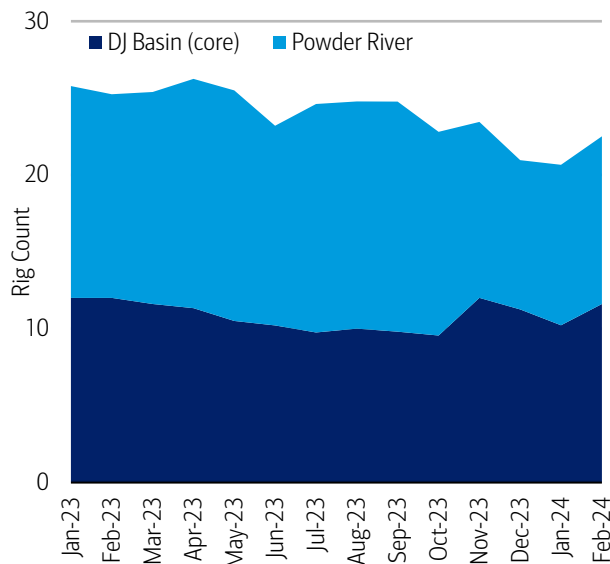
WES surprised investors with a 52% base dividend increase that moves the base distribution up to \$3.50/unit annualized on a run rate basis (\$3.20/unit for '24). Guided FCF is \$1.15bn in '24 and, excluding asset sales, the '24 distribution is \$1.2bn (365mm units x \$3.20/unit), so WES is outspending cash flow for this increase. And it points to future increases, but this would require capital efficient growth. And WES points to future annual capex being at '22 levels, which was ~\$500mm vs. the ~\$800mm it is spending in '24. We do not see the Delaware having operating leverage, as we expect North Loving to be full when it comes online in '25, so it would need to build processing. And the PRB does have operating leverage, but the rig count has trended down, so we see moderated growth in '25+. Anecdotally, EOG is lowering activity in '24 for the PRB



and using learnings from the Mowry formation in the PRB, to enhance efficiencies in the Niobrara. So, WES is cutting its payout close, and as such we do not believe a yield-based approach is appropriate to value the stock.

#### Exhibit 34: Rockies Rig Counts (Stacked)

Rigs in both the DJ and PRB have increased in 1Q

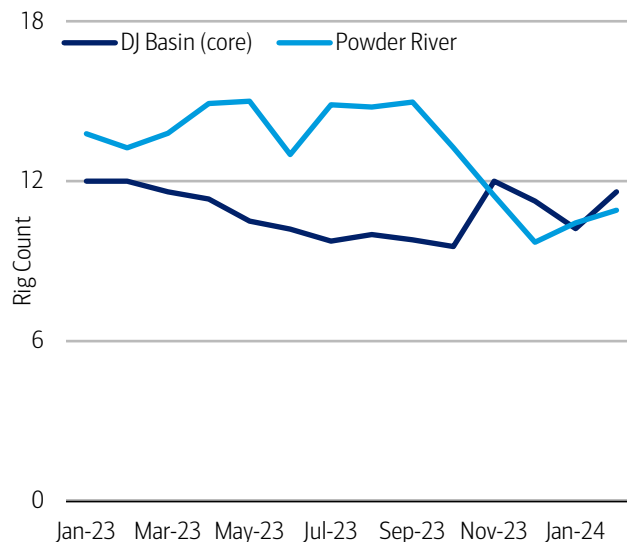


Source: Rystad

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

#### Exhibit 35: Rockies Rig Counts (Time Series)

Rigs in both the DJ and PRB have increased in 1Q



Source: Rystad

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Entire equity portfolio considered “non-core”

Prior to the sale speculation and the print, WES traded at ~8x '25 EBITDA, which is a G&P multiple. But it does have a material equity interest portfolio of higher multiple assets, which are non-strategic, and it typically does not get credit for. WES has done asset swaps and sales before but sold 5 different assets for \$790mm at a 9.6x multiple.

#### Exhibit 36: WES Announced Asset Sales

5 assets sold for \$790mm and 9.6x EBITDA

<b>February 2024</b> <b>Marcellus</b> Gas gathering system <b>Cash proceeds from sale of 33.75% interest</b>	<b>February 2024</b> <b>Whitethorn</b> Crude-oil pipeline <b>Cash proceeds from sale of 20% interest</b>	<b>February 2024</b> <b>Panola</b> NGL pipeline <b>Cash proceeds from sale of 15% interest</b>	<b>February 2024</b> <b>Mont Belvieu JV</b> NGL fractionization <b>Cash proceeds from sale of 25% interest</b>	<b>February 2024</b> <b>Saddlehorn</b> Crude-oil pipeline <b>Cash proceeds from sale of 20% interest</b>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Source: Company presentation

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Assets were sold to the following counterparties:

- The Marcellus gas gathering system was sold to EQT.
- Whitethorn, Panola and the Mont Belvieu JV were sold to EPD.
- Saddlehorn was sold to one of the existing holders, so that would imply PAA or OKE were buyers. We believe PAA bought the asset, as they are strategically bolting-on crude assets to their portfolio.

Moving forward, WES does still have remaining assets in its equity portfolio, which can be used to buffer the distribution or fund repurchases:

#### Exhibit 37: Remaining WES Equity Investment Portfolio

All would be considered "non" core

Equity Investment	WES Ownership	Location	Description	Operator
Mi Vida	50%	Ward County, TX	200 MMcf/d gas-processing plant	Energy Transfer
Red Bluff Express	30%	Reeves County, TX to Waha, TX	1.5 Bcf/d natural-gas pipeline	Energy Transfer
Front Range Pipeline	33.33%	DJ Basin to Skellytown, TX	250 MBbls/d NGL pipeline	Enterprise
Texas Express Pipeline	20%	Skellytown, TX to Mont Belvieu, TX	366 MBbls/d NGL pipeline	Enterprise
Texas Express Gathering	20%	TX Panhandle to Mont Belvieu, TX	138 mi NGL-gathering system	Producers Midstream
White Cliffs	10%	DJ Basin to Cushing, OK	180+ MBbls/d crude/NGL pipelines	Energy Transfer
Rendezvous	22%	SW Wyoming	~450 MMcf/d natural-gas pipeline	Marathon

Source: Company presentation

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

## Potential WES sale complicated and non-strategic to many

OXY has noted it needs to sell assets to fund its announced Crownquest acquisition. WES has been discussed, by investors, as a possible asset divestiture for OXY, given its 48% interest. And news stories started breaking on 2/19, the day before it was reported that both OXY and WES were exploring sales processes. Trading halted with the stock up 5% and WES released a press release that it was not exploring a sales process, and it could not speak for OXY. Nevertheless, we expect the M&A premium will stay on WES, like SMID cap peer ETRN, as OXY embarks on its divestiture process.

### But a sale to an integrated would be tough to execute given T&F constraints

Integrations like ET, EPD and OKE are looking for G&P companies, in the Permian, to source their latent NGL pipeline capacity and realize full downstream benefits. But as we outline in our [Year Ahead](#):

- The WES Delaware system's two largest customers are OXY and ConocoPhillips (COP). Both are in-kind customers that control the downstream volumes vs. a closed loop where WES or an acquiror could control the barrels to the wellhead.
- And even if OXY wanted to commit their volumes to a WES acquiror, our understanding is that OXY has tied up those volumes under long-term agreements (>10 years) in both the Delaware and DJ.
- Then OXY's cost of service agreements will need to be understood and extended. The complexity and year-to-year adjustments under cost of service make any agreement harder than a normal G&P transaction. While WES has added 3<sup>rd</sup> party volumes, like those with COP, they are at significantly lower rates than OXY's volumes. So again, OXY is providing the value under contracts.



- Any deal would need to be completed at ~50/50 cash/equity as an acquiror would need to pay OXY cash while publicly owned WES shares would be exchanged for equity. Few buyers could fund the cash component.
- Permian G&P companies like Navitas/Lucid have transacted at 7.2x/7.5x EBITDA, so an at market deal with WES would be hard to pay up for.

**Exhibit 38: WES New/Old Estimates**

We update our '24/'25 EBITDA estimates by 3%/4%

BofA vs Consensus Estimates	2024E	2025E	2026E
BofA EBITDA New (\$mm)	\$2,330	\$2,403	\$2,470
BofA EBITDA Old (\$mm)	\$2,272	\$2,309	
BofA % Change	3%	4%	NA
Consensus EBITDA (\$mm)	\$2,299	\$2,387	\$2,426
<b>BofA % Difference vs. Consensus</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>

Source: BofA Global Research, Bloomberg, Company report

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 39: WES price objective**

We raise our PO for WES to \$30

**12 MONTH PRICE OBJECTIVE PRICE TARGET**

\$mn except per share

<b>2020 EBITDA</b>	<b>2,030</b>
<b>2021 EBITDA</b>	<b>1,947</b>
<b>2022 EBITDA</b>	<b>2,128</b>
<b>2023 EBITDA</b>	<b>2,069</b>
<b>2024 EBITDA</b>	<b>2,330</b>
<b>2025 EBITDA</b>	<b>2,403</b>
<b>2026 EBITDA</b>	<b>2,470</b>

**EV/EBITDA Multiple** **8.0x**

**EV (\$mm)** **19,194**

Adjusted YE24 Net Debt (\$mm) = 7,629  
NCI (\$mm) = 131

Equity Value (\$mm) 11,434  
**\$/Shr** **\$30**

Source: BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

**Exhibit 40: Stocks mentioned**

Prices and ratings for stocks mentioned in this report

BofA Ticker	Bloomberg ticker	Company name	Price	Rating
ET	ET US	Energy Transfer LP	US\$ 14.69	B-1-7
EPD	EPD US	Enterprise L.P.	US\$ 27.61	B-1-7
ETRN	ETRN US	Equitrans Midstream	US\$ 10.42	C-3-8
KMI	KMI US	Kinder Morgan	US\$ 17.17	B-2-7
MPLX	MPLX US	MPLX LP	US\$ 39.37	B-3-7
OKE	OKE US	ONEOK Inc	US\$ 74.37	B-1-7
PAA	PAA US	Plains AA	US\$ 16.36	B-2-7
PAGP	PAGP US	Plains GP Holdings	US\$ 17.11	B-2-7
TRGP	TRGP US	Targa Corp.	US\$ 97.08	C-1-7
WES	WES US	Western Midstream	US\$ 34.04	C-3-7

Source: BofA Global Research

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH





## Price objective basis & risk

### Energy Transfer LP (ET)

Our PO of \$18 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies a 7.1x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast terminal growth of 1% while using a 7.0% WACC.

Downside risks are: potential shutdown of Dakota Access pipeline for extended period as per court ruling, higher leverage, dilutive M&A transaction and lower sustained commodity prices. The tax treatment of ET depends on its status as a partnership for federal income tax purposes: should ET become subject to taxes, its performance could be materially affected. From a macro perspective, financial risks are rising interest rates and a stricter regulatory environment which would increase operating and maintenance expenses.

### Enterprise Products Partners, L.P. (EPD)

Our PO of \$31 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies a 9.8x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten-year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast a terminal growth of 1.0% while using a 7.0% weighted-average cost of capital (WACC).

Downside risks to our price objective are supply chain disruptions, the loss of key customers, and lower sustained commodity prices. Any of these risks could negatively impact volumes at EPD's pipelines and storage facilities and demand for gathering, processing and storage of crude oil, natural gas, NGLs, and petrochemicals.

### Equitrans Midstream Corporation (ETRN)

Our PO of \$9.00 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which is 7.7x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast a terminal growth rate of 1.0% while using a 9.0% WACC.

We continue to see risks some associated with the MVP JV project and current slate of associated projects. We acknowledge steady gas production in the Northeast and ETRN's entirely fee-based cash flows and advantaged position in the Marcellus/Utica. Upside risks to our PO: favorable progress on MVP completion withstanding new legal challenges, better than expected volume growth, faster than expected deleveraging, additional growth projects. Downside risks to our PO: further project delays, supply chain disruptions, increased customer credit risks, and slower than expected production ramp, any of which could negatively impact ETRN's natural gas pipelines and gathering systems. From a macro perspective, risks are elevated geopolitical uncertainty, an increasing interest rate environment, the need to access a relatively large amount of external capital to fund growth, and a stricter regulatory environment. ETRN is a C-corp structure and thus any changes to its tax characterization could impact cash flows.

### Kinder Morgan Inc (KMI)

Our PO of \$18 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies a 9.3x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast terminal growth of 1.0% while using a 7.5% WACC.

Upside risks to our estimates are (1) higher commodity prices, (2) better long-term macro environment in the crude oil and refined products businesses, (3) stronger pipeline recontracting prospects and (4) tailwinds associated with energy transition opportunities.

Downside risks to our estimates are (1) US economic weakness, (2) slower oil and gas demand growth, (3) lower oil/gas prices, (4) higher than expected cash tax incidence at KMI and (5) weaker pricing at KMI's CO2 segment.

#### **MPLX LP (MPLX)**

Our PO of \$38 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies a 8.7x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten-year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast a terminal growth rate of 0% while using a 7.5% weighted-average cost of capital (WACC).

Downside risks to our price objective are (1) US economic weakness, (2) slower oil and gas demand growth/lower oil/gas prices, (3) lower utilization at MPC's refineries, (4) slowdown/decline in crude oil/refined products demand and (5) changes to its dividend/payout policy.

#### **ONEOK Inc (OKE)**

Our PO of \$86 PO is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies a 11.2x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten-year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast a terminal growth of 0% while using a 7.0% WACC.

Upside risks to our estimates and price objective are: (1) stronger and sustained commodity prices, (2) faster oil and NGL demand growth, (3) increased oil producer capital spending, (4) quicker than expected deleveraging, (5) favorable commodity price differentials and (6) lower corporate taxes.

Downside risks to our estimates and price objective are: (1) materially lower commodity prices, (2) lower oil and NGL demand growth and (3) decreased oil producer capital spending in the Bakken which may translate to lower/flat volumes.

#### **Plains All American Pipeline, L.P. (PAA)**

Our price objective (PO) of \$18.00 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies an 8.4x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast a terminal growth rate of 0% while using a 8.0% weighted-average cost of capital (WACC).

While PAA appears to be well contracted over the medium-term, we acknowledge the overbuild in the Permian may persist. Upside risks to our price objective are a better-than-expected recovery in oil prices and drilling activity, lower-than-expected headwinds to PAA's pipeline transportation tariffs, higher spread/contango opportunities, further reductions to PAA's capex program, better-than-anticipated cost optimizations and further potential asset sales.

Downside risks to our price objective are prolonged period of crude oversupply and longer-term demand destruction, sustained low crude oil prices and lower drilling activity and bigger-than-expected drop in pipeline tariffs.

#### **Plains GP Holdings, L.P. (PAGP)**

For PAGP, we use the same valuation as PAA. Our PO of \$18.00 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies a 8.4x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast a terminal growth of 0% while using a 8.0% WACC.

While PAA appears to be well contracted over the medium-term, the overbuild in the Permian may persist. Upside risks to our price objective are a better than expected recovery in oil prices and drilling activity, lower then expected headwinds to PAA's pipeline transportation tariffs, higher spread/contango opportunities, further reductions

to PAA's capex program, better than anticipated cost optimizations and potential asset sales.

Downside risks to our price objective are prolonged period of crude oversupply and potential longer term demand destruction, sustained low crude oil prices and lower drilling activity and bigger than expected drop in pipeline tariffs

#### **Targa Resources Corp. (TRGP)**

Our PO of \$109 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies an 9.0x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast terminal growth of 1% while using a 8% WACC.

Downside risks are: 1) another downturn in commodity prices and producer activity in TRGP's core basins, 2) slower-than-expected volume ramp on TRGP's assets, 3) sustained weakness in commodity prices leading to deterioration of counterparty credit quality and (4) reduced oil & gas producer capital spending.

#### **The Williams Companies, Inc. (WMB)**

Our PO of \$40 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies a 9.7x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast a terminal growth of 1.0% while using a 7.0% WACC.

Downside risks to our estimates and price objective are: (1) pace of deleveraging longer than expected and inability to execute on organic growth projects (2) global economic weakness (3) slower oil and gas demand growth (4) reduced oil & gas producer capital spending (5) changes to regulatory environment (6) increase in corporate tax policies.

#### **Western Midstream Partners, LP (WES)**

Our PO of \$30 is derived from our discounted cash flow valuation, which implies a 8.0x 2024E EV/EBITDA multiple. We forecast a ten-year outlook, which we believe is the limit of market recognition, and then forecast a terminal growth of 0% while using a 9.0% WACC.

We believe WES's earnings predictability, higher leverage/capex and limited ability to return capital in '24 are issues with a weak commodity tape going into '24.

Risks to the upside are higher than expected volumes on WES's Delaware, DJ and PRB systems, more earnings certainty, and lower than expected capex needs.

### **Analyst Certification**

I, Neel Mitra, CFA, hereby certify that the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect my personal views about the subject securities and issuers. I also certify that no part of my compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the specific recommendations or view expressed in this research report.

**US - Pipelines and MLPs Coverage Cluster**

Investment rating	Company	BofA Ticker	Bloomberg symbol	Analyst
<b>BUY</b>				
	Energy Transfer LP	ET	ET US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	Enterprise Products Partners, L.P.	EPD	EPD US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	Kinetik Holdings Inc.	KNTK	KNTK US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	Kodiak Gas Services, Inc.	KGS	KGS US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	ONEOK Inc	OKE	OKE US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	Targa Resources Corp.	TRGP	TRGP US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	The Williams Companies, Inc.	WMB	WMB US	Neel Mitra, CFA
<b>NEUTRAL</b>				
	Kinder Morgan Inc	KMI	KMI US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	Plains All American Pipeline, L.P.	PAA	PAA US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	Plains GP Holdings, L.P.	PAGP	PAGP US	Neel Mitra, CFA
<b>UNDERPERFORM</b>				
	Equitrans Midstream Corporation	ETRN	ETRN US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	MPLX LP	MPLX	MPLX US	Neel Mitra, CFA
	Western Midstream Partners, LP	WES	WES US	Neel Mitra, CFA
<b>RVW</b>				
	Golar LNG Limited	GLNG	GLNG US	Neel Mitra, CFA

## Disclosures

### Important Disclosures

**Equity Investment Rating Distribution: Energy Group (as of 31 Dec 2023)**

Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships <sup>R1</sup>	Count	Percent
Buy	83	61.48%	Buy	64	77.11%
Hold	28	20.74%	Hold	21	75.00%
Sell	24	17.78%	Sell	18	75.00%

**Equity Investment Rating Distribution: Global Group (as of 31 Dec 2023)**

Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships <sup>R1</sup>	Count	Percent
Buy	1895	53.62%	Buy	1083	57.15%
Hold	832	23.54%	Hold	454	54.57%
Sell	807	22.84%	Sell	383	47.46%

<sup>R1</sup> Issuers that were investment banking clients of BofA Securities or one of its affiliates within the past 12 months. For purposes of this Investment Rating Distribution, the coverage universe includes only stocks. A stock rated Neutral is included as a Hold, and a stock rated Underperform is included as a Sell.

**FUNDAMENTAL EQUITY OPINION KEY:** Opinions include a Volatility Risk Rating, an Investment Rating and an Income Rating. **VOLATILITY RISK RATINGS**, indicators of potential price fluctuation, are: A - Low, B - Medium and C - High. **INVESTMENT RATINGS** reflect the analyst's assessment of both a stock's absolute total return potential as well as its attractiveness for investment relative to other stocks within its Coverage Cluster (defined below). Our investment ratings are: 1 - Buy stocks are expected to have a total return of at least 10% and are the most attractive stocks in the coverage cluster; 2 - Neutral stocks are expected to remain flat or increase in value and are less attractive than Buy rated stocks and 3 - Underperform stocks are the least attractive stocks in a coverage cluster. An investment rating of 6 (No Rating) indicates that a stock is no longer trading on the basis of fundamentals. Analysts assign investment ratings considering, among other things, the 0-12 month total return expectation for a stock and the firm's guidelines for ratings dispersions (shown in the table below). The current price objective for a stock should be referenced to better understand the total return expectation at any given time. The price objective reflects the analyst's view of the potential price appreciation (depreciation).

Investment rating	Total return expectation (within 12-month period of date of initial rating)	Ratings dispersion guidelines for coverage cluster <sup>R2</sup>
Buy	≥ 10%	≤ 70%
Neutral	≥ 0%	≤ 30%
Underperform	N/A	≥ 20%

<sup>R2</sup> Ratings dispersions may vary from time to time where BofA Global Research believes it better reflects the investment prospects of stocks in a Coverage Cluster.

**INCOME RATINGS**, indicators of potential cash dividends, are: 7 - same/higher (dividend considered to be secure), 8 - same/lower (dividend not considered to be secure) and 9 - pays no cash dividend. **Coverage Cluster** is comprised of stocks covered by a single analyst or two or more analysts sharing a common industry, sector, region or other classification(s). A stock's coverage cluster is included in the most recent BofA Global Research report referencing the stock.

Price Charts for the securities referenced in this research report are available on the [Price Charts website](#), or call 1-800-MERRILL to have them mailed.

BofAS or one of its affiliates acts as a market maker for the equity securities recommended in the report: Energy Transfer LP, Enterprise L.P., Equitrans Midstream, Kinder Morgan, MPLX LP, ONEOK Inc, Plains AA, Plains GP Holdings, Targa Corp., Western Midstream, Williams Companies.

BofAS or an affiliate was a manager of a public offering of securities of this issuer within the last 12 months: Oneok Inc., Targa Corp., The Williams Comp., Western Midstream.

The issuer is or was, within the last 12 months, an investment banking client of BofAS and/or one or more of its affiliates: Energy Transfer LP, Enterprise L.P., Equitrans Midstream, Kinder

Morgan, MPLX LP, Oneok Inc., Plains AA, Plains GP Holdings, Targa Corp., The Williams Comp., Western Midstream.

BofAS or an affiliate has received compensation from the issuer for non-investment banking services or products within the past 12 months: Energy Transfer LP, Enterprise L.P., Equitrans Midstream, Kinder Morgan, MPLX LP, Oneok Inc., Plains AA, Plains GP Holdings, Targa Corp., The Williams Comp., Western Midstream.

The issuer is or was, within the last 12 months, a non-securities business client of BofAS and/or one or more of its affiliates: Energy Transfer LP, Enterprise L.P., Equitrans Midstream, Kinder Morgan, MPLX LP, Oneok Inc., Plains AA, Plains GP Holdings, Targa Corp., The Williams Comp., Western Midstream.

BofAS or an affiliate has received compensation for investment banking services from this issuer within the past 12 months: Energy Transfer LP, Enterprise L.P., Equitrans Midstream, MPLX LP, Oneok Inc., Plains AA, Plains GP Holdings, Targa Corp., The Williams Comp., Western Midstream.

BofAS or an affiliate expects to receive or intends to seek compensation for investment banking services from this issuer or an affiliate of the issuer within the next three months: Energy Transfer LP, Enterprise L.P., Equitrans Midstream, Kinder Morgan, MPLX LP, Oneok Inc., Plains AA, Plains GP Holdings, Targa Corp., The Williams Comp., Western Midstream.

BofAS together with its affiliates beneficially owns one percent or more of the common stock of this issuer. If this report was issued on or after the 9th day of the month, it reflects the ownership position on the last day of the previous month. Reports issued before the 9th day of a month reflect the ownership position at the end of the second month preceding the date of the report: Energy Transfer LP, Kinder Morgan, MPLX LP, The Williams Comp.

BofAS or one of its affiliates is willing to sell to, or buy from, clients the common equity of the issuer on a principal basis: Energy Transfer LP, Enterprise L.P., Equitrans Midstream, Kinder Morgan, MPLX LP, ONEOK Inc, Plains AA, Plains GP Holdings, Targa Corp., Western Midstream, Williams Companies.

The issuer is or was, within the last 12 months, a securities business client (non-investment banking) of BofAS and/or one or more of its affiliates: Energy Transfer LP, Enterprise L.P., Equitrans Midstream, Kinder Morgan, MPLX LP, Oneok Inc., Plains AA, Plains GP Holdings, Targa Corp., The Williams Comp., Western Midstream.

BofA Global Research personnel (including the analyst(s) responsible for this report) receive compensation based upon, among other factors, the overall profitability of Bank of America Corporation, including profits derived from investment banking. The analyst(s) responsible for this report may also receive compensation based upon, among other factors, the overall profitability of the Bank's sales and trading businesses relating to the class of securities or financial instruments for which such analyst is responsible.

## Other Important Disclosures

From time to time research analysts conduct site visits of covered issuers. BofA Global Research policies prohibit research analysts from accepting payment or reimbursement for travel expenses from the issuer for such visits.

Prices are indicative and for information purposes only. Except as otherwise stated in the report, for any recommendation in relation to an equity security, the price referenced is the publicly traded price of the security as of close of business on the day prior to the date of the report or, if the report is published during intraday trading, the price referenced is indicative of the traded price as of the date and time of the report and in relation to a debt security (including equity preferred and CDS), prices are indicative as of the date and time of the report and are from various sources including BofA Securities trading desks.

The date and time of completion of the production of any recommendation in this report shall be the date and time of dissemination of this report as recorded in the report timestamp.

Recipients who are not institutional investors or market professionals should seek the advice of their independent financial advisor before considering information in this report in connection with any investment decision, or for a necessary explanation of its contents.

Officers of BofAS or one or more of its affiliates (other than research analysts) may have a financial interest in securities of the issuer(s) or in related investments.

Refer to [BofA Global Research policies relating to conflicts of interest](#).

**"BofA Securities" includes BofA Securities, Inc. ("BofAS") and its affiliates. Investors should contact their BofA Securities representative or Merrill Global Wealth Management financial advisor if they have questions concerning this report or concerning the appropriateness of any investment idea described herein for such investor. "BofA Securities" is a global brand for BofA Global Research.**

**Information relating to Non-US affiliates of BofA Securities and Distribution of Affiliate Research Reports:**

BofAS and/or Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated ("MLPF&S") may in the future distribute, information of the following non-US affiliates in the US (short name: legal name, regulator): Merrill Lynch (South Africa): Merrill Lynch South Africa (Pty) Ltd., regulated by The Financial Service Board; MLI (UK): Merrill Lynch International, regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA); BofASE (France): BofA Securities Europe SA is authorized by the Autorité de Contrôle Prudentiel et de Résolution (ACPR) and regulated by the ACPR and the Autorité des Marchés Financiers (AMF). BofA Securities Europe SA ("BofASE") with registered address at 51, rue La Boétie, 75008 Paris is registered under no 842 602 690 RCS Paris. In accordance with the provisions of French Code Monétaire et Financier (Monetary and Financial Code), BofASE is an établissement de crédit et d'investissement (credit and investment institution) that is authorised and supervised by the European Central Bank and the Autorité de Contrôle Prudentiel et de Résolution (ACPR) and regulated by the ACPR and the Autorité des Marchés Financiers. BofASE's share capital can be found at [www.bofam.com/BofASEdisclaimer](http://www.bofam.com/BofASEdisclaimer); BofA Europe (Milan): Bank of America Europe Designated Activity Company, Milan Branch, regulated by the Bank of Italy, the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Central Bank of Ireland (CBI); BofA Europe (Frankfurt): Bank of America Europe Designated Activity Company, Frankfurt Branch regulated by BaFin, the ECB and the CBI; BofA Europe (Madrid): Bank of America Europe Designated Activity Company, Sucursal en España, regulated by the Bank of Spain, the ECB and the CBI; Merrill Lynch (Australia): Merrill Lynch Equities (Australia) Limited, regulated by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission; Merrill Lynch (Hong Kong): Merrill Lynch (Asia Pacific) Limited, regulated by the Hong Kong Securities and Futures Commission (HKSF); Merrill Lynch (Singapore): Merrill Lynch (Singapore) Pte Ltd, regulated by the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS); Merrill Lynch (Canada): Merrill Lynch Canada Inc, regulated by the Canadian Investment Regulatory Organization; Merrill Lynch (Mexico): Merrill Lynch Mexico, SA de CV, Casa de Bolsa, regulated by the Comisión Nacional Bancaria y de Valores; Merrill Lynch (Argentina): Merrill Lynch Argentina SA, regulated by Comisión Nacional de Valores; BofAS Japan: BofA Securities Japan Co., Ltd., regulated by the Financial Services Agency; Merrill Lynch (Seoul): Merrill Lynch International, LLC Seoul Branch, regulated by the Financial Supervisory Service; Merrill Lynch (Taiwan): Merrill Lynch Securities (Taiwan) Ltd., regulated by the Securities and Futures Bureau; BofAS India: BofA Securities India Limited, regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI); Merrill Lynch (Israel): Merrill Lynch Israel Limited, regulated by Israel Securities Authority; Merrill Lynch (DIFC): Merrill Lynch International (DIFC Branch), regulated by the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA); Merrill Lynch (Brazil): Merrill Lynch S.A. Corretora de Títulos e Valores Mobiliários, regulated by Comissão de Valores Mobiliários; Merrill Lynch KSA Company: Merrill Lynch Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Company, regulated by the Capital Market Authority.

This information has been approved for publication and is distributed in the United Kingdom (UK) to professional clients and eligible counterparties (as each is defined in the rules of the FCA and the PRA) by MLI (UK), which is authorized by the PRA and regulated by the FCA and the PRA - details about the extent of our regulation by the FCA and PRA are available from us on request; has been approved for publication and is distributed in the European Economic Area (EEA) by BofASE (France), which is authorized by the ACPR and regulated by the ACPR and the AMF; has been considered and distributed in Japan by BofAS Japan, a registered securities dealer under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act in Japan, or its permitted affiliates; is issued and distributed in Hong Kong by Merrill Lynch (Hong Kong) which is regulated by HKSF; is issued and distributed in Taiwan by Merrill Lynch (Taiwan); is issued and distributed in India by BofAS India; and is issued and distributed in Singapore to institutional investors and/or accredited investors (each as defined under the Financial Advisers Regulations) by Merrill Lynch (Singapore) (Company Registration No 198602883D). Merrill Lynch (Singapore) is regulated by MAS. Merrill Lynch Equities (Australia) Limited (ABN 65 006 276 795), AFS License 235132 (MLEA) distributes this information in Australia only to 'Wholesale' clients as defined by s.761G of the Corporations Act 2001. With the exception of Bank of America N.A., Australia Branch, neither MLEA nor any of its affiliates involved in preparing this information is an Authorised Deposit-Taking Institution under the Banking Act 1959 nor regulated by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority. No approval is required for publication or distribution of this information in Brazil and its local distribution is by Merrill Lynch (Brazil) in accordance with applicable regulations. Merrill Lynch (DIFC) is authorized and regulated by the DFSA. Information prepared and issued by Merrill Lynch (DIFC) is done so in accordance with the requirements of the DFSA conduct of business rules. BofA Europe (Frankfurt) distributes this information in Germany and is regulated by BaFin, the ECB and the CBI. BofA Securities entities, including BofA Europe and BofASE (France), may outsource/delegate the marketing and/or provision of certain research services or aspects of research services to other branches or members of the BofA Securities group. You may be contacted by a different BofA Securities entity acting for and on behalf of your service provider where permitted by applicable law. This does not change your service provider. Please refer to the [Electronic Communications Disclaimers](#) for further information.

This information has been prepared and issued by BofAS and/or one or more of its non-US affiliates. The author(s) of this information may not be licensed to carry on regulated activities in your jurisdiction and, if not licensed, do not hold themselves out as being able to do so. BofAS and/or MLPF&S is the distributor of this information in the US and accepts full responsibility for information distributed to BofAS and/or MLPF&S clients in the US by its non-US affiliates. Any US person receiving this information and wishing to effect any transaction in any security discussed herein should do so through BofAS and/or MLPF&S and not such foreign affiliates. Hong Kong recipients of this information should contact Merrill Lynch (Asia Pacific) Limited in



respect of any matters relating to dealing in securities or provision of specific advice on securities or any other matters arising from, or in connection with, this information. Singapore recipients of this information should contact Merrill Lynch (Singapore) Pte Ltd in respect of any matters arising from, or in connection with, this information. For clients that are not accredited investors, expert investors or institutional investors Merrill Lynch (Singapore) Pte Ltd accepts full responsibility for the contents of this information distributed to such clients in Singapore.

#### General Investment Related Disclosures:

Taiwan Readers: Neither the information nor any opinion expressed herein constitutes an offer or a solicitation of an offer to transact in any securities or other financial instrument. No part of this report may be used or reproduced or quoted in any manner whatsoever in Taiwan by the press or any other person without the express written consent of BofA Securities.

This document provides general information only, and has been prepared for, and is intended for general distribution to, BofA Securities clients. Neither the information nor any opinion expressed constitutes an offer or an invitation to make an offer, to buy or sell any securities or other financial instrument or any derivative related to such securities or instruments (e.g., options, futures, warrants, and contracts for differences). This document is not intended to provide personal investment advice and it does not take into account the specific investment objectives, financial situation and the particular needs of, and is not directed to, any specific person(s). This document and its content do not constitute, and should not be considered to constitute, investment advice for purposes of ERISA, the US tax code, the Investment Advisers Act or otherwise. Investors should seek financial advice regarding the appropriateness of investing in financial instruments and implementing investment strategies discussed or recommended in this document and should understand that statements regarding future prospects may not be realized. Any decision to purchase or subscribe for securities in any offering must be based solely on existing public information on such security or the information in the prospectus or other offering document issued in connection with such offering, and not on this document.

Securities and other financial instruments referred to herein, or recommended, offered or sold by BofA Securities, are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and are not deposits or other obligations of any insured depository institution (including, Bank of America, N.A.). Investments in general and, derivatives, in particular, involve numerous risks, including, among others, market risk, counterparty default risk and liquidity risk. No security, financial instrument or derivative is suitable for all investors. Digital assets are extremely speculative, volatile and are largely unregulated. In some cases, securities and other financial instruments may be difficult to value or sell and reliable information about the value or risks related to the security or financial instrument may be difficult to obtain. Investors should note that income from such securities and other financial instruments, if any, may fluctuate and that price or value of such securities and instruments may rise or fall and, in some cases, investors may lose their entire principal investment. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. Levels and basis for taxation may change.

This report may contain a short-term trading idea or recommendation, which highlights a specific near-term catalyst or event impacting the issuer or the market that is anticipated to have a short-term price impact on the equity securities of the issuer. Short-term trading ideas and recommendations are different from and do not affect a stock's fundamental equity rating, which reflects both a longer term total return expectation and attractiveness for investment relative to other stocks within its Coverage Cluster. Short-term trading ideas and recommendations may be more or less positive than a stock's fundamental equity rating.

BofA Securities is aware that the implementation of the ideas expressed in this report may depend upon an investor's ability to "short" securities or other financial instruments and that such action may be limited by regulations prohibiting or restricting "shortselling" in many jurisdictions. Investors are urged to seek advice regarding the applicability of such regulations prior to executing any short idea contained in this report.

Foreign currency rates of exchange may adversely affect the value, price or income of any security or financial instrument mentioned herein. Investors in such securities and instruments, including ADRs, effectively assume currency risk.

BofA or one of its affiliates is a regular issuer of traded financial instruments linked to securities that may have been recommended in this report. BofA or one of its affiliates may, at any time, hold a trading position (long or short) in the securities and financial instruments discussed in this report.

BofA Securities, through business units other than BofA Global Research, may have issued and may in the future issue trading ideas or recommendations that are inconsistent with, and reach different conclusions from, the information presented herein. Such ideas or recommendations may reflect different time frames, assumptions, views and analytical methods of the persons who prepared them, and BofA Securities is under no obligation to ensure that such other trading ideas or recommendations are brought to the attention of any recipient of this information.

In the event that the recipient received this information pursuant to a contract between the recipient and BofA for the provision of research services for a separate fee, and in connection therewith BofA may be deemed to be acting as an investment adviser, such status relates, if at all, solely to the person with whom BofA has contracted directly and does not extend beyond the delivery of this report (unless otherwise agreed specifically in writing by BofA). If such recipient uses the services of BofA in connection with the sale or purchase of a security referred to herein, BofA may act as principal for its own account or as agent for another person. BofA is and continues to act solely as a broker-dealer in connection with the execution of any transactions, including transactions in any securities referred to herein.

#### BofA ESGMeter Methodology:

ESGMeter is a proprietary metric based on quantitative analysis and fundamental analyst inputs that reflects our assessment of a company's Environmental, Social and Governance-related attributes. The ESGMeter is intended to indicate a company's likelihood of experiencing stronger financial stability (higher return on equity and lower earnings and price volatility) over the next three years relative to peer group. There are three ESGMeter levels - Low, Medium, and High - which indicate whether a company has attributes most likely to translate into superior financial stability (in the case of a High level) or weaker financial stability (in the case of a Low level) over the next three years relative to its peer group. A Medium level suggests that a company exhibits ESG characteristics that are likely associated with financial stability results in line with its peer group over the next three years. Full details of our methodology, financial stability definition and disclaimers are available at [BofA ESGMeter methodology](#). ESGMeter is not indicative of a company's future stock price performance and is not an investment recommendation or rating. ESGMeter is independent of the BofA Global Research fundamental equity analyst's investment rating, volatility risk rating, income rating or price objective for that company.

#### Copyright and General Information:

Copyright 2024 Bank of America Corporation. All rights reserved. iQDatabase® is a registered service mark of Bank of America Corporation. This information is prepared for the use of BofA Securities clients and may not be redistributed, retransmitted or disclosed, in whole or in part, or in any form or manner, without the express written consent of BofA Securities. BofA Global Research information is distributed simultaneously to internal and client websites and other portals by BofA Securities and is not publicly-available material. Any unauthorized use or disclosure is prohibited. Receipt and review of this information constitutes your agreement not to redistribute, retransmit, or disclose to others the contents, opinions, conclusion, or information contained herein (including any investment recommendations, estimates or price targets) without first obtaining express permission from an authorized officer of BofA Securities.

Materials prepared by BofA Global Research personnel are based on public information. Facts and views presented in this material have not been reviewed by, and may not reflect information known to, professionals in other business areas of BofA Securities, including investment banking personnel. BofA Securities has established information barriers between BofA Global Research and certain business groups. As a result, BofA Securities does not disclose certain client relationships with, or compensation received from, such issuers. To the extent this material discusses any legal proceeding or issues, it has not been prepared as nor is it intended to express any legal conclusion, opinion or advice. Investors should consult their own legal advisers as to issues of law relating to the subject matter of this material. BofA Global Research personnel's knowledge of legal proceedings in which any BofA Securities entity and/or its directors, officers and employees may be plaintiffs, defendants, co-defendants or co-plaintiffs with or involving issuers mentioned in this material is based on public information. Facts and views presented in this material that relate to any such proceedings have not been reviewed by, discussed with, and may not reflect information known to, professionals in other business areas of BofA Securities in connection with the legal proceedings or matters relevant to such proceedings.

This information has been prepared independently of any issuer of securities mentioned herein and not in connection with any proposed offering of securities or as agent of any issuer of any securities. None of BofA or any of its affiliates or their research analysts has any authority whatsoever to make any representation or warranty on behalf of the issuer(s). BofA Global Research policy prohibits research personnel from disclosing a recommendation, investment rating, or investment thesis for review by an issuer prior to the publication of a research report containing such rating, recommendation or investment thesis.

Any information relating to the tax status of financial instruments discussed herein is not intended to provide tax advice or to be used by anyone to provide tax advice. Investors are urged to seek tax advice based on their particular circumstances from an independent tax professional.

The information herein (other than disclosure information relating to BofA Securities and its affiliates) was obtained from various sources and we do not guarantee its accuracy. This information may contain links to third-party websites. BofA Securities is not responsible for the content of any third-party website or any linked content contained in a third-party website. Content contained on such third-party websites is not part of this information and is not incorporated by reference. The inclusion of a link does not imply any endorsement by or any affiliation with BofA Securities. Access to any third-party website is at your own risk, and you should always review the terms and privacy policies at third-party websites before submitting any personal information to them. BofA Securities is not responsible for such terms and privacy policies and expressly disclaims any liability for them.

All opinions, projections and estimates constitute the judgment of the author as of the date of publication and are subject to change without notice. Prices also are subject to change without notice. BofA Securities is under no obligation to update this information and BofA Securities ability to publish information on the subject issuer(s) in the future is subject to applicable quiet periods. You should therefore assume that BofA Securities will not update any fact, circumstance or opinion contained herein.

Subject to the quiet period applicable under laws of the various jurisdictions in which we distribute research reports and other legal and BofA Securities policy-related restrictions on the publication of research reports, fundamental equity reports are produced on a regular basis as necessary to keep the investment recommendation current. Certain outstanding reports or investment opinions relating to securities, financial instruments and/or issuers may no longer be current. Always refer to the most recent research report relating to an issuer prior to making an investment decision.

In some cases, an issuer may be classified as Restricted or may be Under Review or Extended Review. In each case, investors should consider any investment opinion relating to such issuer (or its security and/or financial instruments) to be suspended or withdrawn and should not rely on the analyses and investment opinion(s) pertaining to such issuer (or its securities and/or financial instruments) nor should the analyses or opinion(s) be considered a solicitation of any kind. Sales persons and financial advisors affiliated with BofAS or any of its affiliates may not solicit purchases of securities or financial instruments that are Restricted or Under Review and may only solicit securities under Extended Review in accordance with firm policies.

Neither BofA Securities nor any officer or employee of BofA Securities accepts any liability whatsoever for any direct, indirect or consequential damages or losses arising from any use of this information.

