

SM Energy Co
Form 424B5
August 08, 2016

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Registration No. 333-203936

The information in this preliminary prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not an offer to sell nor do they seek an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED AUGUST 8, 2016

**Preliminary Prospectus supplement
(To prospectus dated August 8, 2016)**

15,000,000 shares

SM ENERGY COMPANY

Common Stock

We are offering 15,000,000 shares of our common stock, par value \$0.01 per share.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, or NYSE, under the symbol "SM." On August 5, 2016, the last reported trading price of our common stock as reported on the NYSE was \$29.30 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves risks. See "Risk Factors" beginning on page S-14 of this prospectus supplement and on page 4 of the accompanying prospectus.

	Per Share	Total
Public offering price	\$	\$
Underwriting discount and commissions	\$	\$
Proceeds, before expenses, to us	\$	\$

We have granted the underwriters a 30-day option to purchase up to an additional 2,250,000 shares from us, at the public offering price, less the underwriting discount.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The underwriters expect to deliver the shares of our common stock to purchasers on or about _____, 2016.

Joint Book-Running Managers

**Wells Fargo
Securities**

**BofA Merrill
Lynch**

J.P. Morgan

Barclays

BBVA

**RBC Capital
Markets**

The date of this prospectus supplement is August _____, 2016.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT AND THE ACCOMPANYING PROSPECTUS

This document is in two parts. The first part is the prospectus supplement, which describes the specific terms of this offering and also adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference into the accompanying prospectus. The second part is the accompanying prospectus, which gives more general information about securities we may offer from time to time, some of which may not apply to this offering. Generally, when we refer to this prospectus, we are referring to both this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Before you invest in our common stock or this offering, you should carefully read this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, in addition to the information contained in the documents we refer to under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information" and "Incorporation by Reference" in this prospectus supplement.

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any free writing prospectus we may provide you in connection with this offering. If any information varies between this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or documents incorporated by reference herein prior to the date of this prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information in this prospectus supplement. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized any other person to provide you with additional or different information. If anyone provides you with additional, different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not, and the underwriters are not, making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

The information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or in any document incorporated by reference herein or therein is accurate and complete only as of the date hereof or thereof, respectively, regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or of any sale of our common stock by us or the underwriters. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

Unless the context otherwise indicates, the terms "SM Energy," "the Company," "we," "us" and "our" in this prospectus supplement mean SM Energy Company, a Delaware corporation, and its subsidiaries. Certain oil and natural gas industry terms used in this prospectus supplement are defined in the "Glossary of Oil and Natural Gas Terms" beginning on page S-37 of this prospectus supplement.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the informational requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Securities Exchange Act"), and we file annual, quarterly and other reports and other information with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"). You may read and copy any document we file with the SEC at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street NE, Washington, D.C. 20549-2521. Please call 1-800-732-0330 for further information concerning the operation of the public reference room. Our SEC filings are also available on the SEC's web site at <http://www.sec.gov>. Unless specifically listed under "Incorporation by Reference" below, the information contained on the SEC web site is not intended to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and you should not consider that information a part of this prospectus supplement.

We make available free of charge on or through our Internet website, <http://www.sm-energy.com>, our Annual Report on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Current Reports on Form 8-K and amendments to those reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act as soon as reasonably practicable after we electronically file such material with, or furnish it to, the SEC. In addition, information contained on our Internet website is not part of this prospectus supplement and does not constitute a part of this prospectus supplement.

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INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

We "incorporate by reference" in this prospectus supplement certain documents that we have previously filed with the SEC. This means that we are disclosing important information to you without actually including that information in this prospectus supplement by referring you to other documents that we have filed separately with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus supplement. Information that we later provide to the SEC, and which is deemed "filed" with the SEC, will automatically update information that we previously filed with the SEC, and may replace information in this prospectus supplement and information that we previously filed with the SEC. We incorporate by reference the following documents in this prospectus supplement, which you should review in connection with this prospectus supplement:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2015, filed with the SEC on February 24, 2016 ("2015 Form 10-K");

our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the period ended March 31, 2016, filed with the SEC on May 4, 2016, and for the period ended June 30, 2016, filed with the SEC on August 3, 2016;

our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on February 22, 2016, March 25, 2016, April 13, 2016, May 26, 2016 and August 8, 2016 (excluding any information furnished pursuant to Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 on any Current Report on Form 8-K); and

the description of our common stock contained in our Form 8-A/A (File No. 001-31539) filed with the SEC on August 8, 2016, including any amendment to that form that we may file in the future for the purpose of updating the description of our common stock.

We also incorporate by reference each of the documents that we file with the SEC (excluding those filings made under Items 2.02 or 7.01 of Form 8-K or other information furnished to the SEC) under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act on or after the date of this prospectus supplement and before the termination of the offering of common stock under this prospectus supplement shall be deemed to be incorporated in this prospectus supplement by reference and to be a part hereof from the date of the filing of such documents. Any statements made in such documents will automatically update and supersede the information contained in this prospectus supplement, and any statements made in this prospectus supplement update and supersede the information contained in past SEC filings incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement.

We will provide, at no cost to you, a copy of all documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom we deliver this prospectus supplement, upon written or oral request. You may request a copy of these filings by writing or telephoning us at the following address or telephone number:

Investor Relations
SM Energy Company
1775 Sherman Street, Suite 1200
Denver, Colorado 80203
(303) 861-8140
information@sm-energy.com

CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement contains "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act") and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act. All statements, other than statements of historical facts, included in this prospectus supplement that address activities, events, or developments with respect to our financial condition, results of operations, or economic performance that we expect, believe, or anticipate will or

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may occur in the future, or that address plans and objectives of management for future operations, are forward-looking statements. The words "anticipate," "assume," "believe," "budget," "estimate," "expect," "forecast," "intend," "plan," "project," "will," and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements appear throughout this prospectus supplement, and include statements about such matters as:

the amount and nature of future capital expenditures and the availability of liquidity and capital resources to fund capital expenditures;

our ability to consummate acquisitions and the successful integration and future performance of such assets;

our outlook on future oil, gas, and NGL prices, well costs, and service costs;

the drilling of wells and other exploration and development activities and plans, as well as possible acquisitions;

the possible divestiture or farm-down of, or joint venture relating to, certain properties;

proved reserve estimates and the estimates of both future net revenues and the present value of future net revenues associated with those proved reserve estimates;

future oil, gas, and NGL production estimates;

cash flows, anticipated liquidity, and the future repayment of debt;

business strategies and other plans and objectives for future operations, including plans for expansion and growth of operations or to defer capital investment, and our outlook on our future financial condition or results of operations; and

other similar matters such as those discussed in the "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" section of our 2015 Form 10-K.

Our forward-looking statements are based on assumptions and analyses made by us in light of our experience and our perception of historical trends, current conditions, expected future developments, and other factors that we believe are appropriate under the circumstances. These statements are subject to a number of known and unknown risks and uncertainties, which may cause our actual results and performance to be materially different from any future results or performance expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. Some of these risks are described in the *Risk Factors* section in Part I, Item 1A of our 2015 Form 10-K, and include such factors as:

the volatility of oil, gas, and NGL prices, and the effect it may have on our profitability, financial condition, cash flows, access to capital, and ability to grow production volumes and/or proved reserves;

weakness in economic conditions and uncertainty in financial markets;

our ability to replace reserves in order to sustain production, including our ability to consummate acquisitions and the successful integration and future performance of such assets;

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our ability to raise the substantial amount of capital required to develop and/or replace our reserves;

our ability to compete against competitors that have greater financial, technical, and human resources;

our ability to attract and retain key personnel;

the imprecise estimations of our actual quantities and present value of proved oil, gas, and NGL reserves;

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the uncertainty in evaluating recoverable reserves and estimating expected benefits or liabilities;

the possibility that exploration and development drilling may not result in commercially producible reserves;

our limited control over activities on outside-operated properties;

our reliance on the skill and expertise of third-party service providers on our operated properties;

the possibility that title to properties in which we have an interest may be defective;

the possibility that our planned drilling in existing or emerging resource plays using some of the latest available horizontal drilling and completion techniques is subject to drilling and completion risks and may not meet our expectations for reserves or production;

the uncertainties associated with acquisitions, divestitures, joint ventures, farm-downs, farm-outs and similar transactions with respect to certain assets, including whether such transactions will be consummated or completed in the form or timing and for the value that we anticipate;

the uncertainties associated with enhanced recovery methods;

our commodity derivative contracts may result in financial losses or may limit the prices we receive for oil, gas, and NGL sales;

the inability of one or more of our service providers, customers, or contractual counterparties to meet their obligations;

our ability to deliver necessary quantities of natural gas or crude oil to contractual counterparties;

price declines or unsuccessful exploration efforts resulting in write-downs of our asset carrying values;

the impact that lower oil, gas, or NGL prices could have on the amount we are able to borrow under our Credit Agreement (as defined herein);

the possibility our amount of debt may limit our ability to obtain financing for acquisitions, make us more vulnerable to adverse economic conditions, and make it more difficult for us to make payments on our debt;

the possibility that covenants in our debt agreements may limit our discretion in the operation of our business, prohibit us from engaging in beneficial transactions, or lead to the accelerated payment of our debt;

operating and environmental risks and hazards that could result in substantial losses;

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the impact of seasonal weather conditions and lease stipulations on our ability to conduct drilling activities;

our ability to acquire adequate supplies of water and dispose of or recycle water we use at a reasonable cost in accordance with environmental and other applicable rules;

complex laws and regulations, including environmental regulations, that result in substantial costs and other risks;

the availability and capacity of gathering, transportation, processing, and/or refining facilities;

our ability to sell and/or receive market prices for our oil, gas, and NGLs;

new technologies may cause our current exploration and drilling methods to become obsolete;

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the possibility of security threats, including terrorist attacks and cybersecurity breaches, against, or otherwise impacting, our facilities and systems; and

litigation, environmental matters, the potential impact of legislation and government regulations, and the use of management estimates regarding such matters.

We caution you that forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and actual results or performance may be materially different from those expressed or implied in the forward-looking statements. The forward-looking statements in this prospectus supplement speak as of the filing date of this prospectus supplement. Although we may from time to time voluntarily update our prior forward-looking statements, we disclaim any commitment to do so except as required by securities laws.

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PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

This prospectus supplement summary highlights information contained elsewhere in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, and the documents we incorporate by reference. It does not contain all of the information that you should consider before making an investment decision. For a more complete understanding of our business and this offering, you should carefully read the entire prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein, including our historical financial statements and the notes thereto, which are incorporated herein by reference from our 2015 Form 10-K and our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the periods ended March 31, 2016 and June 30, 2016. You should read "Risk Factors" beginning on page S-14 of this prospectus supplement, on page 4 of the accompanying prospectus and Item 1A. "Risk Factors" in our 2015 Form 10-K and Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the periods ended March 31, 2016 and June 30, 2016, for more information about important risks that you should consider before making a decision to invest in our common stock.

Certain information with respect to our estimated proved reserves referred to and incorporated by reference herein is based in part upon the audit of our proved reserve estimates by Ryder Scott Company, L.P., a firm of independent petroleum engineers. Such information is included and incorporated herein in reliance on the authority of such firm as an expert in petroleum engineering.

SM Energy Company

We are an independent energy company engaged in the acquisition, exploration, development, and production of oil, natural gas, and NGLs in onshore North America. Our core assets and active development positions are located in the Eagle Ford shale in south Texas, the Bakken/Three Forks in North Dakota and the Permian Basin in west Texas. We also have a delineation and exploration program in the Powder River Basin in Wyoming.

Our strategic objective is to profitably build our ownership and operatorship of North American oil, natural gas, and NGL producing assets that have high operating margins and significant opportunities for additional economic investment. We pursue growth opportunities through both exploration and acquisitions, and we seek to maximize the value of our assets through industry leading technology application and outstanding operational execution. We focus on achieving high full-cycle economic returns on our investments and maintaining a simple, strong balance sheet through a conservative approach to leverage.

As of year-end 2015, our proved reserves were 471.3 MMBoe. In the second quarter of 2016, production averaged 157,200 Boe per day. As of the end of the second quarter of 2016, our leasehold acreage totaled approximately 390,000 net acres in the Eagle Ford shale in south Texas, the Bakken/Three Forks in North Dakota and the Permian Basin in west Texas, approximately 171,000 net acres in the Powder River Basin and 477,000 net acres in other areas, of which 79,000 acres we recently announced were subject to contracts for sale.

Corporate Information

We were founded in 1908 and incorporated in Delaware in 1915. Our initial public offering of common stock was in December 1992. Our common stock trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol "SM." Our principal offices are located at 1775 Sherman Street, Suite 1200, Denver, Colorado 80203, and our telephone number is (303) 861-8140. Our website address is www.sm-energy.com; information included or referred to on our website is not part of this prospectus supplement.

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Recent Developments

Pending Acquisition

On August 8, 2016, we entered into a definitive membership interest purchase agreement (the "Purchase Agreement") with Rock Oil Holdings LLC (the "Seller") to acquire (the "Acquisition") 100% of the membership interests in JPM EOC Opal, LLC (the "Target"), a Delaware limited liability company and wholly-owned subsidiary of Seller, which owns undeveloped leasehold interests, producing wells and associated infrastructure assets in the Midland Basin of west Texas. The Acquisition will complement and significantly expand our existing core position in the basin. The purchase price for the membership interests in Target is \$980 million (the "Purchase Price"), subject to certain customary purchase price adjustments.

Pursuant to the Purchase Agreement, we will acquire approximately 24,783 net acres in Howard County, Texas that are predominantly contiguous; an estimated 6 MMBoe of proved developed producing reserves (based on internal estimates); and approximately 4,900 Boe per day of net production (as of July 2016) that is approximately 77% oil. The to be acquired leasehold has current production from wells in the Wolfcamp A, Wolfcamp B and Lower Spraberry formations, with a recently completed well producing approximately 1,600 Boe/d in the last 30 days. We have demonstrated superior operational execution in the Midland Basin and plan to utilize our extensive experience and expertise, including applying reservoir modeling, pad drilling and leading edge completion technologies to optimize the performance of the wells we expect to drill on the acquired assets.

We intend to fund the Acquisition with net proceeds from this offering, net proceeds from our Concurrent Convertible Notes Offering (as defined below), proceeds from asset sales pursuant to definitive agreements currently in place, proceeds from asset sales contemplated as part of our continued portfolio management (including the divestiture of our outside-operated position in the Eagle Ford shale), borrowings under our Fifth Amended and Restated Credit Agreement (as amended, the "Credit Agreement") by and among the Company, Wells Fargo Bank, National Association, as Administrative Agent, and the institutions named therein as lenders, or borrowings under the Bridge Facility (as defined below). There can be no assurances that any asset sales will be consummated.

The Acquisition is scheduled to close October 4, 2016 with an effective date of September 1, 2016, and is subject to the satisfaction of customary closing conditions. There can be no assurance that the transaction will close on the expected closing date or at all. Following the execution of the Purchase Agreement, we are required to deposit \$49.0 million into an escrow account as a deposit to be applied against the Purchase Price at the closing of the Acquisition.

Neither the closing of this offering nor the closing of the Concurrent Convertible Notes Offering are conditioned upon, nor are they a condition to, the consummation of the Acquisition. If the Acquisition is delayed, not consummated or consummated in a manner different than described herein, the price of our shares of common stock may decline. In addition, if the Acquisition is not consummated, our management will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds of this offering. Accordingly, if you decide to purchase shares of our common stock in this offering, you should be willing to do so whether or not we complete the Acquisition.

Concurrent Convertible Notes Offering

Concurrently with this offering of our common stock, we are also making a public offering of \$100.0 million principal amount of our % Convertible Senior Notes due 2021 ("Convertible Notes") pursuant to a separate prospectus supplement (the "Concurrent Convertible Notes Offering"). In that offering, we have granted the underwriters a 30-day option to purchase up to an additional \$15.0 million principal amount of Convertible Notes. In connection with the pricing of the Concurrent

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Convertible Notes Offering, the Company expects to enter into capped call transactions with option counterparties. The capped call transactions are generally expected to reduce potential dilution to our common stock upon any conversion of the Convertible Notes and/or offset any cash payments we are required to make in excess of the principal amount of converted notes, as the case may be, with such reduction and/or offset subject to a cap. The closing of this offering of our common stock is not conditioned upon the closing of the concurrent offering of our Convertible Notes, and the closing of the concurrent offering of Convertible Notes is not conditioned upon the closing of this offering of our common stock.

Bridge Facility

On August 8, 2016, we entered into a commitment letter by which a lender committed to make available to us a second lien bridge facility in a principal amount of up to \$500 million ("Bridge Facility") until November 11, 2016, subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the commitment letter. If we decide to use this facility, the proceeds would be used to fund a portion of the Purchase Price of the Acquisition and the payment of fees and expenses of the Acquisition.

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THE OFFERING

Issuer	SM Energy Company.
Common stock offered by us	15,000,000 shares.
Option to purchase additional shares	The underwriters also have the option to purchase up to an additional 2,250,000 shares from us on the same terms and conditions within 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement.
Common stock outstanding following the offering(1)	83,466,823 shares (85,716,823 shares if the underwriters exercise their option to purchase additional shares in full).
Use of proceeds	<p>We estimate that the net proceeds from this offering, after deducting the underwriting discount and commissions and our estimated offering expenses, will be approximately \$ (or \$ if the underwriters exercise their option to purchase additional shares in full).</p> <p>If the Acquisition is consummated, we intend to use the net proceeds from this offering to partially fund the Acquisition. If the Acquisition is not consummated, we intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, which may include, among other things, reducing indebtedness, acquiring properties, and funding a portion of our exploration and production activities and working capital. See "Use of proceeds."</p> <p>This offering is not conditioned upon the completion of the Acquisition, which, if completed, will occur subsequent to the closing of this offering, and the completion of this offering is not a condition to the completion of the Acquisition. In addition, there can be no assurance that we will consummate the Acquisition on the terms described herein or at all. If the Acquisition is not consummated, our management will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds of this offering.</p>
Risk factors	Investing in our common stock involves substantial risk. You should carefully consider the risk factors set forth or cross-referenced in the sections entitled "Risk factors" beginning on page S-14 of this prospectus supplement and on page 4 of the accompanying prospectus, and the other information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein, prior to making an investment in our common stock.
New York Stock Exchange symbol	"SM."

(1) The number of shares of common stock to be outstanding immediately following this offering is based on 68,466,823 shares outstanding as of July 31, 2016.

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SUMMARY CONSOLIDATED HISTORICAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION

We derived the following summary historical financial data as of December 31, 2015 and 2014 and for the years ended December 31, 2015, 2014, and 2013, from our audited financial statements, which are incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and should be read in conjunction with Item 7, "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" and Item 8, "Financial Statements and Supplementary Data" included in our 2015 Form 10-K, which is incorporated by reference herein. The summary historical balance sheet data as of December 31, 2013 has been derived from our audited financial statements included in our annual report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2013 but not included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement. The financial data for the six months ended June 30, 2016 and 2015, respectively, and as of June 30, 2016 was derived from our unaudited condensed consolidated financial statements included in our Second Quarter 2016 Form 10-Q, which is incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement. The Consolidated Balance Sheet data as of June 30, 2015 was derived from our unaudited condensed consolidated financial statements included in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the period ended June 30, 2015, which is not included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement. The following summary historical financial data should be read in conjunction with Part I, Item 2, "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" and Part I, Item 1, "Financial Statements" of our Second Quarter 2016 Form 10-Q.

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	For the Six Months Ended June 30,		For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2016	2015	2015	2014	2013
	(unaudited)				
	(in thousands, except per share amounts)				
Operating revenues:					
Oil, gas, and NGL production revenue	\$ 502,965	\$ 834,571	\$ 1,499,905	\$ 2,481,544	\$ 2,199,550
Net gain (loss) on divestiture activity	(18,975)	36,082	43,031	646	27,974
Marketed gas system revenue		9,482	9,485	24,897	60,039
Other operating revenues	900	1,945	4,544	15,220	5,811
Total operating revenues and other income	484,890	882,080	1,556,965	2,522,307	2,293,374
Operating expenses:					
Oil, gas, and NGL production expense	293,134	369,836	723,633	715,878	597,045
Depletion, depreciation, amortization, and asset retirement obligation liability accretion	425,227	437,105	921,009	767,532	822,872
Exploration	28,460	62,948	120,569	129,857	74,104
Impairment of proved properties	269,785	68,440	468,679	84,480	172,641
Abandonment and impairment of unproved properties	2,349	17,446	78,643	75,638	46,105
Impairment of other property and equipment			49,369		
General and administrative	60,438	86,244	157,668	167,103	149,551
Change in Net Profits Plan liability	1,865	(8,810)	(19,525)	(29,849)	(21,842)
Derivative (gain) loss	149,123	(73,238)	(408,831)	(583,264)	(3,080)
Marketed gas system expense		10,773	13,922	24,460	57,647
Other operating expenses	11,783	16,650	30,612	4,658	30,076
Total operating expenses	1,242,164	987,394	2,135,748	1,356,493	1,925,119
Income (loss) from operations	(757,274)	(105,314)	(578,783)	1,165,814	368,255
Non-operating income (expense):					
Other, net	11	596	649	(2,561)	67
Interest expense					