

United States Brent Oil Fund, LP  
Form 10-K  
March 14, 2018

**UNITED STATES**

**SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

**Washington, D.C. 20549**

**FORM 10-K**

**Annual report pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 for the fiscal year ended  
x December 31, 2017.**

**OR**

**..Transition report pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 for the transition  
period from to .**

**Commission file number: 001-34704**

**United States Brent Oil Fund, LP**

**(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)**

**Delaware 27-0925904  
(State or other jurisdiction of (I.R.S. Employer  
incorporation or organization) Identification No.)**

**1999 Harrison Street, Suite 1530**

**Oakland, California 94612**

**(Address of principal executive offices) (Zip code)**

**(510) 522-9600**

**(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)**

**Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:**

<b>Shares of United States Brent Oil Fund, LP</b>	<b>NYSE Arca, Inc.</b>
<b>(Title of each class)</b>	<b>(Name of exchange on which registered)</b>

**Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: None**

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act.  Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.  Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Website, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files).  Yes  No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K (§229.405 of this chapter) is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, a smaller reporting company, or an emerging growth company. See the definitions of “large accelerated filer,” “accelerated filer,” “smaller reporting company” and “emerging growth company” in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer	Accelerated filer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Non-accelerated filer (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)	Smaller reporting company	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Emerging growth company	<input type="checkbox"/>

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided to Section 7(a)(2)(B) of the Securities Act.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).  
 Yes  No

The aggregate market value of the registrant’s shares held by non-affiliates of the registrant as of June 30, 2017 was: \$115,700,000.

The registrant had 5,100,000 outstanding shares as of March 12, 2018.

**DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE:**

None.

**UNITED STATES BRENT OIL FUND, LP**

**Table of Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
<u>Part I</u>	
<u>Item 1. Business.</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Item 1A. Risk Factors.</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>Item 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments.</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Item 2. Properties.</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Item 3. Legal Proceedings.</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Item 4. Mine Safety Disclosures.</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Part II</u>	
<u>Item 5. Market for Registrant’s Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities.</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Item 6. Selected Financial Data.</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>Item 7. Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations.</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>Item 7A. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk.</u>	<u>55</u>
<u>Item 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data.</u>	<u>56</u>
<u>Item 9. Changes in and Disagreements With Accountants on Accounting and Financial Disclosure.</u>	<u>75</u>
<u>Item 9A. Controls and Procedures.</u>	<u>75</u>
<u>Item 9B. Other Information.</u>	<u>75</u>
<u>Part III.</u>	
<u>Item 10. Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance.</u>	<u>76</u>
<u>Item 11. Executive Compensation.</u>	<u>81</u>

<u>Item 12. Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Stockholder Matters.</u>	<u>82</u>
<u>Item 13. Certain Relationships and Related Transactions, and Director Independence.</u>	<u>82</u>
<u>Item 14. Principal Accountant Fees and Services.</u>	<u>82</u>
<u>Part IV</u>	
<u>Item 15. Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules.</u>	<u>83</u>
<u>Exhibit Index.</u>	<u>83</u>
<u>Signatures.</u>	<u>84</u>

## Part I

### Item 1. Business.

#### **What is BNO?**

The United States Brent Oil Fund, LP (“BNO”) is a Delaware limited partnership organized on September 2, 2009. BNO maintains its main business office at 1999 Harrison Street, Suite 1530, Oakland, California 94612. BNO is a commodity pool that issues limited partnership interests (“shares”) traded on the NYSE Arca, Inc. (the “NYSE Arca”). It operates pursuant to the terms of the Fourth Amended and Restated Agreement of Limited Partnership dated as of December 15, 2017 (as amended from time to time, the “LP Agreement”), which grants full management control to its general partner, United States Commodity Funds LLC (“USCF”).

The investment objective of BNO is for the daily changes in percentage terms of its shares’ per share net asset value (“NAV”) to reflect the daily changes in percentage terms of the spot price of Brent crude oil, as measured by the daily changes in the price of a specific short-term futures contract for Brent crude oil traded on the ICE Futures Europe Exchange (the “ICE Futures”), that is the near month contract to expire, except when the near month contract is within two weeks of expiration, in which case it will be measured by the futures contract that is the next month contract to expire (the “Benchmark Futures Contract”), plus interest earned on BNO’s collateral holdings, less BNO’s expenses. BNO’s investment objective is not for its NAV or market price of shares to equal, in dollar terms, the spot price of Brent crude oil or any particular futures contract based on Brent crude oil or any particular futures contract based on Brent crude oil, nor is BNO’s investment objective for the percentage change in its NAV to reflect the percentage change of the price of any particular futures contract as measured over a time period greater than one day.

USCF believes that it is not practical to manage the portfolio to achieve such an investment goal when investing in Futures Contracts (as defined below) and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments (as defined below). BNO’s shares began trading on June 2, 2010. USCF is the general partner of BNO and is responsible for the management of BNO.

#### **Who is USCF?**

USCF is a single member limited liability company that was formed in the state of Delaware on May 10, 2005. USCF maintains its main business office at 1999 Harrison Street, Suite 1530, Oakland, California 94612. USCF is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Wainwright Holdings, Inc., a Delaware corporation (“Wainwright”), which is a wholly

owned subsidiary of Concierge Technologies, Inc. (publicly traded under the ticker CNCG (“Concierge”). Mr. Nicholas Gerber (discussed below), along with certain family members and certain other shareholders, owns the majority of the shares in Concierge. Wainwright is a holding company that currently holds both USCF, as well as USCF Advisers LLC, an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, as amended. USCF Advisers LLC serves as the investment adviser for the USCF SummerHaven SHPEN Index Fund (“BUYN”), the USCF SummerHaven SHPEI Index Fund (“BUY”), each a series of the USCF ETF Trust as well as the USCF Commodity Strategy Fund, a series of the USCF Mutual Funds Trust. USCF ETF Trust and USCF Mutual Funds Trust are registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the “1940 Act”). USCF Advisers LLC was also the investment adviser for the Stock Split Index Fund (“TOFR”) and the USCF Restaurant Leaders Fund (“MENU”), each a series of the USCF ETF Trust, until October 2017 when both funds liquidated all of their assets and distributed cash pro rata to all remaining shareholders. The Board of Trustees for USCF ETF Trust and USCF Mutual Funds Trust consist of different independent trustees than those independent directors who serve on the Board of Directors of USCF. USCF is a member of the National Futures Association (the “NFA”) and registered as a commodity pool operator (“CPO”) with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (the “CFTC”) on December 1, 2005 and as a swaps firm on August 8, 2013.

USCF serves as general partner of the United States Oil Fund, LP (“USO”), the United States Natural Gas Fund, LP (“UNG”), the United States 12 Month Oil Fund, LP (“USL”), the United States Gasoline Fund, LP (“UGA”), the United States Diesel-Heating Oil Fund, LP (“UHN”), the United States Short Oil Fund, LP (“DNO”), the United States 12 Month Natural Gas Fund, LP (“UNL”) and the United States Brent Oil Fund, LP (“BNO”). USCF is also the sponsor of the United States Commodity Index Fund (“USCI”), the United States Copper Index Fund (“CPER”), the United States Agriculture Index Fund (“USAG”), and the USCF Canadian Crude Oil Index Fund (“UCCO”), each a series of the United States Commodity Index Funds Trust. UCCO is currently in registration and has not commenced operations.

In addition, USCF is the sponsor of the USCF Funds Trust, a Delaware Statutory Trust, and each of its series, the REX S&P MLP Fund (“RMLP”) and the REX S&P MLP Inverse Fund (“MLPD”), which are currently in registration and have not commenced operations (together, the “REX Funds”), and the United States 3x Oil Fund (“USOU”) and the United States 3x Short Oil Fund (“USOD”), which commenced operations on July 20, 2017.

All funds listed previously, other than UCCO and the REX Funds, are referred to collectively herein as the “Related Public Funds.”

The Related Public Funds are subject to reporting requirements under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Exchange Act”). For more information about each of the Related Public Funds, investors in BNO may call 1-800-920-0259 or visit [www.uscfinvestments.com](http://www.uscfinvestments.com) or the Securities and Exchange Commission’s (the “SEC”) website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov).

USCF, as the sponsor of United States Commodity Index Funds Trust (the “Trust”) and its series United States Metals Index Fund (“USMI”), terminated USMI effective March 18, 2015 and USMI was also delisted from NYSE Arca. On March 24, 2015, USMI liquidated all its assets and distributed cash pro rata to all remaining shareholders as of such date.

USCF is required to evaluate the credit risk of BNO to the futures commission merchant (“FCM”), oversee the purchase and sale of BNO’s shares by certain authorized purchasers (“Authorized Participants”), review daily positions and margin requirements of BNO and manage BNO’s investments. USCF also pays the fees of ALPS Distributors, Inc. (“ALPS Distributors”), which serves as the marketing agent for BNO (the “Marketing Agent”), and Brown Brothers Harriman & Co. (“BBH&Co.”), which serves as the administrator (the “Administrator”) and the custodian (the “Custodian”) for BNO.

Limited partners have no right to elect USCF as the general partner on an annual or any other continuing basis. If USCF voluntarily withdraws as general partner, however, the holders of a majority of BNO’s outstanding shares (excluding for purposes of such determination shares owned, if any, by the withdrawing USCF and its affiliates) may elect its successor. USCF may not be removed as general partner except upon approval by the affirmative vote of the holders of at least 66 and 2/3 percent of BNO’s outstanding shares (excluding shares owned, if any, by USCF and its affiliates), subject to the satisfaction of certain conditions set forth in the LP Agreement.

BNO has no executive officers or employees. Pursuant to the terms of the LP Agreement, BNO’s affairs are managed by USCF.



The business and affairs of USCF are managed by a board of directors (the “Board”), which is comprised of four management directors (the “Management Directors”), each of whom are also executive officers or employees of USCF, and three independent directors who meet the independent director requirements established by the NYSE Arca Equities Rules and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. The Management Directors have the authority to manage USCF pursuant to the terms of the Sixth Amended and Restated Limited Liability Company Agreement, of USCF, dated as of May 15, 2015 (as amended from time to time, the “LLC Agreement”). Through its Management Directors, USCF manages the day-to-day operations of BNO. The Board has an audit committee which is made up of the three independent directors (Gordon L. Ellis, Malcolm R. Fobes III and Peter M. Robinson). For additional information relating to the audit committee, please see “*Item 10. Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance – Audit Committee*” in this annual report on Form 10-K.

### **How Does BNO Operate?**

An investment in the shares provides a means for diversifying an investor’s portfolio or hedging exposure to changes in Brent crude oil prices. An investment in the shares allows both retail and institutional investors to easily gain this exposure to the Brent crude oil market in a transparent, cost-effective manner.

The net assets of BNO consist primarily of investments in futures contracts for crude oil, diesel-heating oil, gasoline, natural gas and other petroleum-based fuels that are traded on the ICE Futures, the NYMEX, or other U.S. and foreign exchanges (collectively, “Futures Contracts”) and, to a lesser extent, in order to comply with regulatory requirements or in view of market conditions, other crude oil-related investments such as cash-settled options on Futures Contracts, forward contracts for oil, cleared swap contracts and non-exchange traded over-the-counter (“OTC”) transactions that are based on the price of crude oil, other petroleum-based fuels, Futures Contracts and indices based on the foregoing (collectively, “Other Crude Oil-Related Investments”). For convenience and unless otherwise specified, Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments collectively are referred to as “Crude Oil Interests” in this annual report on Form 10-K. BNO invests substantially the entire amount of its assets in Futures Contracts while supporting such investments by holding the amounts of its margin, collateral and other requirements relating to these obligations-in short-term obligations of the United States of two years or less (“Treasuries”), cash and cash equivalents. The daily holdings of BNO are available on BNO’s website at [www.uscfinvestments.com](http://www.uscfinvestments.com).

The investment objective of BNO is for the daily changes in percentage terms of its per share NAV to reflect the daily changes in percentage terms of the spot price of Brent crude oil as measured by the daily changes in the price of a specified short-term futures contract on Brent crude oil traded on the ICE Futures that is the near month contract to expire, except when the near month contract is within two weeks of expiration, in which case it will be measured by the futures contract that is the next month contract to expire (the “Benchmark Futures Contract”), plus interest earned on BNO’s collateral holdings, less BNO’s expenses. BNO’s investment objective is not for its NAV or market price of shares to equal, in dollar terms, the spot price of Brent crude oil or any particular futures contract based on Brent crude oil nor is BNO’s investment objective for the percentage change in its NAV to reflect the percentage change of the price of any particular futures contract as measured over a time period greater than one day. BNO may invest in interests other than the Benchmark Futures Contract to comply with accountability levels and position limits. For a detailed discussion of accountability levels and position limits, see “*Item 1. Business – What are Futures Contracts?*” below in this annual report on Form 10-K.

USCF employs a “neutral” investment strategy in order to track changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract regardless of whether the price goes up or goes down. BNO’s “neutral” investment strategy is designed to permit investors generally to purchase and sell BNO’s shares for the purpose of investing indirectly in Brent crude oil in a cost-effective manner, and/or to permit participants in the oil or other industries to hedge the risk of losses in their Brent crude oil-related transactions. Accordingly, depending on the investment objective of an individual investor, the risks generally associated with investing in Brent crude oil and/or the risks involved in hedging may exist. In addition, an investment in BNO involves the risk that the daily changes in the price of BNO’s shares, in percentage terms, will not accurately track the daily changes in the Benchmark Futures Contract, in percentage terms, and that daily changes in the Benchmark Futures Contract, in percentage terms, will not closely correlate with daily changes in the spot prices of crude oil, in percentage terms.

The Benchmark Futures Contract is changed from the near month contract to the next month contract over a four-day period. Each month the Benchmark Futures Contract changes starting at the end of the day on the date two weeks prior to expiration of the near month contract for that month. During the first three days of the period, the applicable value of the Benchmark Futures Contract is based on a combination of the near month contract and the next month

contract as follows: (1) day 1 consists of 75% of the then near month contract's price plus 25% of the price of the next month contract, divided by 75% of the near month contract's prior day's price plus 25% of the price of the next month contract, (2) day 2 consists of 50% of the then near month contract's price plus 50% of the price of the next month contract, divided by 50% of the near month contract's prior day's price plus 50% of the price of the next month contract and (3) day 3 consists of 25% of the then near month contract's price plus 75% of the price of the next month contract, divided by 25% of the near month contract's prior day's price plus 75% of the price of the next month contract. On day 4, the Benchmark Futures Contract is the next month contract to expire at that time and that contract remains the Benchmark Futures Contract until the beginning of the following month's change in the Benchmark Futures Contract over a four-day period.

On each day during the four-day period, USCF anticipates it will "roll" BNO's positions in Crude Oil Interests by closing, or selling, a percentage of BNO's positions in Crude Oil Interests and reinvesting the proceeds from closing those positions in new Crude Oil Interests that reflect the change in the Benchmark Futures Contract.

The anticipated dates that the monthly four-day roll period will commence are posted on BNO's website at [www.uscfinvestments.com](http://www.uscfinvestments.com), and are subject to change without notice.

BNO's total portfolio composition is disclosed on its website each business day that the NYSE Arca is open for trading. The website disclosure of portfolio holdings is made daily and includes, as applicable, the name and value of each Crude Oil Interest, the specific types of Other Crude Oil-Related Investments and characteristics of such Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, the name and value of each Treasury and cash equivalent, and the amount of cash held in BNO's portfolio. BNO's website is publicly accessible at no charge. BNO's assets used for margin and collateral are held in segregated accounts pursuant to the Commodity Exchange Act (the "CEA") and CFTC regulations.

The shares issued by BNO may only be purchased by Authorized Participants and only in blocks of 50,000 shares, called "Creation Baskets". The amount of the purchase payment for a Creation Basket is equal to the aggregate NAV of the shares in the Creation Basket. Similarly, only Authorized Participants may redeem shares and only in blocks of 50,000 shares, called "Redemption Baskets". The amount of the redemption proceeds for a Redemption Basket is equal to the aggregate NAV of shares in the Redemption Basket. The purchase price for Creation Baskets and the redemption price for Redemption Baskets are the actual per share NAV calculated at the end of the business day when a request for a purchase or redemption is received by BNO. The NYSE Arca publishes an approximate per share NAV intra-day based on the prior day's per share NAV and the current price of the Benchmark Futures Contract, but the price of Creation Baskets and Redemption Baskets is determined based on the actual per share NAV calculated at the end of the day.

While BNO issues shares only in Creation Baskets, shares are listed on the NYSE Arca and investors may purchase and sell shares at market prices like any listed security.

### **What is BNO's Investment Strategy?**

In managing BNO's assets, USCF does not use a technical trading system that issues buy and sell orders. USCF instead employs a quantitative methodology whereby each time a Creation Basket is sold, USCF purchases Crude Oil Interests, such as the Benchmark Futures Contract, that have an aggregate market value that approximates the amount of Treasuries and/or cash received upon the issuance of the Creation Basket.

By remaining invested as fully as possible in Futures Contracts or Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, USCF believes that the daily changes in percentage terms in BNO's per share NAV will continue to closely track the daily changes in percentage terms in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract. USCF believes that certain arbitrage opportunities result in the price of the shares traded on the NYSE Arca closely tracking the per share NAV of BNO. Additionally, Futures Contracts traded on the ICE Futures have closely tracked the spot price of Brent crude oil. Based on these expected interrelationships, USCF believes that the daily changes in the price of BNO's shares traded on the NYSE Arca, on a percentage basis, have closely tracked and will continue to closely track on a daily basis, the changes in the spot price of Brent crude oil, on a percentage basis. For performance data relating to BNO's ability to track its benchmark, see "*Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of*

*Operations – Tracking BNO’s Benchmark*” in this annual report on Form 10-K.

USCF endeavors to place BNO’s trades in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments and otherwise manage BNO’s investments so that “A” will be within plus/minus ten percent (10%) of “B”, where:

- A is the average daily change in BNO’s per share NAV for any period of 30 successive valuation days; i.e., any NYSE Arca trading day as of which BNO calculates its per share NAV; and
- B is the average daily percentage change in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract over the same period.

USCF believes that market arbitrage opportunities will cause the daily changes in BNO’s share price on the NYSE Arca, on a percentage basis, to closely track the daily changes in BNO’s per share NAV on a percentage basis. USCF further believes that the net effect of these two expected relationships and the relationships described above between BNO’s per share NAV and the Benchmark Futures Contract, will be that the daily changes in the price of BNO’s shares on the NYSE Arca on a percentage basis will closely track the daily changes in the spot price of a barrel of Brent crude oil on a percentage basis, plus interest earned on BNO’s collateral holdings, less BNO’s expenses. For performance data relating to BNO’s ability to track its benchmark, see “*Item 7. Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations – Tracking BNO’s Benchmark*” in this annual report on Form 10-K.

The specific Futures Contracts purchased depend on various factors, including a judgment by USCF as to the appropriate diversification of BNO's investments in futures contracts with respect to the month of expiration, and the prevailing price volatility of particular contracts. While USCF has made significant investments in ICE Futures Contracts, for various reasons, including the ability to enter into the precise amount of exposure to the crude oil market, position limits or other regulatory requirements limiting BNO's holdings, and market conditions, it may invest in futures contracts traded on other exchanges or invest in Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. To the extent that BNO invests in Crude Oil Interests, it would prioritize investments in contracts and instruments that are economically equivalent to the Benchmark Futures Contract, including cleared swaps that satisfy such criteria, and then, to a lesser extent, it would invest in other types of cleared swaps and other contracts, instruments and non-cleared swaps, such as swaps in the OTC market. If BNO is required by law or regulation, or by one of its regulators, including a futures exchange, to reduce its position in the Benchmark Futures Contracts to the applicable position limit or to a specified accountability level or if market conditions dictate it would be more appropriate to invest in Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, a substantial portion of BNO's assets could be invested in accordance with such priority in Other Crude Oil-Related Investments that are intended to replicate the return on the Benchmark Futures Contract. As BNO's assets reach higher levels, it is more likely to exceed position limits, accountability levels or other regulatory limits and, as a result, it is more likely that it will invest in accordance with such priority in Other Crude Oil-Related Investments at such higher levels. In addition, market conditions that USCF currently anticipates could cause BNO to invest in Other Crude Oil-Related Investments include those allowing BNO to obtain greater liquidity or to execute transactions with more favorable pricing. See "*Item 1. Business – Commodities Regulation*" in this annual report on Form 10-K for a discussion of the potential impact of regulation on BNO's ability to invest in OTC transactions and cleared swaps.

USCF may not be able to fully invest BNO's assets in the Futures Contracts having an aggregate notional amount exactly equal to BNO's NAV. For example, as standardized contracts, the Futures Contracts are for a specified amount of a particular commodity, and BNO's NAV and the proceeds from the sale of a Creation Basket are unlikely to be an exact multiple of the amounts of those contracts. As a result, in such circumstances, BNO may be better able to achieve the exact amount of exposure to changes in price of the Benchmark Futures Contract through the use of Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, such as OTC contracts that have better correlation with changes in price of the Benchmark Futures Contract.

BNO anticipates that to the extent it invests in Futures Contracts other than contracts on Brent crude oil (such as futures contracts for diesel-heating oil, natural gas, and other petroleum-based fuels) and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, it will enter into various non-exchange-traded derivative contracts to hedge the short-term price movements of such Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments against the current Benchmark Futures Contract.

USCF does not anticipate letting BNO's Futures Contracts expire and taking delivery of the underlying commodity. Instead, USCF closes existing positions, e.g., when it changes the Benchmark Futures Contract or Other Crude Oil-Related Investments or it otherwise determines it would be appropriate to do so and reinvests the proceeds in new Futures Contracts or Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. Positions may also be closed out to meet orders for Redemption Baskets and in such case proceeds for such baskets will not be reinvested.

### **What is the Crude Oil Market and the Petroleum-Based Fuel Market?**

BNO may purchase Futures Contracts traded on the ICE Futures that are based on Brent crude oil. It may also purchase contracts on other exchanges, including the NYMEX, ICE Futures Exchanges or other U.S. and Foreign exchanges. The contracts provide for delivery of several grades of domestic and internationally traded foreign crudes, and, among other things, serve the diverse needs of the physical market. In Europe, Brent crude oil is the standard for futures contracts and is primarily traded on the ICE Futures Europe. Brent crude oil is the price reference for two-thirds of the world's traded oil. The ICE Brent Futures is a deliverable contract with an option to cash settle which trades in units of 1,000 barrels (42,000 U.S. gallons). The ICE Futures also offers a West Texas Intermediate ("WTI") crude oil futures contract which trades in units of 1,000 barrels. The WTI crude oil futures contract is cash settled against the prevailing market price for U.S. light, sweet crude oil.

*Brent Crude Oil.* Crude oil is the world's most actively traded commodity. The futures contracts for Brent crude oil that are traded on the ICE Futures are the world's second most liquid forum for crude oil trading, as well as the world's second largest volume futures contract trading on a physical commodity. Due to the liquidity and price transparency of light, sweet crude oil futures contracts, they are used as a principal international pricing benchmark. The futures contracts for Brent crude oil trade on the ICE Futures in units of 1,000 U.S. barrels and, if not closed out before maturity, will result in delivery of oil to Sullom Voe, an oil terminal located in the Shetland Island near Scotland, which is also accessible to the international spot markets by tanker.

The price of crude oil is established by the supply and demand conditions in the global market overall, and more particularly, in the main refining centers of Singapore, Northwest Europe, and the U.S. Gulf Coast. Demand for petroleum products by consumers, as well as agricultural, manufacturing and transportation industries, determines demand for crude oil by refiners. Since the precursors of product demand are linked to economic activity, crude oil demand will tend to reflect economic conditions. However, other factors such as weather also influence product and crude oil demand. The price of Brent crude oil has historically exhibited periods of significant volatility.

*Diesel-Heating Oil.* Diesel-heating oil, also known as No. 2 fuel oil, accounts for 25% of the yield of a barrel of crude oil, the second largest "cut" from oil after gasoline. The diesel-heating oil Futures Contract listed and traded on the NYMEX trades in units of 42,000 gallons (1,000 barrels) and is based on delivery in the New York harbor, the principal cash market center. The ICE Futures also offers a diesel-heating oil Futures Contract which trades in units of 42,000 U.S. gallons (1,000 barrels). The diesel-heating oil Futures Contract is cash-settled against the prevailing market price for heating oil delivered to the New York Harbor.

*Gasoline.* Gasoline is the largest single volume refined product sold in the U.S. and accounts for almost half of national oil consumption. The gasoline futures contract listed and traded on the NYMEX, trades in units of 42,000 gallons (1,000 barrels) and is based on delivery at petroleum products terminals in the New York harbor, the major East Coast trading center for imports and domestic shipments from refineries in the New York harbor area or from the Gulf Coast refining centers. The price of gasoline has historically been volatile.

*Natural Gas.* Natural gas accounts for almost a quarter of U.S. energy consumption. The natural gas futures contract listed and traded on the NYMEX trades in units of 10,000 million British thermal units and is based on delivery at the Henry Hub in Louisiana, the nexus of 16 intra- and interstate natural gas pipeline systems that draw supplies from the region's prolific gas deposits. The pipelines serve markets throughout the U.S. East Coast, the Gulf Coast, the Midwest, and up to the Canadian border. The price of natural gas has historically been volatile.

## **What are Futures Contracts?**



Futures contracts are agreements between two parties. One party agrees to buy a commodity such as Brent crude oil from the other party at a later date at a price and quantity agreed-upon when the contract is made. Futures Contracts are traded on futures exchanges, including the ICE Futures. For example, the Benchmark Futures Contract is traded on the ICE Futures in units of 1,000 barrels. The Brent crude Futures Contracts traded on the ICE Futures are priced by an electronic, screen-based system that determines the price by matching electronically offers to purchase and sell. Additional risks of investing in Futures Contracts are included in “*Item 1A. Risk Factors*” in this annual report on Form 10-K.

*Accountability Levels, Position Limits and Price Fluctuation Limits.* Designated contract markets, such as the NYMEX and ICE, have established accountability levels and position limits on the maximum net long or net short futures contracts in commodity interests that any person or group of persons under common trading control (other than as a hedge, which an investment by BNO is not) may hold, own or control. These levels and position limits apply to the futures contracts that BNO invests in to meet its investment objective. In addition to accountability levels and position limits, the NYMEX and ICE Futures also set daily price fluctuation limits on futures contracts. The daily price fluctuation limit establishes the maximum amount that the price of a futures contract may vary either up or down from the previous day’s settlement price. Once the daily price fluctuation limit has been reached in a particular futures contract, no trades may be made at a price beyond that limit.

The accountability levels for the Benchmark Futures Contract and other Futures Contracts traded on U.S.-based futures exchanges, such as the NYMEX, are not a fixed ceiling, but rather a threshold above which the NYMEX may exercise greater scrutiny and control over an investor's positions. The current accountability level for net long or short positions at any one time in the NYMEX Contract for light, sweet crude oil Futures Contracts is 20,000 net future contracts. In addition, the ICE Futures maintains the same accountability levels, position limits and monitoring authority for its light, sweet crude oil contracts as the NYMEX. If BNO and the Related Public Funds exceed this accountability level for investments in the futures contracts for light, sweet crude oil, the NYMEX and ICE Futures will monitor such exposure and may ask for further information on their activities, including the total size of all positions, investment and trading strategy, and the extent of liquidity resources of BNO and the Related Public Funds. If deemed necessary by the NYMEX and/or ICE Futures, BNO could be ordered to reduce its net futures contracts back to the accountability level. In contrast, the position limits for the ICE Futures maintain that when 100 lots or more are traded, the activity must be reported to the exchange on a daily basis. ICE Futures also maintains that an Expiration Limit of 6,000 lots, long or short, will apply for the five business days up to and including the expiration date. There are no specific position accountability levels or limits, nor are there any maximum daily price fluctuation limits for the ICE Brent Crude Oil (physically settled) futures contract. BNO did not exceed accountability levels of the NYMEX or ICE Futures during the year ended December 31, 2017. As of December 31, 2017, BNO held 1,414 Futures Contracts for Brent crude oil traded on the ICE Futures. BNO did not hold any Futures Contracts traded on exchanges other than ICE as of December 31, 2017.

Position limits differ from accountability levels in that they represent fixed limits on the maximum number of futures contracts that any person may hold and cannot allow such limits to be exceeded without express CFTC authority to do so. In addition to accountability levels and position limits that may apply at any time, the ICE Futures Exchange and the NYMEX impose position limits on contracts held in the last few days of trading in the near month contract to expire. It is unlikely that BNO will run up against such position limits because BNO's investment strategy is to close out its positions and "roll" from the near month contract to expire to the next month contract during a four-day period beginning two weeks from expiration of the contract. For the year ended December 31, 2017, BNO did not exceed any position limits imposed by NYMEX and ICE Futures.

The CFTC has proposed to adopt limits on speculative positions in 25 physical commodity futures and option contracts as well as swaps that are economically equivalent to such contracts in the agriculture, energy and metals markets (the "Position Limit Rules"). The Position Limit Rules would, among other things: identify which contracts are subject to speculative position limits; set thresholds that restrict the size of speculative positions that a person may hold in the spot month, other individual months, and all months combined; create an exemption for positions that constitute bona fide hedging transactions; impose responsibilities on designated contract markets ("DCMs") and swap execution facilities ("SEFs") to establish position limits or, in some cases, position accountability rules; and apply to both futures and swaps across four relevant venues: OTC, DCMs, SEFs as well as certain non-U.S. located platforms. The CFTC's first attempt at finalizing the Position Limit Rules, in 2011, was successfully challenged by market participants in 2012 and, since then, the CFTC has re-proposed them and solicited comments from market participants multiple times. At this time, it is unclear how the Position Limit Rules may affect BNO, but the effect may be substantial and adverse. By way of example, the Position Limit Rules may negatively impact the ability of BNO to meet its investment objectives through limits that may inhibit USCF's ability to sell additional Creation Baskets of BNO. See *"The Commodity Interest Markets-Commodities Regulation"* in this annual report on Form 10-K for additional information.

Until such time as the Position Limit Rules are adopted, the regulatory architecture in effect prior to the adoption of the Position Limit Rules will govern transactions in commodities and related derivatives. Under that system, the CFTC enforces federal limits on speculation in nine agricultural products (e.g., corn, wheat and soy), while futures exchanges establish and enforce position limits and accountability levels for other agricultural products and certain energy products (e.g., oil and natural gas). As a result, BNO may be limited with respect to the size of its investments in any commodities subject to these limits.

Under existing and recently adopted CFTC regulations, for the purpose of position limits, a market participant is generally required, subject to certain narrow exceptions, to aggregate all positions for which that participant controls the trading decisions with all positions for which that participant has a 10 percent or greater ownership interest in an account or position, as well as the positions of two or more persons acting pursuant to an express or implied agreement or understanding with that participant (the “Aggregation Rules”). The Aggregation Rules will also apply with respect to the Position Limit Rules if and when such Position Limit Rules are adopted.

*Price Volatility.* The price volatility of Futures Contracts generally has been historically greater than that for traditional securities such as stocks and bonds. Price volatility often is greater day-to-day as opposed to intra-day. Futures Contracts tend to be more volatile than stocks and bonds because price movements for crude oil are more currently and directly influenced by economic factors for which current data is available and are traded by crude oil futures traders throughout the day. Because BNO invests a significant portion of its assets in Futures Contracts, the assets of BNO, and therefore the prices of BNO shares, may be subject to greater volatility than traditional securities.

*Marking-to-Market Futures Positions.* Futures Contracts are marked to market at the end of each trading day and the margin required with respect to such contracts is adjusted accordingly. This process of marking-to-market is designed to prevent losses from accumulating in any futures account. Therefore, if BNO's futures positions have declined in value, BNO may be required to post "variation margin" to cover this decline. Alternatively, if BNO futures positions have increased in value, this increase will be credited to BNO's account.

#### **Why Does BNO Purchase and Sell Futures Contracts?**

BNO's investment objective is for the daily changes in percentage terms of its shares' per share NAV to reflect the daily changes in percentage terms of the Benchmark Futures Contract, plus interest earned on BNO's collateral holdings, less BNO's expenses. BNO invests primarily in Futures Contracts. BNO seeks to have its aggregate NAV approximate at all times the aggregate market value of the Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments it holds.

In connection with investing in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, BNO holds Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents that serve as segregated assets supporting BNO's positions in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. For example, the purchase of a Futures Contract with a notional value of \$10 million would not require BNO to pay \$10 million upon entering into the contract; rather, only a margin deposit, generally of 5% to 30% of the stated value of the Futures Contract, would be required. To secure its Futures Contract obligations, BNO would deposit the required margin with the FCM and would separately hold, through its Custodian or FCM, Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents in an amount equal to the balance of the current market value of the contract, which at the contract's inception would be \$10 million minus the amount of the margin deposit, or \$9.5 million (assuming a 5% margin).

As a result of the foregoing, typically 5% to 30% of BNO's assets are held as margin in segregated accounts with an FCM. In addition to the Treasuries and cash it posts with the FCM for the Futures Contracts it owns, BNO may hold, through the Custodian, Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents that can be posted as additional margin or as other collateral to support its OTC contracts. BNO earns income from the Treasuries and/or cash equivalents that it purchases, and on the cash it holds through the Custodian or FCM. BNO anticipates that the earned income will increase the NAV and limited partners' capital contribution accounts. BNO reinvests the earned income, holds it in

cash, or uses it to pay its expenses. If BNO reinvests the earned income, it makes investments that are consistent with its investment objective.

**What are the Trading Policies of BNO?**

*Liquidity*

BNO invests only in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments that, in the opinion of USCF, are traded in sufficient volume to permit the ready taking and liquidation of positions in these financial interests.

### ***Spot Commodities***

While the Futures Contracts traded on the exchange can be physically settled, BNO does not intend to take or make physical delivery. BNO may from time to time trade in Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, including contracts based on the spot price of crude oil.

### ***Leverage***

USCF endeavors to have the value of BNO's Treasuries, cash and cash equivalents, whether held by BNO or posted as margin or other collateral, at all times approximate the aggregate market value of its obligations under its Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. Commodity pools' trading positions in futures contracts or other related investments are typically required to be secured by the deposit of margin funds that represent only a small percentage of a futures contract's (or other commodity interest's) entire market value. While USCF has not and does not intend to leverage BNO's assets, it is not prohibited from doing so under the LP Agreement.

### ***Borrowings***

Borrowings are not used by BNO unless BNO is required to borrow money in the event of physical delivery, if BNO trades in cash commodities, or for short-term needs created by unexpected redemptions.

### ***OTC Derivatives (Including Spreads and Straddles)***

In addition to Futures Contracts, there are also a number of listed options on the Futures Contracts on the principal futures exchanges. These contracts offer investors and hedgers another set of financial vehicles to use in managing exposure to the crude oil market. Consequently, BNO may purchase options on crude oil Futures Contracts on these exchanges in pursuing its investment objective.

In addition to the Futures Contracts and options on the Futures Contracts, there also exists an active non-exchange-traded market in derivatives tied to crude oil. These derivatives transactions (also known as OTC contracts) are usually entered into between two parties in private contracts. Unlike most of the exchange-traded Futures Contracts or exchange-traded options on the Futures Contracts, each party to such contract bears the credit

risk of the other party, i.e., the risk that the other party may not be able to perform its obligations under its contract.

To reduce the credit risk that arises in connection with such contracts, BNO will generally enter into an agreement with each counterparty based on the Master Agreement published by the International Swaps and Derivatives Association, Inc. (“ISDA”) that provides for the netting of its overall exposure to its counterparty.

USCF assesses or reviews, as appropriate, the creditworthiness of each potential or existing counterparty to an OTC contract pursuant to guidelines approved by USCF’s Board.

BNO may enter into certain transactions where an OTC component is exchanged for a corresponding futures contract (“Exchange for Related Position” or “EFRP” transactions). In the most common type of EFRP transaction entered into by BNO, the OTC component is the purchase or sale of one or more baskets of BNO’s shares. These EFRP transactions may expose BNO to counterparty risk during the interim period between the execution of the OTC component and the exchange for a corresponding futures contract. Generally, the counterparty risk from the EFRP transaction will exist only on the day of execution.

BNO may employ spreads or straddles in its trading to mitigate the differences in its investment portfolio and its goal of tracking the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract. BNO would use a spread when it chooses to take simultaneous long and short positions in futures written on the same underlying asset, but with different delivery months.

During the reporting period of this annual report on Form 10-K, BNO limited its derivatives activities to Futures Contracts and EFRP transactions.

### *Pyramiding*

BNO has not and will not employ the technique, commonly known as pyramiding, in which the speculator uses unrealized profits on existing positions as variation margin for the purchase or sale of additional positions in the same or another commodity interest.

### **Who are the Service Providers?**

In its capacity as the Custodian for BNO, BBH&Co. may hold BNO's Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents pursuant to a custodial agreement. BBH&Co. is also the registrar and transfer agent for the shares. In addition, in its capacity as Administrator for BNO, BBH&Co. performs certain administrative and accounting services for BNO and prepares certain SEC, NFA and CFTC reports on behalf of BNO. USCF pays BBH&Co.'s fees for these services.

BBH&Co.'s principal business address is 50 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02110-1548. BBH&Co., a private bank founded in 1818, is neither a publicly held company nor insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. BBH&Co. is authorized to conduct a commercial banking business in accordance with the provisions of Article IV of the New York State Banking Law, New York Banking Law §§160–181, and is subject to regulation, supervision, and examination by the New York State Department of Financial Services. BBH&Co. is also licensed to conduct a commercial banking business by the Commonwealths of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania and is subject to supervision and examination by the banking supervisors of those states.

BNO also employs ALPS Distributors as its marketing agent. USCF pays the Marketing Agent an annual fee. In no event may the aggregate compensation paid to the Marketing Agent and any affiliate of USCF for distribution-related services in connection with the offering of shares exceed ten percent (10%) of the gross proceeds of the offering.

ALPS Distributors' principal business address is 1290 Broadway, Suite 1100, Denver, CO 80203. ALPS Distributors is a broker-dealer registered with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ("FINRA") and a member of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation.

On October 8, 2013, USCF entered into a Futures and Cleared Derivatives Transactions Customer Account Agreement with RBC Capital Markets, LLC ("RBC Capital") to serve as BNO's FCM, effective October 10, 2013. This agreement requires RBC Capital to provide services to BNO, as of October 10, 2013, in connection with the purchase and sale of Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments that may be purchased or sold by or through



RBC Capital for BNO's account. For the period October 10, 2013 and after, BNO pays RBC Capital commissions for executing and clearing trades on behalf of BNO.

RBC Capital's primary address is 500 West Madison Street, Suite 2500, Chicago, Illinois 60661. Effective October 10, 2013, RBC Capital became the futures clearing broker for BNO. RBC Capital is registered in the United States with FINRA as a broker-dealer and with the CFTC as an FCM. RBC Capital is a member of various U.S. futures and securities exchanges.

Royal Bank of Canada ("RBC"), and its subsidiary, RBC Capital Markets LLC ("RBC Capital"), are large financial institutions subject to many different complex legal and regulatory requirements. As a result, certain of RBC's regulators may from time to time conduct investigations, initiate enforcement proceedings and/or enter into settlements with RBC with respect to issues raised in various investigations. RBC complies fully with its regulators in all investigations being conducted and in all settlements it reaches. In addition, RBC is and has been subject to a variety of civil legal claims in various jurisdictions, a variety of settlement agreements and a variety of orders, awards and judgments made against it by courts and tribunals, both in regard to such claims and investigations. RBC complies fully with all settlements it reaches and all orders, awards and judgments made against it.

RBC has been named as a defendant in various legal actions, including arbitrations, class actions and other litigation including those described below, arising in connection with its activities as a broker-dealer. Certain of the actual or threatened legal actions include claims for substantial compensatory and/or punitive damages or claims for indeterminate amounts of damages. RBC is also involved, in other reviews, investigations and proceedings (both formal and informal) by governmental and self-regulatory agencies regarding RBC's business, including among other matters, accounting and operational matters, certain of which may result in adverse judgments, settlements, fines, penalties, injunctions or other relief.

RBC contests liability and/or the amount of damages as appropriate in each pending matter. In view of the inherent difficulty of predicting the outcome of such matters, particularly in cases where claimants seek substantial or indeterminate damages or where investigations and proceedings are in the early stages, RBC cannot predict the loss or range of loss, if any, related to such matters; how or if such matters will be resolved; when they will ultimately be resolved; or what the eventual settlement, fine, penalty or other relief, if any, might be. Subject to the foregoing, RBC believes, based on current knowledge and after consultation with counsel, that the outcome of such pending matters will not have a material adverse effect on the consolidated financial condition of RBC.

On April 27, 2017, pursuant to an offer of settlement, a Panel of the Chicago Board of Trade Business Conduct Committee (“Panel”) found that RBC Capital engaged in EFRP transactions which failed to satisfy the Rules of the Chicago Board of Trade (the “Exchange”) in one or more ways. Specifically, the Panel found that RBC Capital traders entered into EFRP trades in which RBC Capital accounts were on both sides of the transactions. While the purpose of the transactions was to transfer positions between the RBC Capital accounts, the CME Group found that the manner in which the trades occurred violated the Exchange’s prohibition on wash trades. The Panel found that RBC Capital thereby violated CBOT Rules 534 and (legacy) 538.B. and C. In accordance with the settlement offer, the Panel ordered RBC Capital to pay a \$175,000 fine.

On June 18, 2015, in connection with the Municipalities Continuing Disclosure Cooperation initiative of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”), the SEC commenced and settled an administrative proceeding against RBC Capital for willful violations of Sections 17(a)(2) of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (“Securities Act”) after the firm self-reported instances in which it conducted inadequate due diligence in certain municipal securities offerings and as a result, failed to form a reasonable basis for believing the truthfulness of certain material representations in official statements issued in connection with those offerings. RBC Capital paid a fine of \$500,000.

RBC and certain affiliates were named as defendants in a lawsuit relating to their role in transactions involving investments made by a number of Wisconsin school districts in certain collateralized debt obligations. These transactions were also the subject of a regulatory investigation, which was resolved in 2011. RBC reached a final settlement with all parties in the civil litigation, and the civil action against RBC was dismissed with prejudice on December 6, 2016.

On July 31, 2015, RBC Capital was added as a new defendant in a pending putative class action initially filed in November 2013 in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. The action is brought against multiple foreign exchange dealers and alleges collusive behavior, among other allegations, in foreign exchange trading. Various regulators are also conducting inquiries regarding potential violations of law by a number of banks and other entities, including RBC, regarding foreign exchange trading. In September 2017, the U.S. District Court entered an order preliminarily approving a pending settlement with class plaintiffs. Canadian class actions and one other U.S. action that is purportedly brought on behalf of different classes of plaintiffs remain pending.

On April 13, 2015, RBC’s affiliate, Royal Bank of Canada Trust Company (Bahamas) Limited (RBC Bahamas), was charged in France with complicity in tax fraud. RBC Bahamas believes that its actions did not violate French law and contested the charge in the French court. The trial of this matter has concluded and a verdict was delivered on January 12, 2017, acquitting the company and the other defendants. The French prosecutor’s office has appealed.

Thornburg Mortgage Inc. (now known as “TMST”) and RBC were parties to a master repurchase agreement executed in September 2003 whereby TMST financed its purchase of residential mortgage-backed securities. Upon TMST’s

default during the financial crisis, RBC valued TMST's collateral at allegedly deflated prices. After TMST's bankruptcy filing, TMST's trustee brought suit against RBC in 2011 for breach of contract. In 2015, TMST was awarded more than \$45 million in damages. RBC has appealed. The appeals court set a briefing schedule and simultaneously ordered the parties to participate in a mediation. The parties have subsequently reached an agreement to settle the matter; a motion to approve the settlement was filed with the bankruptcy court on January 10, 2016 and granted on February 27, 2017.

On October 14, 2014, the Delaware Court of Chancery (the "Court of Chancery") in a class action brought by former shareholders of Rural/Metro Corporation, held RBC Capital liable for aiding and abetting a breach of fiduciary duty by three Rural/Metro directors, but did not make an additional award for attorney's fees. A final judgment was entered on February 19, 2015 in the amount of US\$93 million plus post judgment interest. RBC appealed the Court of Chancery's determination of liability and quantum of damages, and the plaintiffs cross-appealed the ruling on additional attorneys' fees. On November 30, 2015, the Delaware Supreme Court affirmed the Court of Chancery with respect to both the appeal and cross-appeal. RBC is cooperating with an investigation by the SEC relating to this matter. In particular, the SEC contended that RBC caused materially false and misleading information to be included in the proxy statement that Rural filed to solicit shareholder approval for the sale in violation of section 14(A) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and Rule 14A-9 thereunder. On August 31, 2016, RBC was ordered by the SEC to cease and desist and paid \$500,000 in disgorgement, plus interest of \$77,759 and a civil penalty of \$2 million.

On March 11, 2013, the New Jersey Bureau of Securities entered a consent order settling an administrative complaint against RBC, which alleged that RBC failed to follow its own procedures with respect to monthly account reviews and failed to maintain copies of the monthly account reviews with respect to certain accounts that James Hankins Jr. maintained at the firm in violation of N.J.S.A. 49:3-58(a)(2)(xi) and 49:3-59(b). Without admitting or denying the findings of fact and conclusions of law, RBC consented to a civil monetary penalty of \$150,000 (of which \$100,000 was suspended as a result of the firm's cooperation) and to pay disgorgement of \$300,000.

Please see RBC's Form BD, which is available on the FINRA BrokerCheck program, for more details.

RBC will act only as clearing broker for BNO and as such will be paid commissions for executing and clearing trades on behalf of BNO. RBC has not passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this annual report on Form 10-K. RBC will not act in any supervisory capacity with respect to USCF or participate in the management of USCF or BNO.

RBC is not affiliated with BNO or USCF. Therefore, neither USCF nor BNO believes that there are any conflicts of interest with RBC or its trading principals arising from its acting as BNO's FCM.

Currently, USCF does not employ commodity trading advisors for trading of BNO contracts. USCF currently does, however, employ SummerHaven Investment Management, LLC as a trading advisor for USCI, CPER and USAG. If, in the future, USCF does employ commodity trading advisors for BNO, it will choose each advisor based on arm's-length negotiations and will consider the advisor's experience, fees and reputation.

## **Fees of BNO**

### ***Fees and Compensation Arrangements with USCF and Non-Affiliated Service Providers<sup>(1)</sup>***

<b>Service Provider</b>	<b>Compensation Paid by USCF</b>
-------------------------	----------------------------------

BBH&Co., Custodian and Administrator	Minimum amount of \$75,000 annually for its custody, fund accounting and fund administration services rendered to all funds, as well as a \$20,000 annual fee for its transfer agency services. In addition, an asset-based charge of (a) 0.06% for the first \$500 million of BNO's and the Related Public Funds' combined net assets, (b) 0.0465% for BNO's and the Related Public Funds' combined net assets greater than \$500 million but less than \$1 billion, and (c) 0.035% once BNO's and the Related Public Funds' combined net assets exceed \$1 billion. <sup>(2)</sup>
--	--

ALPS Distributors  
- Marketing Agent 0.06% on BNO's assets to \$3 billion and 0.04% on BNO's assets in excess of \$3 billion.

(1) USCF pays this compensation.

The annual minimum amount will not apply if the asset-based charge for all accounts in the aggregate exceeds

(2) \$75,000. USCF also will pay transaction charge fees to BBH&Co., ranging from \$7 to \$15 per transaction for the funds.

***Compensation to USCF***

BNO is contractually obligated to pay USCF a management fee based on 0.75% per annum on its average daily total net assets. Fees are calculated on a daily basis (accrued at 1/365 of the applicable percentage of total net assets on that day) and paid on a monthly basis. Total net assets are calculated by taking the current market value of BNO's total assets and subtracting any liabilities.

***Fees and Compensation Arrangements between BNO and Non-Affiliated Service Providers<sup>(3)</sup>***

<b>Service Provider</b>	<b>Compensation Paid by BNO</b>
RBC Capital Futures Commission Merchant	Approximately \$3.50 per buy or sell; charges may vary

<sup>(3)</sup>BNO pays this compensation.

***Expenses Paid or Accrued by BNO from Inception through December 31, 2017 in dollar terms:***

<b>Expenses:</b>	<b>Amount in Dollar Terms</b>
Amount Paid or Accrued to USCF:	\$ 3,623,206
Amount Paid or Accrued in Portfolio Brokerage Commissions:	\$ 540,865
Other Amounts Paid or Accrued <sup>(4)</sup> :	\$ 1,446,486
Total Expenses Paid or Accrued:	\$ 5,610,557
Expenses Waived <sup>(5)</sup> :	\$ (1,151,496 )
Total Expenses Paid or Accrued Excluding Expenses Waived <sup>(5)</sup> :	\$ 4,459,061

<sup>(4)</sup> Includes expenses relating to legal fees, auditing fees, printing expenses, tax reporting fees, prepaid insurance expenses and miscellaneous expenses and fees and expenses paid to the independent directors of USCF.

USCF paid certain expenses typically borne by BNO on a discretionary basis, to the extent that such expenses <sup>(5)</sup>exceeded 0.15% (15 basis points) of BNO's NAV, on an annualized basis. USCF has no obligation to pay such expenses in subsequent periods.

***Expenses Paid or Accrued by BNO from Inception through December 31, 2017 as a Percentage of Average Daily Net Assets:***

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

Expenses:	Amount as a Percentage of Average Daily Net Assets
Amount Paid or Accrued to USCF:	0.75% annualized
Amount Paid or Accrued in Portfolio Brokerage Commissions:	0.11% annualized
Other Amounts Paid or Accrued <sup>(6)</sup> :	0.30% annualized
Total Expenses Paid or Accrued:	1.16% annualized
Expenses Waived <sup>(7)</sup> :	(0.24)% annualized
Total Expenses Paid or Accrued Excluding Expenses Waived <sup>(7)</sup> :	0.92% annualized

<sup>(6)</sup> Includes expenses relating to legal fees, auditing fees, printing expenses, tax reporting fees, prepaid insurance expenses and miscellaneous expenses and fees and expenses paid to the independent directors of USCF.

USCF paid certain expenses typically borne by BNO on a discretionary basis, to the extent that such expenses <sup>(7)</sup>exceeded 0.15% (15 basis points) of BNO's NAV, on an annualized basis. USCF has no obligation to pay such expenses in subsequent periods.

**Other Fees.** BNO also pays the fees and expenses associated with its audit expenses, tax accounting and reporting requirements. These fees were approximately \$190,000 for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2017. In addition, BNO is responsible for paying its portion of the directors' and officers' liability insurance for BNO and the Related Public Funds and the fees and expenses of the independent directors who also serve as audit committee members of BNO and the Related Public Funds organized as limited partnerships and, as of July 8, 2011, those Related Public Funds organized as a series of a Delaware statutory trust. BNO shares the fees and expenses on a pro rata basis with each Related Public Fund, as described above, based on the relative assets of each fund computed on a daily basis. These fees and expenses for the year ended December 31, 2017 were \$536,375 for BNO and the Related Public Funds. BNO's portion of such fees and expenses for the year ended December 31, 2017 was \$13,325.

### **Form of Shares**

**Registered Form.** Shares are issued in registered form in accordance with the LP Agreement. The Administrator has been appointed registrar and transfer agent for the purpose of transferring shares in certificated form. The Administrator keeps a record of all limited partners and holders of the shares in certificated form in the registry. USCF recognizes transfers of shares in certificated form only if done in accordance with the LP Agreement. The beneficial interests in such shares are held in book-entry form through participants and/or accountholders in the Depository Trust Company ("DTC").

**Book Entry.** Individual certificates are not issued for the shares. Instead, shares are represented by one or more global certificates, which are deposited by the Administrator with DTC and registered in the name of Cede & Co., as nominee for DTC. The global certificates evidence all of the shares outstanding at any time. Shareholders are limited to (1) participants in DTC such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies ("DTC Participants"), (2) those who maintain, either directly or indirectly, a custodial relationship with a DTC Participant ("Indirect Participants"), and (3) those banks, brokers, dealers, trust companies and others who hold interests in the shares through DTC Participants or Indirect Participants, in each case who satisfy the requirements for transfers of shares. DTC Participants acting on behalf of investors holding shares through such participants' accounts in DTC will follow the delivery practice applicable to securities eligible for DTC's Same-Day Funds Settlement System. Shares are credited to DTC Participants' securities accounts following confirmation of receipt of payment.

**DTC.** DTC has advised BNO as follows: It is a limited purpose trust company organized under the laws of the State of New York and is a member of the Federal Reserve System, a "clearing corporation" within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code and a "clearing agency" registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Exchange Act. DTC holds securities for DTC Participants and facilitates the clearance and settlement of transactions between DTC Participants through electronic book-entry changes in accounts of DTC Participants.

### **Calculating Per Share NAV**



BNO's per share NAV is calculated by:

Taking the current market value of its total assets;  
Subtracting any liabilities; and  
Dividing that total by the total number of outstanding shares.

The Administrator calculates the per share NAV of BNO once each NYSE Arca trading day. The per share NAV for a normal trading day is released after 4:00 p.m. New York time. Trading during the core trading session on the NYSE Arca typically closes at 4:00 p.m. New York time. The Administrator uses the ICE Futures settlement price (a weighted average price of trades during a three minute settlement period from 2:27 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. New York time) for the Futures Contracts traded on the ICE Futures, but calculates or determines the value of all other BNO investments (including Futures Contracts not traded on the ICE Futures, Other Crude Oil-Related Investments and Treasuries), using market quotations, if available, or other information customarily used to determine the fair value of such investments as of the earlier of the close of the NYSE Arca or 4:00 p.m. New York time, in accordance with the current Administrative Agency Agreement among BBH&Co., BNO and USCF. "Other information" customarily used in determining fair value includes information consisting of market data in the relevant market supplied by one or more third parties including, without limitation, relevant rates, prices, yields, yield curves, volatilities, spreads, correlations or other market data in the relevant market; or information of the types described above from internal sources if that information is of the same type used by BNO in the regular course of its business for the valuation of similar transactions. The information may include costs of funding, to the extent costs of funding are not and would not be a component of the other information being utilized. Third parties supplying quotations or market data may include, without limitation, dealers in the relevant markets, end-users of the relevant product, information vendors, brokers and other sources of market information.

In addition, in order to provide updated information relating to BNO for use by investors and market professionals, the NYSE Arca calculates and disseminates throughout the core trading session on each trading day an updated indicative fund value. The indicative fund value is calculated by using the prior day's closing per share NAV of BNO as a base and updating that value throughout the trading day to reflect changes in the most recently reported trade price for the active Brent crude oil Futures Contracts on the ICE Futures. The prices reported for those Futures Contract months are adjusted based on the prior day's spread differential between settlement values for the relevant contract and the spot month contract. In the event that the spot month contract is also the Benchmark Futures Contract, the last sale price for that contract is not adjusted. The indicative fund value share basis disseminated during NYSE Arca core trading session hours should not be viewed as an actual real time update of the per share NAV, because the per share NAV is calculated only once at the end of each trading day based upon the relevant end of day values of BNO's investments.

The NYSE Arca disseminates the indicative fund value through the facilities of CTA/CQ High Speed Lines. In addition, the indicative fund value is published on the NYSE Arca's website and is available through on-line information services such as Bloomberg and Reuters.

Dissemination of the indicative fund value provides additional information that is not otherwise available to the public and is useful to investors and market professionals in connection with the trading of BNO shares on the NYSE Arca. Investors and market professionals are able throughout the trading day to compare the market price of BNO and the indicative fund value. If the market price of BNO shares diverges significantly from the indicative fund value, market professionals will have an incentive to execute arbitrage trades. For example, if BNO appears to be trading at a discount compared to the indicative fund value, a market professional could buy BNO shares on the NYSE Arca and sell short Futures Contracts. Such arbitrage trades can tighten the tracking between the market price of BNO and the indicative fund value and thus can be beneficial to all market participants.

### *Creation and Redemption of Shares*

BNO creates and redeems shares from time to time, but only in one or more Creation Baskets or Redemption Baskets. The creation and redemption of baskets are only made in exchange for delivery to BNO or the distribution by BNO of the amount of Treasuries and any cash represented by the baskets being created or redeemed, the amount of which is based on the combined NAV of the number of shares included in the baskets being created or redeemed determined after 4:00 p.m. New York time on the day the order to create or redeem baskets is properly received.

Authorized Participants are the only persons that may place orders to create and redeem baskets. Authorized Participants must be (1) registered broker-dealers or other securities market participants, such as banks and other financial institutions, that are not required to register as broker-dealers to engage in securities transactions as described below, and (2) DTC Participants. To become an Authorized Participant, a person must enter into an Authorized Participant Agreement with USCF on behalf of BNO (each such agreement, an "Authorized Participant Agreement").

The Authorized Participant Agreement provides the procedures for the creation and redemption of baskets and for the delivery of the Treasuries and any cash required for such creations and redemptions. The Authorized Participant Agreement and the related procedures attached thereto may be amended by USCF, without the consent of any limited partner or shareholder or Authorized Participant. Authorized Participants pay BNO a transaction fee of \$350 for each order placed to create one or more Creation Baskets or to redeem one or more Redemption Baskets. Authorized Participants who make deposits with BNO in exchange for baskets receive no fees, commissions or other form of compensation or inducement of any kind from either BNO or USCF, and no such person will have any obligation or responsibility to USCF or BNO to effect any sale or resale of shares. As of December 31, 2017, 9 Authorized Participants had entered into agreements with USCF on behalf of BNO. During the year ended December 31, 2017, BNO issued 63 Creation Baskets and redeemed 103 Redemption Baskets.

Certain Authorized Participants are expected to be capable of participating directly in the physical crude oil market and the crude oil futures market. In some cases, Authorized Participants or their affiliates may from time to time buy crude oil or sell crude oil or Crude Oil Interests and may profit in these instances. USCF believes that the size and operation of the crude oil market make it unlikely that an Authorized Participant's direct activities in the crude oil or securities markets will significantly affect the price of crude oil, Crude-Oil Interests, or the price of the shares.

Each Authorized Participant is required to be registered as a broker-dealer under the Exchange Act and is a member in good standing with FINRA, or exempt from being or otherwise not required to be registered as a broker-dealer or a member of FINRA, and qualified to act as a broker or dealer in the states or other jurisdictions where the nature of its business so requires. Certain Authorized Participants may also be regulated under federal and state banking laws and regulations. Each Authorized Participant has its own set of rules and procedures, internal controls and information barriers as it determines is appropriate in light of its own regulatory regime.

Under the Authorized Participant Agreement, USCF, and BNO under limited circumstances, have agreed to indemnify the Authorized Participants against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and to contribute to the payments the Authorized Participants may be required to make in respect of those liabilities.

The following description of the procedures for the creation and redemption of baskets is only a summary and an investor should refer to the relevant provisions of the LP Agreement and the form of Authorized Participant Agreement for more detail, each of which is incorporated by reference into this annual report on Form 10-K.

### ***Creation Procedures***

On any business day, an Authorized Participant may place an order with the Marketing Agent to create one or more baskets. For purposes of processing purchase and redemption orders, a "business day" means any day other than a day when any of the NYSE Arca, the ICE Futures or the NYSE is closed for regular trading. Purchase orders must be placed by 12:00 p.m. New York time or the close of regular trading on the NYSE Arca, whichever is earlier. The day on which the Marketing Agent receives a valid purchase order is referred to as the purchase order date.

By placing a purchase order, an Authorized Participant agrees to deposit Treasuries, cash, or a combination of Treasuries and cash, as described below. Prior to the delivery of baskets for a purchase order, the Authorized Participant must also have wired to the Custodian the non-refundable transaction fee due for the purchase order. Authorized Participants may not withdraw a creation request, except as otherwise set forth in the procedures in the Authorized Participant Agreement.

The manner by which creations are made is dictated by the terms of the Authorized Participant Agreement. By placing a purchase order, an Authorized Participant agrees to (1) deposit Treasuries, cash, or a combination of Treasuries and cash with the Custodian, and (2) if required by USCF in its sole discretion, enter into or arrange for a block trade, an exchange for physical or exchange for swap, or any other OTC energy transaction (through itself or a designated acceptable broker) with BNO for the purchase of a number and type of futures contracts at the closing settlement price for such contracts on the purchase order date. If an Authorized Participant fails to consummate (1) and (2), the order shall be cancelled. The number and type of contracts specified shall be determined by USCF, in its sole discretion, to meet BNO's investment objective and shall be purchased as a result of the Authorized Participant's purchase of shares.

### ***Determination of Required Deposits***

The total deposit required to create each basket (“Creation Basket Deposit”) is the amount of Treasuries and/or cash that is in the same proportion to the total assets of BNO (net of estimated accrued but unpaid fees, expenses and other liabilities) on the purchase order date as the number of shares to be created under the purchase order is in proportion to the total number of shares outstanding on the purchase order dates. USCF determines, directly in its sole discretion or in consultation with the Administrator, the requirements for Treasuries and the amount of cash, including the maximum permitted remaining maturity of a Treasury and proportions of Treasury and cash that may be included in deposits to create baskets. The Marketing Agent will publish such requirements at the beginning of each business day. The amount of cash deposit required is the difference between the aggregate market value of the Treasuries required to be included in a Creation Basket Deposit as of 4:00 p.m. New York time on the date the order to purchase is properly received and the total required deposit.

### ***Delivery of Required Deposits***

An Authorized Participant who places a purchase order is responsible for transferring to BNO’s account with the Custodian the required amount of Treasuries and cash by the end of the second business day following the purchase order date. Upon receipt of the deposit amount, the Administrator directs DTC to credit the number of baskets ordered to the Authorized Participant’s DTC account on the second business day following the purchase order date. The expense and risk of delivery and ownership of Treasuries until such Treasuries have been received by the Custodian on behalf of BNO shall be borne solely by the Authorized Participant.

Because orders to purchase baskets must be placed by 12:00 p.m., New York time, but the total payment required to create a basket during the continuous offering period will not be determined until after 4:00 p.m. New York time on the date the purchase order is received, Authorized Participants will not know the total amount of the payment required to create a basket at the time they submit an irrevocable purchase order for the basket. BNO’s per share NAV and the total amount of the payment required to create a basket could rise or fall substantially between the time an irrevocable purchase order is submitted and the time the amount of the purchase price in respect thereof is determined.

### ***Rejection of Purchase Orders***

USCF acting by itself or through the Marketing Agent shall have the absolute right but no obligation to reject a purchase order or a Creation Basket Deposit if:

it determines that the investment alternative available to BNO at that time will not enable it to meet its investment objective;

· it determines that the purchase order or the Creation Basket Deposit is not in proper form;

it believes that the purchase order or the Creation Basket Deposit would have adverse tax consequences to BNO, the limited partners or its shareholders;

· the acceptance or receipt of the Creation Basket Deposit would, in the opinion of counsel to USCF, be unlawful; or circumstances outside the control of USCF, Marketing Agent or Custodian make it, for all practical purposes, not feasible to process creations of baskets.

None of USCF, the Marketing Agent or the Custodian will be liable for the rejection of any purchase order or Creation Basket Deposit.

### ***Redemption Procedures***

The procedures by which an Authorized Participant can redeem one or more baskets mirror the procedures for the creation of baskets. On any business day, an Authorized Participant may place an order with the Marketing Agent to redeem one or more baskets. Redemption orders must be placed by 12:00 p.m. New York time or the close of regular trading on the NYSE Arca, whichever is earlier. A redemption order so received will be effective on the date it is received in satisfactory form by the Marketing Agent (“Redemption Order Date”). The redemption procedures allow Authorized Participants to redeem baskets and do not entitle an individual shareholder to redeem any shares in an amount less than a Redemption Basket, or to redeem baskets other than through an Authorized Participant.

By placing a redemption order, an Authorized Participant agrees to deliver the baskets to be redeemed through DTC's book-entry system to BNO, as described below. Prior to the delivery of the redemption distribution for a redemption order, the Authorized Participant must also have wired to BNO's account at the Custodian the non-refundable transaction fee due for the redemption order. An Authorized Participant may not withdraw a redemption order, except as otherwise set forth in the procedures in the Authorized Participant Agreement.

The manner by which redemptions are made is dictated by the terms of the Authorized Participant Agreement. By placing a redemption order, an Authorized Participant agrees to (1) deliver the Redemption Basket to be redeemed through DTC's book-entry system to BNO's account with the Custodian not later than 3:00 p.m. New York time on the second business day following the effective date of the redemption order ("Redemption Distribution Date"), and (2) if required by USCF in its sole discretion, enter into or arrange for a block trade, an exchange for physical or exchange for swap, or any other OTC energy transaction (through itself or a designated acceptable broker) with BNO for the sale of a number and type of futures contracts at the closing settlement price for such contracts on the Redemption Order Date. If an Authorized Participant fails to consummate (1) and (2) above, the order shall be cancelled. The number and type of contracts specified shall be determined by USCF, in its sole discretion, to meet BNO's investment objective and shall be sold as a result of the Authorized Participant's sale of shares.

#### ***Determination of Redemption Distribution***

The redemption distribution from BNO consists of a transfer to the redeeming Authorized Participant of an amount of Treasuries and/or cash that is in the same proportion to the total assets of BNO (net of estimated accrued but unpaid fees, expenses and other liabilities) on the date the order to redeem is properly received as the number of shares to be redeemed under the redemption order is in proportion to the total number of shares outstanding on the date the order is received. USCF, directly or in consultation with the Administrator, determines the requirements for Treasuries and the amounts of cash, including the maximum permitted remaining maturity of a Treasury, and the proportions of Treasuries and cash that may be included in distributions to redeem baskets. The Marketing Agent will publish an estimate of the redemption distribution per basket as of the beginning of each business day.

#### ***Delivery of Redemption Distribution***

The redemption distribution due from BNO will be delivered to the Authorized Participant by 3:00 p.m. New York time on the second business day following the redemption order date if, by 3:00 p.m. New York time on such second business day, BNO's DTC account has been credited with the baskets to be redeemed. If BNO's DTC account has not been credited with all of the baskets to be redeemed by such time, the redemption distribution will be delivered to the extent of whole baskets received. Any remainder of the redemption distribution will be delivered on the next business day to the extent of remaining whole baskets received if BNO receives the fee applicable to the extension of the redemption distribution date which USCF may, from time to time, determine and the remaining baskets to be



redeemed are credited to BNO's DTC account by 3:00 p.m. New York time on such next business day. Any further outstanding amount of the redemption order shall be cancelled. Pursuant to information from USCF, the Custodian will also be authorized to deliver the redemption distribution notwithstanding that the baskets to be redeemed are not credited to BNO's DTC account by 3:00 p.m. New York time on the second business day following the redemption order date if the Authorized Participant has collateralized its obligation to deliver the baskets through DTC's book entry-system on such terms as USCF may from time to time determine.

### ***Suspension or Rejection of Redemption Orders***

USCF may, in its discretion, suspend the right of redemption, or postpone the redemption settlement date, (1) for any period during which the NYSE Arca or the ICE Futures is closed other than customary weekend or holiday closings, or trading on the NYSE Arca or the ICE Futures is suspended or restricted, (2) for any period during which an emergency exists as a result of which delivery, disposal or evaluation of Treasuries is not reasonably practicable, or (3) for such other period as USCF determines to be necessary for the protection of the limited partners or shareholders. For example, USCF may determine that it is necessary to suspend redemptions to allow for the orderly liquidation of BNO's assets at an appropriate value to fund a redemption. If USCF has difficulty liquidating its positions, e.g., because of a market disruption event in the futures markets, a suspension of trading by the exchange where the futures contracts are listed or an unanticipated delay in the liquidation of a position in an OTC contract, it may be appropriate to suspend redemptions until such time as such circumstances are rectified. None of USCF, the Marketing Agent, the Administrator, or the Custodian will be liable to any person or in any way for any loss or damages that may result from any such suspension or postponement.

Redemption orders must be made in whole baskets. USCF will reject a redemption order if the order is not in proper form as described in the Authorized Participant Agreement or if the fulfillment of the order, in the opinion of its counsel, might be unlawful. USCF may also reject a redemption order if the number of shares being redeemed would reduce the remaining outstanding shares to 100,000 shares (i.e., two baskets) or less.

### ***Creation and Redemption Transaction Fee***

To compensate BNO for its expenses in connection with the creation and redemption of baskets, an Authorized Participant is required to pay a transaction fee per order to create or redeem baskets, regardless of the number of baskets in such order. Authorized Participants pay BNO a transaction fee of \$350 for each order placed to create one or more Creation Baskets or to redeem one or more Redemption Baskets. The transaction fee may be reduced, increased or otherwise changed by USCF. USCF shall notify DTC of any change in the transaction fee and will not implement any increase in the fee for the redemption of baskets until 30 days after the date of the notice.

### ***Tax Responsibility***

Authorized Participants are responsible for any transfer tax, sales or use tax, stamp tax, recording tax, value added tax or similar tax or governmental charge applicable to the creation or redemption of baskets, regardless of whether or not such tax or charge is imposed directly on the Authorized Participant, and agree to indemnify USCF and BNO if they are required by law to pay any such tax, together with any applicable penalties, additions to tax and interest thereon.

### ***Secondary Market Transactions***

As noted, BNO creates and redeems shares from time to time, but only in one or more Creation Baskets or Redemption Baskets. The creation and redemption of baskets are only made in exchange for delivery to BNO or the distribution by BNO of the amount of Treasuries and cash represented by the baskets being created or redeemed, the amount of which will be based on the aggregate NAV of the number of shares included in the baskets being created or redeemed determined on the day the order to create or redeem baskets is properly received.

As discussed above, Authorized Participants are the only persons that may place orders to create and redeem baskets. Authorized Participants must be registered broker-dealers or other securities market participants, such as banks and other financial institutions that are not required to register as broker-dealers to engage in securities transactions. An Authorized Participant is under no obligation to create or redeem baskets, and an Authorized Participant is under no

obligation to offer to the public shares of any baskets it does create. Authorized Participants that do offer to the public shares from the baskets they create will do so at per-share offering prices that are expected to reflect, among other factors, the trading price of the shares on the NYSE Arca, the per share NAV of BNO at the time the Authorized Participant purchased the Creation Baskets and the per share NAV of the shares at the time of the offer of the shares to the public, the supply of and demand for shares at the time of sale, and the liquidity of the Futures Contract market and the market for Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. The prices of shares offered by Authorized Participants are expected to fall between BNO's per share NAV and the trading price of the shares on the NYSE Arca at the time of sale. Shares initially comprising the same basket but offered by Authorized Participants to the public at different times may have different offering prices. An order for one or more baskets may be placed by an Authorized Participant on behalf of multiple clients. Authorized Participants who make deposits with BNO in exchange for baskets receive no fees, commissions or other form of compensation or inducement of any kind from either BNO or USCF, and no such person has any obligation or responsibility to USCF or BNO to effect any sale or resale of shares. Shares trade in the secondary market on the NYSE Arca. Shares may trade in the secondary market at prices that are lower or higher relative to their per share NAV. The amount of the discount or premium in the trading price relative to the per share NAV may be influenced by various factors, including the number of investors who seek to purchase or sell shares in the secondary market and the liquidity of the Futures Contracts market and the market for Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. While the shares trade during the core trading session on the NYSE Arca until 4:00 p.m. New York time and trading in Futures Contracts on the ICE Futures Exchange continues throughout the entire NYSE Arca trading day, liquidity in the market for Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments traded on the NYMEX may be reduced after the close of the NYMEX at 2:30 p.m. New York time. As a result, during this time, particularly if BNO has invested in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments traded on the NYMEX, trading spreads, and the resulting premium or discount, on the shares may widen.

## Investments

USCF causes BNO to transfer the proceeds from the sale of Creation Baskets to the Custodian or other custodian for trading activities. USCF will invest BNO's assets in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments and investments in Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents. When BNO purchases a Futures Contract and certain exchange-traded Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, BNO is required to deposit 5% to 30% with the selling FCM on behalf of the exchange a portion of the value of the contract or other interest as security to ensure payment for the obligation under Crude Oil Interests at maturity. This deposit is known as initial margin. Counterparties in transactions in OTC Crude Oil Interests will generally impose similar collateral requirements on BNO. USCF will invest the assets that remain after margin and collateral are posted in Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents subject to these margin and collateral requirements. USCF has sole authority to determine the percentage of assets that are:

held on deposit with the FCM or other custodian;  
used for other investments; and  
held in bank accounts to pay current obligations and as reserves.

Ongoing margin and collateral payments will generally be required for both exchange-traded and OTC Crude Oil Interests based on changes in the value of the Crude Oil Interests. Furthermore, ongoing collateral requirements with respect to OTC Crude Oil Interests are negotiated by the parties, and may be affected by overall market volatility, volatility of the underlying commodity or index, the ability of the counterparty to hedge its exposure under a Crude Oil Interest, and each party's creditworthiness. In light of the differing requirements for initial payments under exchange-traded and OTC Crude Oil Interests and the fluctuating nature of ongoing margin and collateral payments, it is not possible to estimate what portion of BNO's assets will be posted as margin or collateral at any given time. The Treasuries, cash and cash equivalents held by BNO will constitute reserves that will be available to meet ongoing margin and collateral requirements. All interest income will be used for BNO's benefit.

An FCM, counterparty, government agency or commodity exchange could increase margin or collateral requirements applicable to BNO to hold trading positions at any time. Moreover, margin is merely a security deposit and has no bearing on the profit or loss potential for any positions held.

The assets of BNO posted as margin for Futures Contracts are held in segregated accounts pursuant to the CEA and CFTC regulations.

If BNO enters into a swap agreement, BNO must post both collateral and independent amounts to its swap counterparty(ies). The amount of collateral BNO posts changes according to the amounts owed by BNO to its counterparty on a given swap transaction, while independent amounts are fixed amounts posted by BNO at the start of

a swap transaction. Collateral and independent amounts posted to swap counterparties will be held by a third party custodian.

## **The Commodity Interest Markets**

### *General*

The CEA governs the regulation of commodity interest transactions, markets and intermediaries. The CEA provides for varying degrees of regulation of commodity interest transactions depending upon: (1) the type of instrument being traded (e.g., contracts for future delivery, forwards, options, swaps or spot contracts), (2) the type of commodity underlying the instrument (distinctions are made between instruments based on agricultural commodities, energy and metals commodities and financial commodities), (3) the nature of the parties to the transaction (e.g., retail or eligible contract participant), (4) whether the transaction is entered into on a principal-to-principal or intermediated basis, (5) the type of market on which the transaction occurs, and (6) whether the transaction is subject to clearing through a clearing organization.

The offer and sale of shares of BNO, as well as shares of each Related Public Fund, is registered under the Securities Act. BNO and the Related Public Funds are subject to the requirements of the Securities Act, the Exchange Act and the rules and regulations adopted thereunder as administered by the SEC. Firms' participation in the distribution of shares are regulated as described above, as well as by the self-regulatory association, FINRA.

### ***Futures Contracts***

A futures contract is a standardized contract traded on, or subject to the rules of, an exchange that calls for the future delivery of a specified quantity and type of a commodity at a specified time and place. Futures contracts are traded on a wide variety of commodities, including agricultural products, bonds, stock indices, interest rates, currencies, energy and metals. The size and terms of futures contracts on a particular commodity are identical and are not subject to any negotiation, other than with respect to price and the number of contracts traded between the buyer and seller.

The contractual obligations of a buyer or seller may generally be satisfied by taking or making physical delivery of the underlying commodity or by making an offsetting sale or purchase of an identical futures contract on the same or linked exchange before the designated date of delivery. The difference between the price at which the futures contract is purchased or sold and the price paid for the offsetting sale or purchase, after allowance for brokerage commissions, constitutes the profit or loss to the trader. Some futures contracts, such as stock index contracts, settle in cash (reflecting the difference between the contract purchase/sale price and the contract settlement price) rather than by delivery of the underlying commodity.

In market terminology, a trader who purchases a futures contract is long in the market and a trader who sells a futures contract is short in the market. Before a trader closes out his long or short position by an offsetting sale or purchase, his outstanding contracts are known as open trades or open positions. The aggregate amount of open positions held by traders in a particular contract is referred to as the open interest in such contract.

### ***Forward Contracts***

A forward contract is a contractual obligation to purchase or sell a specified quantity of a commodity at or before a specified date in the future at a specified price and, therefore, is economically similar to a futures contract. Unlike futures contracts, however, forward contracts are typically traded in the OTC markets and are not standardized contracts. Forward contracts for a given commodity are generally available for various amounts and maturities and are subject to individual negotiation between the parties involved. Moreover, generally there is no direct means of offsetting or closing out a forward contract by taking an offsetting position as one would a futures contract on a U.S. exchange. If a trader desires to close out a forward contract position, he generally will establish an opposite position in the contract but will settle and recognize the profit or loss on both positions simultaneously on the delivery date. Thus, unlike in the futures contract market where a trader who has offset positions will recognize profit or loss immediately, in the forward market a trader with a position that has been offset at a profit will generally not receive such profit until the delivery date, and likewise a trader with a position that has been offset at a loss will generally not have to pay money until the delivery date. Nevertheless, in some instances forward contracts now provide a right of offset or cash settlement as an alternative to making or taking delivery of the underlying commodity.

In general, the CFTC does not regulate the interbank and forward foreign currency markets with respect to transactions in contracts between certain sophisticated counterparties such as BNO or between certain regulated institutions and retail investors. Although U.S. banks are regulated in various ways by the Federal Reserve Board, the Comptroller of the Currency and other U.S. federal and state banking officials, banking authorities do not regulate the forward markets to the same extent that the swap markets are regulated by the CFTC and SEC.

Regulation exempts both foreign exchange swaps and foreign exchange forwards from the definition of “swap” and, by extension, certain regulatory requirements applicable to swaps (such as clearing and margin). The exemption does not extend to other foreign exchange derivatives, such as foreign exchange options, currency swaps, and non-deliverable forwards.

While the U.S. government does not currently impose any restrictions on the movements of currencies, it could choose to do so. The imposition or relaxation of exchange controls in various jurisdictions could significantly affect the market for that and other jurisdictions’ currencies. Trading in the interbank market also exposes BNO to a risk of default since failure of a bank with which BNO had entered into a forward contract would likely result in a default and thus possibly substantial losses to BNO.

### *Options on Futures Contracts*

Options on futures contracts are standardized contracts traded on an exchange. An option on a futures contract gives the buyer of the option the right, but not the obligation, to take a position at a specified price (the striking, strike, or exercise price) in the underlying futures contract or underlying interest. The buyer of a call option acquires the right, but not the obligation, to purchase or take a long position in the underlying interest, and the buyer of a put option acquires the right, but not the obligation, to sell or take a short position in the underlying interest.

The seller, or writer, of an option is obligated to take a position in the underlying interest at a specified price opposite to the option buyer if the option is exercised. The seller of a call option must stand ready to take a short position in the underlying interest at the strike price if the buyer should exercise the option. The seller of a put option, on the other hand, must stand ready to take a long position in the underlying interest at the strike price.

A call option is said to be in-the-money if the strike price is below current market levels and out-of-the-money if the strike price is above current market levels. Conversely, a put option is said to be in-the-money if the strike price is above the current market levels and out-of-the-money if the strike price is below current market levels.

Options have limited life spans, usually tied to the delivery or settlement date of the underlying interest. Some options, however, expire significantly in advance of such date. The purchase price of an option is referred to as its premium, which consists of its intrinsic value (which is related to the underlying market value) plus its time value. As an option nears its expiration date, the time value shrinks and the market and intrinsic values move into parity. An option that is out-of-the-money and not offset by the time it expires becomes worthless. On certain exchanges, in-the-money options are automatically exercised on their expiration date, but on others unexercised options simply become worthless after their expiration date.

Regardless of how much the market swings, the most an option buyer can lose is the option premium. The option buyer deposits his premium with his broker, and the money goes to the option seller. Option sellers, on the other hand, face risks similar to participants in the futures markets. For example, since the seller of a call option is assigned a short futures position if the option is exercised, his risk is the same as someone who initially sold a futures contract. Because no one can predict exactly how the market will move, the option seller typically posts margin to demonstrate his ability to meet any potential contractual obligations.

### *Options on Forward Contracts or Commodities*



Options on forward contracts or commodities operate in a manner similar to options on futures contracts. An option on a forward contract or commodity gives the buyer of the option the right, but not the obligation, to take a position at a specified price in the underlying forward contract or commodity. However, unlike options on futures contracts, options on forward contracts or on commodities are individually negotiated contracts between counterparties and are typically traded in the OTC market. Therefore, options on forward contracts and physical commodities possess many of the same characteristics of forward contracts with respect to offsetting positions and credit risk that are described above.

### *Swap Contracts*

Swap transactions generally involve contracts between two parties to exchange a stream of payments computed by reference to a notional amount and the price of the asset that is the subject of the swap. Swap contracts are principally traded off-exchange, although certain swap contracts are also being traded in electronic trading facilities and cleared through clearing organizations.

Swaps are usually entered into on a net basis, that is, the two payment streams are netted out in a cash settlement on the payment date or dates specified in the agreement, with the parties receiving or paying, as the case may be, only the net amount of the two payments. Swaps do not generally involve the delivery of underlying assets or principal. Accordingly, the risk of loss with respect to swaps is generally limited to the net amount of payments that the party is contractually obligated to make. In some swap transactions one or both parties may require collateral deposits from the counterparty to support that counterparty's obligation under the swap agreement. If the counterparty to such a swap defaults, the risk of loss consists of the net amount of payments that the party is contractually entitled to receive less any collateral deposits it is holding.

Some swap transactions are cleared through central counterparties. “Clearing” refers to the process by which a trade that is bilaterally executed by two parties is submitted to a central clearing counterparty, via a clearing member (i.e., an FCM), and replaced by two mirror swaps, with the central clearing counterparty becoming the counterparty to both of the initial parties to the swap. These transactions, known as cleared swaps, involve two counterparties first agreeing to the terms of a swap transaction, then submitting the transaction to a clearing house that acts as the central counterparty. Once accepted by the clearing house, the original swap transaction is terminated and replaced by two mirror trades for which the central counterparty becomes the counterparty to each of the original parties based upon the trade terms determined in the original transaction. In this manner each individual swap counterparty reduces its risk of loss due to counterparty nonperformance because the clearing house acts as the counterparty to each transaction.

## **Commodities Regulation**

Futures exchanges in the United States are subject to varying degrees of regulation under the CEA depending on whether such exchange is a designated contract market, exempt board of trade or electronic trading facility. Clearing organizations are also subject to the CEA and the rules and regulations adopted thereunder and administered by the CFTC. The CFTC is the governmental agency charged with responsibility for regulation of futures exchanges and commodity interest trading. The CFTC’s function is to implement the CEA’s objectives of preventing price manipulation and excessive speculation and promoting orderly and efficient commodity interest markets. In addition, the various exchanges and clearing organizations themselves exercise regulatory and supervisory authority over their member firms.

The CFTC also regulates the activities of “commodity trading advisors” and “commodity pool operators” and the CFTC has adopted regulations with respect to certain of such persons’ activities. Pursuant to its authority, the CFTC requires a CPO, such as USCF, to keep accurate, current and orderly records with respect to each pool it operates. The CFTC may suspend, modify or terminate the registration of any registrant for failure to comply with CFTC rules or regulations. Suspension, restriction or termination of USCF’s registration as a CPO would prevent it, until such time (if any) as such registration were to be reinstated, from managing, and might result in the termination of, BNO or the Related Public Funds.

Under certain circumstances, the CEA grants shareholders the right to institute a reparations proceeding before the CFTC against USCF (as a registered commodity pool operator), as well as those of their respective employees who are required to be registered under the CEA. Shareholders may also be able to maintain a private right of action for certain violations of the CEA.

Pursuant to authority in the CEA, the NFA has been formed and registered with the CFTC as a registered futures association. The NFA is the only self-regulatory association for commodities professionals other than the exchanges.

As such, the NFA promulgates rules governing the conduct of commodity professionals and disciplines those professionals that do not comply with such standards. The CFTC has delegated to the NFA responsibility for the registration of commodity pool operators. USCF is a member of the NFA. As a member of the NFA, USCF is subject to NFA standards relating to fair trade practices, financial condition, and consumer protection.

The CEA requires all FCMs, i.e., BNO's clearing brokers, to meet and maintain specified fitness and financial requirements, to segregate customer funds from proprietary funds and account separately for all customers' funds and positions, and to maintain specified books and records open to inspection by the staff of the CFTC. The CFTC has similar authority over introducing brokers, or persons who solicit or accept orders for commodity interest trades but who do not accept margin deposits for the execution of trades. The CEA authorizes the CFTC to regulate trading by FCMs and by their officers and directors, permits the CFTC to require action by exchanges in the event of market emergencies, and establishes an administrative procedure under which customers may institute complaints for damages arising from alleged violations of the CEA.

The regulations of the CFTC and the NFA prohibit any representation by a person registered with the CFTC or by any member of the NFA, that registration with the CFTC, or membership in the NFA, in any respect indicates that the CFTC or the NFA, as the case may be, has approved or endorsed that person or that person's trading program or objectives. The registrations and memberships of the parties described in this summary must not be considered as constituting any such approval or endorsement. Likewise, no futures exchange has given or will give any similar approval or endorsement.

CFTC regulations require enhanced customer protections, risk management programs, internal monitoring and controls, capital and liquidity standards, customer disclosures and auditing and examination programs for FCMs. These regulations are intended to afford greater assurances to market participants that customer segregated funds and secured amounts are protected, customers are provided with appropriate notice of the risks of futures trading and of the FCMs with which they may choose to do business, FCMs are monitoring and managing risks in a robust manner, the capital and liquidity of FCMs are strengthened to safeguard the continued operations, and the auditing and examination programs of the CFTC and the self-regulatory organizations are monitoring the activities of FCMs in a thorough manner.

BNO's investors are afforded prescribed rights for reparations under the CEA against USCF (as a registered commodity pool operator), as well as its respective employees who are required to be registered under the CEA. Investors may also be able to maintain a private right of action for violations of the CEA. The CFTC has adopted rules implementing the reparation provisions of the CEA, which provide that any person may file a complaint for a reparations award with the CFTC for violation of the CEA against a floor broker or an FCM, introducing broker, commodity trading advisor, CPO, and their respective associated persons.

The regulation of commodity interest trading in the United States and other countries is an evolving area of the law. Below are discussed several key regulatory items that are relevant to BNO. The various statements made in this summary are subject to modification by legislative action and changes in the rules and regulations of the CFTC, the NFA, the futures exchanges, clearing organizations and other regulatory bodies. In addition, with regard to any other rules that the CFTC or SEC may adopt in the future, the effect of any such regulatory changes on BNO is impossible to predict, but it could be substantial and adverse.

### **Futures Contracts and Position Limits**

The CFTC is generally prohibited by statute from regulating trading on non-U.S. futures exchanges and markets. The CFTC, however, has adopted regulations relating to the marketing of non-U.S. futures contracts in the United States. These regulations permit certain contracts on non-U.S. exchanges to be offered and sold in the United States.

As discussed above, the CFTC has proposed to adopt limits on speculative positions in 25 physical commodity futures and option contracts as well as swaps that are economically equivalent to such contracts in the agriculture, energy and metals markets. The Position Limit Rules would, among other things: identify which contracts are subject to speculative position limits; set thresholds that restrict the size of speculative positions that a person may hold in the spot month, other individual months, and all months combined; create an exemption for positions that constitute bona fide hedging transactions; impose responsibilities on DCMs and SEFs to establish position limits or, in some cases, position accountability rules; and apply to both futures and swaps across four relevant venues: OTC, DCMs, SEFs as well as certain non-U.S. located platforms. The CFTC's first attempt at finalizing the Position Limit Rules, in 2011,

was successfully challenged by market participants in 2012 and, since then, the CFTC has re-proposed them and solicited comments from market participants multiple times. At this time, it is unclear how the Position Limit Rules may affect BNO, but the effect may be substantial and adverse. By way of example, the Position Limit Rules may negatively impact the ability of BNO to meet its investment objectives through limits that may inhibit USCF's ability to sell additional Creation Baskets of BNO. See *"The Commodity Interest Markets-Commodities Regulation"* in this annual report on Form 10-K for additional information.

Until such time as the Position Limit Rules are adopted, the regulatory architecture in effect prior to the adoption of the Position Limit Rules will govern transactions in commodities and related derivatives. Under that system, the CFTC enforces federal limits on speculation in nine agricultural products (e.g., corn, wheat and soy), while futures exchanges establish and enforce position limits and accountability levels for other agricultural products and certain energy products (e.g., oil and natural gas). As a result, BNO may be limited with respect to the size of its investments in any commodities subject to these limits.

Under existing and recently adopted CFTC regulations, for the purpose of position limits, a market participant is generally required, subject to certain narrow exceptions, to aggregate all positions for which that participant controls the trading decisions with all positions for which that participant has a 10 percent or greater ownership interest in an account or position, as well as the positions of two or more persons acting pursuant to an express or implied agreement or understanding with that participant. The Aggregation Rules will also apply with respect to the Position Limit Rules if and when such Position Limit Rules are adopted.

## Margin Requirements

### Futures and Cleared Swaps

Original or initial margin is the minimum amount of funds that must be deposited by a commodity interest trader with the trader's broker to initiate and maintain an open position in futures contracts. Maintenance margin is the amount (generally less than the original margin) to which a trader's account may decline before he must deliver additional margin. A margin deposit is like a cash performance bond. It helps assure the trader's performance of the futures contracts that he or she purchases or sells.

Futures contracts are customarily bought and sold on initial margin that represents a very small percentage (ranging upward from 5%) of the aggregate purchase or sales price of the contract. Because of such low margin requirements, price fluctuations occurring in the futures markets may create profits and losses that, in relation to the amount invested, are greater than are customary in other forms of investment or speculation. As discussed below, adverse price changes in the futures contract may result in margin requirements that greatly exceed the initial margin. In addition, the amount of margin required in connection with a particular futures contract is set from time to time by the exchange on which the contract is traded and may be modified from time to time by the exchange during the term of the contract.

Brokerage firms, such as BNO's clearing brokers, carrying accounts for traders in commodity interest contracts may not accept lower, and generally require higher, amounts of margin as a matter of policy to further protect themselves. The clearing brokers require BNO to make margin deposits equal to exchange minimum levels for all commodity interest contracts. This requirement may be altered from time to time in the clearing brokers' discretion.

Margin requirements are computed each day by the relevant clearing organization and a trader's clearing broker. When the market value of a particular open commodity interest position changes to a point where the margin on deposit does not satisfy maintenance margin requirements, a margin call is made by the broker. With respect to trading by BNO, BNO (and not its investors personally) is subject to margin calls.

Finally, many major U.S. exchanges have passed certain cross margining arrangements involving procedures pursuant to which the futures and options positions held in an account would, in the case of some accounts, be aggregated and margin requirements would be assessed on a portfolio basis, measuring the total risk of the combined positions.

## Options

When a trader purchases an option, there is no margin requirement; however, the option premium must be paid in full. When a trader sells an option, on the other hand, he or she may be required to deposit margin in an amount determined by the margin requirements established for the underlying interest and, in addition, an amount substantially equal to the current premium for the option. The margin requirements imposed on the selling of options, although adjusted to reflect the probability that out-of-the-money options will not be exercised, can in fact be higher than those imposed in dealing in the futures markets directly. Complicated margin requirements apply to spreads and conversions, which are complex trading strategies in which a trader acquires a mixture of options positions and positions in the underlying interest.

## OTC Swaps

In October 2015, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the FDIC, the Farm Credit Administration, and the Federal Housing Finance Agency (each an “Agency” and, collectively, the “Agencies”) jointly adopted final rules to establish minimum margin and capital requirements for registered swap dealers, major swap participants, security-based swap dealers, and major security-based swap participants (“Swap Entities”) that are subject to the jurisdiction of one of the Agencies (such entities, “Covered Swap Entities”, and the joint final rules, the “Final Margin Rules”).

The Final Margin Rules will subject non-cleared swaps and non-cleared security-based swaps between Covered Swap Entities and Swap Entities, and between Covered Swap Entities and financial end users that have material swaps exposure (i.e., an average daily aggregate notional of \$8 billion or more in non-cleared swaps calculated in accordance with the Final Margin Rules), to a mandatory two-way minimum initial margin requirement. The minimum amount of the initial margin required to be posted or collected would be either the amount calculated by the Covered Swap Entity using a standardized schedule set forth as an appendix to the Final Margin Rules, which provides the gross initial margin (as a percentage of total notional exposure) for certain asset classes, or an internal margin model of the Covered Swap Entity conforming to the requirements of the Final Margin Rules that is approved by the Agency having jurisdiction over the particular Covered Swap Entity. The Final Margin Rules specify the types of collateral that may be posted or collected as initial margin for non-cleared swaps and non-cleared security-based swaps with financial end users (generally cash, certain government, government-sponsored enterprise securities, certain liquid debt, certain equity securities, certain eligible publicly traded debt, and gold); and sets forth haircuts for certain collateral asset classes.

The Final Margin Rules require minimum variation margin to be exchanged daily for non-cleared swaps and non-cleared security-based swaps between Covered Swap Entities and Swap Entities and between Covered Swap Entities and all financial end-users (without regard to the swaps exposure of the particular financial end-user). The minimum variation margin amount is the daily mark-to-market change in the value of the swap to the Covered Swap Entity, taking into account variation margin previously posted or collected. For non-cleared swaps and security-based swaps between Covered Swap Entities and financial end-users, variation margin may be posted or collected in cash or non-cash collateral that is considered eligible for initial margin purposes. Variation margin is not subject to segregation with an independent, third-party custodian, and may, if permitted by contract, be rehypothecated.

The initial margin requirements of the Final Margin Rules are being phased in over time, and the variation margin requirements of the Final Margin Rules are currently in effect. BNO is not a Covered Swap Entity under the Final Margin Rules but it is a financial end-user. Accordingly, BNO is currently subject to the variation margin requirements of the Final Margin Rules. However, BNO does not have material swaps exposure and, accordingly, BNO will not be subject to the initial margin requirements of the Final Margin Rules.

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act required the CFTC and the SEC to adopt their own margin rules to apply to a limited number of registered swap dealers, security-based swap dealers, major swap participants, and major security-based swap participants that are not subject to the jurisdiction of one of the Agencies. On December 16, 2015, the CFTC finalized its margin rules, which are substantially the same as the Final Margin Rules and have the same implementation timeline. The SEC has yet to finalize its margin rules.

### ***Mandatory Trading and Clearing of Swaps***



CFTC regulations require that certain swap transactions be executed on organized exchanges or “swap execution facilities” and cleared through regulated clearing organizations (“derivative clearing organizations” (“DCOs”)), if the CFTC mandates the central clearing of a particular class of swap and such swap is “made available to trade” on a swap execution facility. Currently, swap dealers, major swap participants, commodity pools, certain private funds and entities predominantly engaged in activities that are financial in nature are required to execute on a swap execution facility, and clear, certain interest rate swaps and index-based credit default swaps. As a result, if BNO enters into an interest rate or index-based credit default swaps that is subject to these requirements, such swap will be required to be executed on a swap execution facility and centrally cleared. Mandatory clearing and “made available to trade” determinations with respect to additional types of swaps are expected in the future, and, when finalized, could require BNO to electronically execute and centrally clear certain OTC instruments presently entered into and settled on a bi-lateral basis. If a swap is required to be cleared, initial and variation margin requirements are set by the relevant clearing organization, subject to certain regulatory requirements and guidelines. Additional margin may be required and held by BNO’s FCM.

### ***Other Requirements for Swaps***

In addition to the margin requirements described above, swaps that are not required to be cleared and executed on an SEF but that are executed bilaterally are also subject to various requirements pursuant to CFTC regulations, including, among other things, reporting and recordkeeping requirements and, depending on the status of the counterparties, trading documentation requirements and dispute resolution requirements.

### ***Derivatives Regulations in Non-U.S. Jurisdictions***

In addition to U.S. laws and regulations, BNO may be subject to non-U.S. derivatives laws and regulations if it engages in futures and/or swaps transactions with non-U.S. persons. For example, BNO may be impacted by European laws and regulations to the extent that it engages in futures transactions on European exchanges or derivatives transactions with European entities. Other jurisdictions impose requirements applicable to futures and derivatives that are similar to those imposed by the U.S., including position limits, margin, clearing and trade execution requirements.

### **SEC Reports**

BNO makes available, free of charge, on its website, its annual reports on Form 10-K, its quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, its current reports on Form 8-K and amendments to these reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Exchange Act as soon as reasonably practicable after these forms are filed with, or furnished to, the SEC. These reports are also available from the SEC through its website at: [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov).

### **CFTC Reports**

BNO also makes available its monthly reports and its annual reports required to be prepared and filed with the NFA under the CFTC regulations.

### **Intellectual Property**

USCF owns trademark registrations for UNITED STATES BRENT OIL FUND (U.S. Reg. No. 4181111) for “financial investment services in the field of oil futures contracts, cash-settled options on oil futures contracts, forward contracts for oil, over-the-counter transactions based on the price of oil, and indices based on the foregoing,” in use since June 2, 2010, and BNO UNITED STATES BRENT OIL FUND, LP (and Flame Design), (U.S. Reg. No. 4471561). USCF relies upon these trademarks through which it markets its services and strives to build and maintain brand recognition in the market and among current and potential investors. So long as USCF continues to use these trademarks to identify its services, without challenge from any third party, and properly maintains and renews the trademark registrations under applicable laws, rules and regulations; it will continue to have indefinite protection for these trademarks under current laws, rules and regulations.

USCF owns trademark registrations for USCF (U.S. Reg. No. 5127374) in use since April 10, 2016, USCF (U.S. Reg. No. 5040755) for “fund investment services,” and USCF UNITED STATES COMMODITY FUNDS LLC & Design (U.S. Reg. No. 4304004) for “fund investment services,” in use since June 24, 2008. USCF UNITED STATES COMMODITY FUNDS LLC THE 3RD GENERATION OF COMMODITY INDEX FUNDS (U.S. Reg. No. 4250812), USCF THE 3RD GENERATION OF COMMODITY INDEX FUNDS (U.S. Reg. No. 4250813, USCF UNITED STATES COMMODITY FUNDS LLC THE 3RD GENERATION OF COMMODITY INDEX FUNDS (U.S. Reg. No. 4258460) and USCF THE 3RD GENERATION OF COMMODITY INDEX FUNDS (U.S. Reg. No. 4258461) in use since May 14, 2012. USCF applied for trademark registration for INVEST IN WHAT’S REAL (Serial No. 87073498) in use since April 2014. USCF relies upon these trademarks and service mark through which it markets its services and strives to build and maintain brand recognition in the market and among current and potential investors. So long as USCF continues to use these trademarks to identify its services, without challenge from any third party, and properly maintains and renews the trademark registrations under applicable laws, rules and regulations; it will continue to have indefinite protection for these trademarks under current laws, rules and regulations. USCF has been granted two patents Nos. 7,739,186 and 8,019,675, for systems and methods for an exchange traded fund (ETF) that tracks the price of one or more commodities.

#### Item 1A. Risk Factors.

*The following risk factors should be read in connection with the other information included in this annual report on Form 10-K, including Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and BNO’s financial statements and the related notes.*

BNO’s investment objective is for the daily percentage changes in the net asset value NAV per share to reflect the daily percentage changes of the spot price of Brent crude oil, as measured by the daily percentage changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract, plus interest earned on BNO’s collateral holdings, less BNO’s expenses. BNO seeks to achieve its investment objective by investing so that the average daily percentage change in BNO’s NAV for any period of 30 successive valuation days will be within plus/minus ten percent (10%) of the average daily percentage change in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract over the same period. BNO’s investment strategy is designed to provide investors with a cost-effective way to invest indirectly in Brent crude oil and to hedge against movements in the spot price of Brent crude oil. An investment in BNO involves investment risk similar to a direct investment in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, and correlation risk, or the risk that investors purchasing shares to hedge against movements in the price of crude oil will have an efficient hedge only if the price they pay for their shares closely correlates with the price of Brent crude oil. In addition to investment risk

and correlation risk, an investment in BNO involves tax risks, OTC risks, and other risks.

## **Investment Risk**

*The NAV of BNO's shares relates directly to the value of the Benchmark Futures Contracts and other assets held by BNO and fluctuations in the prices of these assets could materially adversely affect an investment in BNO's shares.*

The net assets of BNO consist primarily of investments in Futures Contracts and, to a lesser extent, in Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. The NAV of BNO's shares relates directly to the value of these assets (less liabilities, including accrued but unpaid expenses), which in turn relates to the price of light, sweet crude oil in the marketplace. Brent crude oil prices depend on local, regional and global events or conditions that affect supply and demand for oil.

*Economic conditions impacting Brent crude oil.* The demand for Brent crude oil correlates closely with general economic growth rates. The occurrence of recessions or other periods of low or negative economic growth will typically have a direct adverse impact on crude oil prices. Other factors that affect general economic conditions in the world or in a major region, such as changes in population growth rates, periods of civil unrest, government austerity programs, or currency exchange rate fluctuations, can also impact the demand for Brent crude oil. Sovereign debt downgrades, defaults, inability to access debt markets due to credit or legal constraints, liquidity crises, the breakup or restructuring of fiscal, monetary, or political systems such as the European Union, and other events or conditions that impair the functioning of financial markets and institutions also may adversely impact the demand for Brent crude oil.

*Other Brent crude oil demand-related factors.* Other factors that may affect the demand for crude oil and therefore its price, include technological improvements in energy efficiency; seasonal weather patterns, which affect the demand for crude oil associated with heating and cooling; increased competitiveness of alternative energy sources that have so far generally not been competitive with oil without the benefit of government subsidies or mandates; and changes in technology or consumer preferences that alter fuel choices, such as toward alternative fueled vehicles.

*Other Brent crude oil supply-related factors.* Brent crude oil prices also vary depending on a number of factors affecting supply. For example, increased supply from the development of new oil supply sources and technologies to enhance recovery from existing sources tends to reduce crude oil prices to the extent such supply increases are not offset by commensurate growth in demand. Similarly, increases in industry refining or petrochemical manufacturing capacity may impact the supply of Brent crude oil. World oil supply levels can also be affected by factors that reduce available supplies, such as adherence by member countries to OPEC production quotas and the occurrence of wars, hostile actions, natural disasters, disruptions in competitors' operations, or unexpected unavailability of distribution channels that may disrupt supplies. Technological change can also alter the relative costs for companies in the petroleum industry to find, produce, and refine oil and to manufacture petrochemicals, which in turn may affect the supply of and demand for oil.

***Other factors impacting the Brent crude oil market.*** The supply of and demand for crude oil may also be impacted by changes in interest rates, inflation, and other local or regional market conditions, as well as by the development of alternative energy sources.

***Price Volatility May Possibly Cause the Total Loss of Your Investment.*** Futures contracts have a high degree of price variability and are subject to occasional rapid and substantial changes. Consequently, you could lose all or substantially all of your investment in BNO.

### **Correlation Risk**

Investors purchasing shares to hedge against movements in the price of crude oil will have an efficient hedge only if the price they pay for their shares closely correlates with the price of crude oil. Investing in BNO's shares for hedging purposes involves the following risks:

- The market price at which the investor buys or sells shares may be significantly less or more than NAV. Daily percentage changes in NAV may not closely correlate with daily percentage changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract.

- Daily percentage changes in the prices of the Benchmark Futures Contract may not closely correlate with daily percentage changes in the price of Brent crude oil.

***The market price at which investors buy or sell shares may be significantly less or more than NAV.***

BNO's NAV per share will change throughout the day as fluctuations occur in the market value of BNO's portfolio investments. The public trading price at which an investor buys or sells shares during the day from their broker may be different from the NAV of the shares. Price differences may relate primarily to supply and demand forces at work in the secondary trading market for shares that are closely related to, but not identical to, the same forces influencing the prices of the Brent crude oil and the Benchmark Futures Contract at any point in time. USCF expects that exploitation of certain arbitrage opportunities by Authorized Participants and their clients and customers will tend to cause the public trading price to track NAV per share closely over time, but there can be no assurance of that.

The NAV of BNO's shares may also be influenced by non-concurrent trading hours between the NYSE Arca and the various futures exchanges on which crude oil is traded. While the shares trade on the NYSE Arca from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time, the trading hours for the futures exchanges on which Brent crude oil trade may not necessarily coincide during all of this time. For example, while the shares trade on the NYSE Arca until 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time, liquidity in the global light sweet crude market will be reduced after the close of the NYMEX at 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time. As a result, during periods when the NYSE Arca is open and the futures exchanges on which Brent crude oil is traded are closed, trading spreads and the resulting premium or discount on the shares may widen and, therefore, increase the difference between the price of the shares and the NAV of the shares.

***Daily percentage changes in BNO's NAV may not correlate with daily percentage changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract.***

It is possible that the daily percentage changes in BNO's NAV per share may not closely correlate to daily percentage changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract. Non-correlation may be attributable to disruptions in the market for Brent crude oil, the imposition of position or accountability limits by regulators or exchanges, or other extraordinary circumstances. As BNO approaches or reaches position limits with respect to the Benchmark Futures Contract and other Futures Contracts or in view of market conditions, BNO may begin investing in Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. In addition, BNO is not able to replicate exactly the changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract because the total return generated by BNO is reduced by expenses and transaction costs, including those incurred in connection with BNO's trading activities, and increased by interest income from BNO's holdings of Treasury securities. Tracking the Benchmark Futures Contract requires trading of BNO's portfolio with a view to tracking the Benchmark Futures Contract over time and is dependent upon the skills of USCF and its trading principals, among other factors.

***Daily percentage changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract may not correlate with daily percentage changes in the spot price of Brent crude oil.***

The correlation between changes in prices of the Benchmark Futures Contract and the spot price of Brent crude oil may at times be only approximate. The degree of imperfection of correlation depends upon circumstances such as variations in the speculative oil market, supply of and demand for Futures Contracts (including the Benchmark Futures Contract) and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, and technical influences in oil futures trading.



***Natural forces in the oil futures market known as “backwardation” and “contango” may increase BNO’s tracking error and/or negatively impact total return.***

The design of BNO’s Benchmark Futures Contract is such that every month it begins by using the near month contract to expire until the near month contract is within two weeks of expiration, when, over a four day period, it transitions to the next month contract to expire as its benchmark contract and keeps that contract as its benchmark until it becomes the near month contract and close to expiration. In the event of a crude oil futures market where near month contracts trade at a higher price than next month to expire contracts, a situation described as “backwardation” in the futures market, then absent the impact of the overall movement in crude oil prices the value of the benchmark contract would tend to rise as it approaches expiration. Conversely, in the event of a crude oil futures market where near month contracts trade at a lower price than next month contracts, a situation described as “contango” in the futures market, then absent the impact of the overall movement in crude oil prices the value of the benchmark contract would tend to decline as it approaches expiration. When compared to total return of other price indices, such as the spot price of crude oil, the impact of backwardation and contango may cause the total return of BNO’s per share NAV to vary significantly. Moreover, absent the impact of rising or falling oil prices, a prolonged period of contango could have a significant negative impact on BNO’s per share NAV and total return and investors could lose part or all of their investment. See “*Item 7. Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations*” in this annual report on Form 10-K for a discussion of the potential effects of contango and backwardation.

***Accountability levels, position limits, and daily price fluctuation limits set by the exchanges have the potential to cause tracking error, which could cause the price of shares to substantially vary from the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract.***

Designated contract markets, such as the NYMEX and ICE Futures, have established accountability levels and position limits on the maximum net long or net short futures contracts in commodity interests that any person or group of persons under common trading control (other than as a hedge, which an investment by BNO is not) may hold, own or control. In addition to accountability levels and position limits, the NYMEX and ICE Futures also set daily price fluctuation limits on futures contracts. The daily price fluctuation limit establishes the maximum amount that the price of a futures contract may vary either up or down from the previous day’s settlement price. Once the daily price fluctuation limit has been reached in a particular futures contract, no trades may be made at a price beyond that limit.

As discussed above, the CFTC has proposed to adopt limits on speculative positions in 25 physical commodity futures and option contracts as well as swaps that are economically equivalent to such contracts in the agriculture, energy and metals markets. The Position Limit Rules would, among other things: identify which contracts are subject to speculative position limits; set thresholds that restrict the size of speculative positions that a person may hold in the spot month, other individual months, and all months combined; create an exemption for positions that constitute bona fide hedging transactions; impose responsibilities on DCMs and SEFs to establish position limits or, in some cases, position accountability rules; and apply to both futures and swaps across four relevant venues: OTC, DCMs, SEFs as well as certain non-U.S. located platforms. The CFTC’s first attempt at finalizing the Position Limit Rules, in 2011,

was successfully challenged by market participants in 2012 and, since then, the CFTC has re-proposed them and solicited comments from market participants multiple times. At this time, it is unclear how the Position Limit Rules may affect BNO, but the effect may be substantial and adverse. By way of example, the Position Limit Rules may negatively impact the ability of BNO to meet its investment objectives through limits that may inhibit USCF's ability to sell additional Creation Baskets of BNO. See *"The Commodity Interest Markets-Commodities Regulation"* in this annual report on Form 10-K for additional information.

Until such time as the Position Limit Rules are adopted, the regulatory architecture in effect prior to the adoption of the Position Limit Rules will govern transactions in commodities and related derivatives. Under that system, the CFTC enforces federal limits on speculation in nine agricultural products (e.g., corn, wheat and soy), while futures exchanges establish and enforce position limits and accountability levels for other agricultural products and certain energy products (e.g., oil and natural gas). As a result, BNO may be limited with respect to the size of its investments in any commodities subject to these limits.

Under existing and recently adopted CFTC regulations, for the purpose of position limits, a market participant is generally required, subject to certain narrow exceptions, to aggregate all positions for which that participant controls the trading decisions with all positions for which that participant has a 10 percent or greater ownership interest in an account or position, as well as the positions of two or more persons acting pursuant to an express or implied agreement or understanding with that participant. The Aggregation Rules will also apply with respect to the Position Limit Rules if and when such Position Limit Rules are adopted.

All of these limits may potentially cause a tracking error between the price of BNO's shares and the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract. This may in turn prevent investors from being able to effectively use BNO as a way to hedge against crude oil-related losses or as a way to indirectly invest in crude oil.

BNO has not limited the size of its offering and is committed to utilizing substantially all of its proceeds to purchase Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. If BNO encounters accountability levels, position limits, or price fluctuation limits for Futures Contracts on the NYMEX or ICE Futures, it may then, if permitted under applicable regulatory requirements, purchase Futures Contracts on other exchanges that trade listed crude oil futures or enter into swaps and other transactions to meet its investment objective. In addition, if BNO exceeds accountability levels on either the NYMEX or ICE Futures and is required by such exchanges to reduce its holdings, such reduction could potentially cause a tracking error between the price of BNO's shares and the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract.

### **Tax Risk**

*An investor's tax liability may exceed the amount of distributions, if any, on its shares.*

Cash or property will be distributed at the sole discretion of USCF. USCF has not and does not currently intend to make cash or other distributions with respect to shares. Investors will be required to pay U.S. federal income tax and, in some cases, state, local, or foreign income tax, on their allocable share of BNO's taxable income, without regard to whether they receive distributions or the amount of any distributions. Therefore, the tax liability of an investor with respect to its shares may exceed the amount of cash or value of property (if any) distributed.

*An investor's allocable share of taxable income or loss may differ from its economic income or loss on its shares.*

Due to the application of the assumptions and conventions applied by BNO in making allocations for tax purposes and other factors, an investor's allocable share of BNO's income, gain, deduction or loss may be different than its economic profit or loss from its shares for a taxable year. This difference could be temporary or permanent and, if permanent, could result in it being taxed on amounts in excess of its economic income.

*Items of income, gain, deduction, loss and credit with respect to shares could be reallocated, and for taxable periods beginning after December 31 2017, BNO could be liable for US. Federal income tax, if the U.S. Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") does not accept the assumptions and conventions applied by BNO in allocating those*

*items, with potential adverse consequences for an investor.*

The U.S. tax rules pertaining to partnerships are complex and their application to large, publicly traded partnerships such as BNO is in many respects uncertain. BNO applies certain assumptions and conventions in an attempt to comply with the intent of the applicable rules and to report taxable income, gains, deductions, losses and credits in a manner that properly reflects shareholders' economic gains and losses. These assumptions and conventions may not fully comply with all aspects of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code") and applicable Treasury Regulations, however, and it is possible that the IRS will successfully challenge BNO's allocation methods and require BNO to reallocate items of income, gain, deduction, loss or credit in a manner that adversely affects investors. If this occurs, investors may be required to file an amended tax return and to pay additional taxes plus deficiency interest.

In addition, for periods beginning after December 31, 2017, BNO may be liable for U.S. federal income tax on any "imputed understatement" of tax resulting from an adjustment as a result of an IRS audit. The amount of the imputed understatement generally includes increases in allocations of items of income or gains to any investor and decreases in allocations of items of deduction, loss, or credit to any investor without any offset for any corresponding reductions in allocations of items of income or gain to any investor or increases in allocations of items of deduction, loss, or credit to any investor. If BNO is required to pay any U.S. federal income taxes on any imputed understatement, the resulting tax liability would reduce the net assets of BNO and would likely have an adverse impact on the value of the shares. Under certain circumstances, BNO may be eligible to make an election to cause the investors to take into account the amount of any imputed understatement, including any interest and penalties. The ability of a publicly traded partnership such as BNO to make this election is uncertain. If the election is made, BNO would be required to provide investors who owned beneficial interests in the shares in the year to which the adjusted allocations relate with a statement setting forth their proportionate shares of the adjustment ("Adjusted K-1s"). The investors would be required to take the adjustment into account in the taxable year in which the Adjusted K-1s are issued. The resulting tax liability on an investor of taking the adjustment into account in the year in which the Adjusted K-1 is issued may be less favorable to the investor than if the adjustment were taken into account in the reviewed year.

***BNO could be treated as a corporation for federal income tax purposes, which may substantially reduce the value of the shares.***

BNO has received an opinion of counsel that, under current U.S. federal income tax laws, BNO will be treated as a partnership that is not taxable as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, provided that (i) at least 90 percent of BNO's annual gross income will be derived from (a) income and gains from commodities (not held as inventory) or futures, forwards, options, swaps and other notional principal contracts with respect to commodities, and (b) interest income, (ii) BNO is organized and operated in accordance with its governing agreements and applicable law and (iii) BNO does not elect to be taxed as a corporation for federal income tax purposes. Although USCF anticipates that BNO has satisfied and will continue to satisfy the "qualifying income" requirement for all of its taxable years, that result cannot be assured. BNO has not requested and will not request any ruling from the IRS with respect to its classification as a partnership not taxable as a corporation for federal income tax purposes. If the IRS were to successfully assert that BNO is taxable as a corporation for federal income tax purposes in any taxable year, rather than passing through its income, gains, losses and deductions proportionately to shareholders, BNO would be subject to tax on its net income for the year at corporate tax rates. In addition, although USCF does not currently intend to make distributions with respect to shares, any distributions would be taxable to shareholders as dividend income. Taxation of BNO as a corporation could materially reduce the after-tax return on an investment in shares and could substantially reduce the value of the shares.

***BNO is organized and operated as a limited partnership in accordance with the provisions of the LP Agreement and applicable state law, and therefore, BNO has a more complex tax treatment than traditional mutual funds.***

BNO is organized and operated as a limited partnership in accordance with the provisions of the LP Agreement and applicable state law. No U.S. federal income tax is paid by BNO on its income. Instead, BNO will furnish shareholders each year with tax information on IRS Schedule K-1 (Form 1065) and each U.S. shareholder is required to report on its U.S. federal income tax return its allocable share of the income, gain, loss and deduction of BNO.

This must be reported without regard to the amount (if any) of cash or property the shareholder receives as a distribution from BNO during the taxable year. A shareholder, therefore, may be allocated income or gain by BNO but receive no cash distribution with which to pay the tax liability resulting from the allocation, or may receive a distribution that is insufficient to pay such liability.

In addition to federal income taxes, shareholders may be subject to other taxes, such as state and local income taxes, unincorporated business taxes, business franchise taxes and estate, inheritance or intangible taxes that may be imposed by the various jurisdictions in which BNO does business or owns property or where the shareholders reside. Although an analysis of those various taxes is not presented here, each prospective shareholder should consider their potential impact on its investment in BNO. It is each shareholder's responsibility to file the appropriate U.S. federal, state, local

and foreign tax returns.

***If BNO is required to withhold tax with respect to any Non-U.S. shareholders, the cost of such withholding may be borne by all shareholders.***

Under certain circumstances, BNO may be required to pay withholding tax with respect to allocations to Non-U.S. shareholders. Although the LP Agreement provides that any such withholding will be treated as being distributed to the Non-U.S. shareholder, BNO may not be able to cause the economic cost of such withholding to be borne by the Non-U.S. shareholder on whose behalf such amounts were withheld since it does not generally expect to make any distributions. Under such circumstances, the economic cost of the withholding may be borne by all shareholders, not just the shareholders on whose behalf such amounts were withheld. This could have a material impact on the value of the shares.

***The impact of U.S. tax reform on BNO is uncertain.***

On December 22, 2017, H.R. 1, the bill formerly known as the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (the “Tax Act”), was signed into law. The Tax Act substantially alters the U.S. federal tax system in a variety of ways, including significant changes to the taxation of business entities, the deductibility of interest expense, and the tax treatment of capital investment. We cannot predict with certainty how any changes in the tax laws might affect the U.S. economy or the demand for and the price of commodities. As a result, it is possible that the Tax Act, as well as any U.S. Treasury regulations, administrative interpretations or court decisions interpreting the Tax Act and any future legislation related to tax reform, could have unexpected or negative impacts on BNO and some or all of its shareholders. Shareholders are urged to consult with their tax advisor regarding tax legislative, regulatory, or administrative developments and proposals and their potential effect on an investment in BNO.

### **OTC Contract Risk**

*BNO will be subject to credit risk with respect to counterparties to OTC contracts entered into by BNO or held by special purpose or structured vehicles.*

BNO faces the risk of non-performance by the counterparties to the OTC contracts. Unlike in futures contracts, the counterparty to these contracts is generally a single bank or other financial institution, rather than a clearing organization backed by a group of financial institutions. As a result, there will be greater counterparty credit risk in these transactions. A counterparty may not be able to meet its obligations to BNO, in which case BNO could suffer significant losses on these contracts. The two-way margining requirements imposed by U.S. regulators, discussed in “*Item 1. Business – Commodities Regulation*,” are intended to mitigate this risk.

Nevertheless, if a counterparty becomes bankrupt or otherwise fails to perform its obligations due to financial difficulties, BNO may experience significant delays in obtaining any recovery in a bankruptcy or other reorganization proceeding. BNO may obtain only limited recovery or may obtain no recovery in such circumstances.

*Valuing OTC derivatives may be less certain than actively traded financial instruments.*

In general, valuing OTC derivatives is less certain than valuing actively traded financial instruments such as exchange traded futures contracts and securities or cleared swaps because the price and terms on which such OTC derivatives are entered into or can be terminated are individually negotiated, and those prices and terms may not reflect the best price or terms available from other sources. In addition, while market makers and dealers generally quote indicative prices or terms for entering into or terminating OTC contracts, they typically are not contractually obligated to do so, particularly if they are not a party to the transaction. As a result, it may be difficult to obtain an independent value for an outstanding OTC derivatives transaction.

### **Other Risks**

*Certain of BNO’s investments could be illiquid, which could cause large losses to investors at any time or from time to time.*

Futures positions cannot always be liquidated at the desired price. It is difficult to execute a trade at a specific price when there is a relatively small volume of buy and sell orders in a market. A market disruption, such as a foreign government taking political actions that disrupt the market for its currency, its crude oil production or exports, or another major export, can also make it difficult to liquidate a position. Because both Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments may be illiquid, BNO's Crude Oil Interests may be more difficult to liquidate at favorable prices in periods of illiquid markets and losses may be incurred during the period in which positions are being liquidated. The large size of the positions that BNO may acquire increases the risk of illiquidity both by making its positions more difficult to liquidate and by potentially increasing losses while trying to do so.

OTC contracts that are not subject to clearing may be even less marketable than futures contracts because they are not traded on an exchange, do not have uniform terms and conditions, and are entered into based upon the creditworthiness of the parties and the availability of credit support, such as collateral, and in general, they are not transferable without the consent of the counterparty. These conditions make such contracts less liquid than standardized futures contracts traded on a commodities exchange and could adversely impact BNO's ability to realize the full value of such contracts. In addition, even if collateral is used to reduce counterparty credit risk, sudden changes in the value of OTC transactions may leave a party open to financial risk due to a counterparty default since the collateral held may not cover a party's exposure on the transaction in such situations.



***BNO is not actively managed and tracks the Benchmark Futures Contract during periods in which the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract is flat or declining as well as when the price is rising.***

BNO is not actively managed by conventional methods. Accordingly, if BNO's investments in Crude Oil Interests are declining in value, BNO will not close out such positions except in connection with paying the proceeds to an Authorized Participant upon the redemption of a basket or closing out futures positions in connection with the monthly change in the Benchmark Futures Contract. USCF will seek to cause the NAV of BNO's shares to track the Benchmark Futures Contract during periods in which its price is flat or declining as well as when the price is rising.

***The NYSE Arca may halt trading in BNO's shares, which would adversely impact an investor's ability to sell shares.***

BNO's shares are listed for trading on the NYSE Arca under the market symbol "BNO." Trading in shares may be halted due to market conditions or, in light of NYSE Arca rules and procedures, for reasons that, in the view of the NYSE Arca, make trading in shares inadvisable. In addition, trading is subject to trading halts caused by extraordinary market volatility pursuant to "circuit breaker" rules that require trading to be halted for a specified period based on a specified market decline. Additionally, there can be no assurance that the requirements necessary to maintain the listing of BNO's shares will continue to be met or will remain unchanged.

***The liquidity of the shares may also be affected by the withdrawal from participation of Authorized Participants, which could adversely affect the market price of the shares.***

In the event that one or more Authorized Participants which have substantial interests in the shares withdraw from participation, the liquidity of the shares will likely decrease, which could adversely affect the market price of the shares and result in investors incurring a loss on their investment.

***Shareholders that are not Authorized Participants may only purchase or sell their shares in secondary trading markets, and the conditions associated with trading in secondary markets may adversely affect investors' investment in the shares.***

Only Authorized Participants may create or redeem Redemption Baskets. All other investors that desire to purchase or sell shares must do so through the NYSE Arca or in other markets, if any, in which the shares may be traded. Shares may trade at a premium or discount to NAV per share.

***The lack of an active trading market for BNO's shares may result in losses on an investor's investment in BNO at the time the investor sells the shares.***

Although BNO's shares are listed and traded on the NYSE Arca, there can be no guarantee that an active trading market for the shares will be maintained. If an investor needs to sell shares at a time when no active trading market for them exists, the price the investor receives upon sale of the shares, assuming they were able to be sold, likely would be lower than if an active market existed.

***Limited partners may have limited liability in certain circumstances, including potentially having liability for the return of wrongful distributions.***

Under Delaware law, a limited partner might be held liable for BNO's obligations as if it were a general partner if the limited partner participates in the control of the partnership's business and the persons who transact business with the partnership think the limited partner is the general partner.

A limited partner will not be liable for assessments in addition to its initial capital investment in any of BNO's shares. However, a limited partner may be required to repay to BNO any amounts wrongfully returned or distributed to it under some circumstances. Under Delaware law, BNO may not make a distribution to limited partners if the distribution causes BNO's liabilities (other than liabilities to partners on account of their partnership interests and nonrecourse liabilities) to exceed the fair value of BNO's assets. Delaware law provides that a limited partner who receives such a distribution and knew at the time of the distribution that the distribution violated the law will be liable to the limited partnership for the amount of the distribution for three years from the date of the distribution.

***The LLC Agreement provides limited authority to the Non-Management Directors, and any Director of USCF may be removed by USCF's parent company, which is wholly owned by Concierge, a controlled public company where the majority of shares are owned by Nicholas Gerber along with certain other family members and certain other shareholders.***

USCF's Board of Directors currently consists of four Management Directors, each of whom are executive officers or employees of USCF, and three Non-Management Directors, each of whom are considered independent for purposes of applicable NYSE Arca and SEC rules. Under USCF's LLC Agreement, the Non-Management Directors have only such authority as the Management Directors expressly confer upon them, which means that the Non-Management Directors may have less authority to control the actions of the Management Directors than is typically the case with the independent members of a company's Board of Directors. In addition, any Director may be removed by written consent of Wainwright Holdings, Inc. ("Wainwright"), which is the sole member of USCF. The sole shareholder of Wainwright is Concierge Technologies Inc., a company publicly traded under the ticker symbol "CNCG" ("Concierge"). Mr. Nicholas Gerber along with certain family members and certain other shareholders, owns the majority of the shares in Concierge, which is the sole shareholder of Wainwright, the sole member of USCF. Accordingly, although USCF is governed by the USCF Board of Directors, which consists of both Management Directors and Non-Management Directors, pursuant to the LLC Agreement, it is possible for Mr. Gerber to exercise his indirect control of Wainwright to effect the removal of any Director (including the Non-Management Directors which comprise the Audit Committee) and to replace that Director with another Director. Having control in one person could have a negative impact on USCF and BNO, including their regulatory obligations.

***There is a risk that BNO will not earn trading gains sufficient to compensate for the fees and expenses that it must pay and as such BNO may not earn any profit.***

BNO pays brokerage charges of approximately 0.08% of average total net assets based on brokerage fees of \$3.50 per buy or sell, management fees of 0.75% of NAV on its average net assets, and OTC spreads and extraordinary expenses (e.g., subsequent offering expenses, other expenses not in the ordinary course of business, including the indemnification of any person against liabilities and obligations to the extent permitted by law and required under the LP Agreement and under agreements entered into by USCF on BNO's behalf and the bringing and defending of actions at law or in equity and otherwise engaging in the conduct of litigation and the incurring of legal expenses and the settlement of claims and litigation) that cannot be quantified.

These fees and expenses must be paid in all cases regardless of whether BNO's activities are profitable. Accordingly, BNO must earn trading gains sufficient to compensate for these fees and expenses before it can earn any profit.

***Regulation of the commodity interests and energy markets is extensive and constantly changing; future regulatory developments are impossible to predict but may significantly and adversely affect BNO.***

The futures markets are subject to comprehensive statutes, regulations, and margin requirements. In addition, the CFTC and futures exchanges are authorized to take extraordinary actions in the event of a market emergency, including, for example, the retroactive implementation of speculative position limits or higher margin requirements, the establishment of daily price limits and the suspension of trading. Regulation of commodity interest transactions in the United States is a rapidly changing area of law and is subject to ongoing modification by governmental and judicial action. Considerable regulatory attention has been focused on non-traditional investment pools that are publicly distributed in the United States. In addition, various national governments outside of the United States have expressed concern regarding the disruptive effects of speculative trading in the energy markets and the need to regulate the derivatives markets in general. The effect of any future regulatory change on BNO is impossible to predict, but it could be substantial and adverse. For a more detailed discussion of the regulations to be imposed by the CFTC and the SEC and the potential impacts thereof on BNO, please see "*Item 1. Business – Commodities Regulation*" in this annual report on Form 10-K.

***An investment in BNO may provide little or no diversification benefits. Thus, in a declining market, BNO may have no gains to offset losses from other investments, and an investor may suffer losses on an investment in BNO while incurring losses with respect to other asset classes.***

Historically, Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments have generally been non-correlated to the performance of other asset classes such as stocks and bonds. Non-correlation means that there is a low statistically valid relationship between the performance of futures and other commodity interest transactions, on the one hand, and stocks or bonds, on the other hand.

However, there can be no assurance that such non-correlation will continue during future periods. If, contrary to historic patterns, BNO's performance were to move in the same general direction as the financial markets, investors will obtain little or no diversification benefits from an investment in BNO's shares. In such a case, BNO may have no gains to offset losses from other investments, and investors may suffer losses on their investment in BNO at the same time they incur losses with respect to other investments.

Variables such as drought, floods, weather, embargoes, tariffs and other political events may have a larger impact on crude oil prices and crude oil-linked instruments, including Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, than on traditional securities. These additional variables may create additional investment risks that subject BNO's investments to greater volatility than investments in traditional securities.

Non-correlation should not be confused with negative correlation, where the performance of two asset classes would be opposite of each other. There is no historical evidence that the spot price of crude oil and prices of other financial assets, such as stocks and bonds, are negatively correlated. In the absence of negative correlation, BNO cannot be expected to be automatically profitable during unfavorable periods for the stock market, or vice versa.

***BNO is not a registered investment company so shareholders do not have the protections of the 1940 Act.***

BNO is not an investment company subject to the 1940 Act. Accordingly, investors do not have the protections afforded by that statute, which, for example, requires investment companies to have a majority of disinterested directors and regulates the relationship between the investment company and its investment manager.

***Trading in international markets could expose BNO to credit and regulatory risk.***

BNO invests primarily in Futures Contracts, a significant portion of which are traded on United States exchanges, including the NYMEX. However, a portion of BNO's trades may take place on markets and exchanges outside the United States. Some non-U.S. markets present risks because they are not subject to the same degree of regulation as their U.S. counterparts. Trading on such non-U.S. markets or exchanges presents risks because they are not subject to the same degree of regulation as their U.S. counterparts, including potentially different or diminished investor protections. In trading contracts denominated in currencies other than U.S. dollars, BNO is subject to the risk of adverse exchange-rate movements between the dollar and the functional currencies of such contracts. Additionally, trading on non-U.S. exchanges is subject to the risks presented by exchange controls, expropriation, increased tax burdens and exposure to local economic declines and political instability. An adverse development with respect to any of these variables could reduce the profit or increase the loss earned on trades in the affected international markets.

***BNO and USCF may have conflicts of interest, which may permit them to favor their own interests to the detriment of shareholders.***

BNO is subject to actual and potential inherent conflicts involving USCF, various commodity futures brokers and Authorized Participants. USCF's officers, directors and employees do not devote their time exclusively to BNO and also are directors, officers or employees of other entities that may compete with BNO for their services. They could have a conflict between their responsibilities to BNO and to those other entities. As a result of these and other relationships, parties involved with BNO have a financial incentive to act in a manner other than in the best interests of BNO and the shareholders. USCF has not established any formal procedure to resolve conflicts of interest. Consequently, investors are dependent on the good faith of the respective parties subject to such conflicts of interest to resolve them equitably. Although USCF attempts to monitor these conflicts, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for USCF to ensure that these conflicts do not, in fact, result in adverse consequences to the shareholders.

BNO may also be subject to certain conflicts with respect to the FCM, including, but not limited to, conflicts that result from receiving greater amounts of compensation from other clients, or purchasing opposite or competing positions on behalf of third party accounts traded through the FCM. In addition, USCF's principals, officers, directors or employees may trade futures and related contracts for their own account. A conflict of interest may exist if their trades are in the same markets and at the same time as BNO trades using the clearing broker to be used by BNO. A potential conflict also may occur if USCF's principals, officers, directors or employees trade their accounts more aggressively or take positions in their accounts which are opposite, or ahead of, the positions taken by BNO.

***BNO could terminate at any time and cause the liquidation and potential loss of an investor's investment and could upset the overall maturity and timing of an investor's investment portfolio.***

BNO may terminate at any time, regardless of whether BNO has incurred losses, subject to the terms of the LP Agreement. In particular, unforeseen circumstances, including the death, adjudication of incompetence, bankruptcy, dissolution, or removal of USCF as the general partner of BNO could cause BNO to terminate unless a majority interest of the limited partners within 90 days of the event elects to continue the partnership and appoints a successor general partner, or the affirmative vote of a majority in interest of the limited partners subject to certain conditions. However, no level of losses will require USCF to terminate BNO. BNO's termination would cause the liquidation and potential loss of an investor's investment. Termination could also negatively affect the overall maturity and timing of an investor's investment portfolio.

***BNO does not expect to make cash distributions.***

BNO has not previously made any cash distributions and intends to reinvest any realized gains in additional Crude Oil Interests rather than distributing cash to limited partners. Therefore, unlike mutual funds, commodity pools or other investment pools that actively manage their investments in an attempt to realize income and gains from their investing activities and distribute such income and gains to their investors, BNO generally does not expect to distribute cash to limited partners. An investor should not invest in BNO if the investor will need cash distributions from BNO to pay taxes on its share of income and gains of BNO, if any, or for any other reason. Nonetheless, although BNO does not intend to make cash distributions, the income earned from its investments held directly or posted as margin may reach levels that merit distribution, e.g., at levels where such income is not necessary to support its underlying investments in Crude Oil Interests and investors adversely react to being taxed on such income without receiving distributions that could be used to pay such tax. If this income becomes significant then cash distributions may be made.

*An unanticipated number of redemption requests during a short period of time could have an adverse effect on BNO's NAV.*

If a substantial number of requests for redemption of Redemption Baskets are received by BNO during a relatively short period of time, BNO may not be able to satisfy the requests from BNO's assets not committed to trading. As a consequence, it could be necessary to liquidate positions in BNO's trading positions before the time that the trading strategies would otherwise dictate liquidation.



### ***Money Market Reform***

The SEC adopted amendments to Rule 2a-7 under the Investment Company Act of 1940, which became effective in 2016, to reform money market funds (“MMFs”). While the new rule applies only to MMFs, it may indirectly affect institutional investors such as BNO. A portion of BNO’s assets that are not used for margin or collateral in the Futures Contracts currently are invested in government MMFs. BNO does not hold any non-government MMFs and, particularly in light of recent changes to the rule governing the operation of MMFs, does not anticipate investing in any non-government MMFs. However, if BNO invests in other types of MMFs besides government MMFs in the future, BNO could be negatively impacted by investing in an MMF that does not maintain a stable \$1.00 NAV or that has the potential to impose redemption fees and gates (temporary suspension of redemptions).

***The failure or bankruptcy of a clearing broker could result in a substantial loss of BNO’s assets and could impair BNO in its ability to execute trades.***

In the event of the bankruptcy of a clearing broker or an Exchange’s clearing house, BNO could be exposed to a risk of loss with respect to its assets that are posted as margin. If such a bankruptcy were to occur, BNO would be afforded the protections granted to customers of an FCM, and participants to transactions cleared through a clearing house, under the United States Bankruptcy Code and applicable CFTC regulations. Such provisions generally provide for a pro rata distribution to customers of customer property held by the bankrupt FCM or an Exchange’s clearing house if the customer property held by the FCM or the Exchange’s clearing house is insufficient to satisfy all customer claims. In any case, there can be no assurance that these protections will be effective in allowing BNO to recover all, or even any, of the amounts it has deposited as margin.

Bankruptcy of a clearing FCM can be caused by, among other things, the default of one of the FCM’s customers. In this event, the Exchange’s clearing house is permitted to use the entire amount of margin posted by BNO (as well as margin posted by other customers of the FCM) to cover the amounts owed by the bankrupt FCM. Consequently, BNO could be unable to recover amounts due to it on its futures positions, including assets posted as margin, and could sustain substantial losses.

CFTC regulations impose several requirements on FCMs that are designed to protect customers, including mandating certain customer protections and the implementation of risk management programs, internal monitoring and controls, capital and liquidity standards, customer disclosures, and auditing and examination programs. There can be no assurance these regulations will prevent losses to, or not materially adversely affect, BNO or its investors.

Notwithstanding that BNO could sustain losses upon the failure or bankruptcy of its FCM, the majority of BNO's assets are held in Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents with the Custodian and would not be impacted by the bankruptcy of an FCM.

***The failure or bankruptcy of BNO's Custodian could result in a substantial loss of BNO's assets.***

The majority of BNO's assets are held in Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents with the Custodian. The insolvency of the Custodian could result in a complete loss of BNO's assets held by that Custodian, which, at any given time, would likely comprise a substantial portion of BNO's total assets.

***Third parties may infringe upon or otherwise violate intellectual property rights or assert that USCF has infringed or otherwise violated their intellectual property rights, which may result in significant costs and diverted attention.***

It is possible that third parties might utilize BNO's intellectual property or technology, including the use of its business methods, trademarks and trading program software, without permission. USCF has a patent for BNO's business method and has registered its trademarks. BNO does not currently have any proprietary software. However, if it obtains proprietary software in the future, any unauthorized use of BNO's proprietary software and other technology could also adversely affect its competitive advantage. BNO may not have adequate resources to implement procedures for monitoring unauthorized uses of its patents, trademarks, proprietary software and other technology. Also, third parties may independently develop business methods, trademarks or proprietary software and other technology similar to that of USCF or claim that USCF has violated their intellectual property rights, including their copyrights, trademark rights, trade names, trade secrets and patent rights. As a result, USCF may have to litigate in the future to protect its trade secrets, determine the validity and scope of other parties' proprietary rights, defend itself against claims that it has infringed or otherwise violated other parties' rights, or defend itself against claims that its rights are invalid. Any litigation of this type, even if USCF is successful and regardless of the merits, may result in significant costs, divert its resources from BNO, or require it to change its proprietary software and other technology or enter into royalty or licensing agreements.

*Due to the increased use of technologies, intentional and unintentional cyber-attacks pose operational and information security risks.*

With the increased use of technologies such as the Internet and the dependence on computer systems to perform necessary business functions, BNO is susceptible to operational and information security risks. In general, cyber incidents can result from deliberate attacks or unintentional events. Cyber-attacks include, but are not limited to, gaining unauthorized access to digital systems for purposes of misappropriating assets or sensitive information, corrupting data, or causing operational disruption. Cyber-attacks may also be carried out in a manner that does not require gaining unauthorized access, such as causing denial-of-service attacks on websites. Cyber security failures or breaches of BNO's clearing broker or third party service provider (including, but not limited to, index providers, the administrator and transfer agent, the custodian), have the ability to cause disruptions and impact business operations, potentially resulting in financial losses, the inability of BNO shareholders to transact business, violations of applicable privacy and other laws, regulatory fines, penalties, reputational damage, reimbursement or other compensation costs, and/or additional compliance costs.

In addition, substantial costs may be incurred in order to prevent any cyber incidents in the future. BNO and its shareholders could be negatively impacted as a result. While BNO has established business continuity plans, there are inherent limitations in such plans.

Item 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments.

Not applicable.

Item 2. Properties.

Not applicable.

Item 3. Legal Proceedings.

Although BNO may, from time to time, be involved in litigation arising out of its operations in the normal course of business or otherwise, BNO is currently not a party to any pending material legal proceedings.

Item 4. Mine Safety Disclosures.

Not applicable.

Part II

Item 5. Market for Registrant's Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities.

**Price Range of Shares**

BNO's shares have traded on the NYSE Arca under the symbol "BNO" since June 2, 2010. The following table sets forth the range of reported high and low sales prices of the shares as reported on the NYSE Arca, as applicable, for the periods indicated below.

	High	Low
Fiscal year 2017		
First quarter	\$15.69	\$13.72
Second quarter	\$15.17	\$11.93
Third quarter	\$15.66	\$12.44
Fourth quarter	\$18.10	\$14.86
Fiscal year 2016		
First quarter	\$12.99	\$9.15
Second quarter	\$15.92	\$11.50
Third quarter	\$15.14	\$12.39
Fourth quarter	\$15.73	\$12.77

As of December 31, 2017, BNO had approximately 11,651 holders of shares.

## Dividends

BNO has not made and does not currently intend to make cash distributions to its shareholders.

## Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities

BNO does not purchase shares directly from its shareholders. In connection with its redemption of baskets held by Authorized Participants, BNO redeemed 23 baskets (comprising 1,150,000 shares) and 103 baskets (comprising 5,150,000 shares) for three and twelve months ended December 31, 2017. Monthly redemptions for the last three months are detailed below.

Period	Total Number of Shares Redeemed	Average Price Per Share
10/1/17 to 10/31/17	300,000	\$ 15.17
11/1/17 to 11/30/17	350,000	\$ 17.21
12/1/17 to 12/31/17	500,000	\$ 17.62
Total	1,150,000	

## Item 6. Selected Financial Data.

### *Financial Highlights (for the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014 and 2013)*

*(Dollar amounts in 000's except for per share information)*

	Year ended December 31, 2017	Year ended December 31, 2016	Year ended December 31, 2015	Year ended December 31, 2014	Year ended December 31, 2013
Total assets	\$ 98,458	\$ 113,999	\$ 82,661	\$ 41,559	\$ 28,639

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

Net realized and unrealized gain (loss) on futures transactions, inclusive of commissions	\$ 15,387	\$ 37,467	\$ (43,021	) \$ (26,154	) \$ 2,598
Net income (loss)	\$ 15,451	\$ 37,005	\$ (43,645	) \$ (26,452	) \$ 2,261
Weighted average limited partnership shares	6,888,630	8,243,989	4,836,438	984,795	963,425
Net income (loss) per share	\$ 2.48	\$ 3.48	\$ (10.17	) \$ (21.42	) \$ 2.83
Net income (loss) per weighted average share	\$ 2.24	\$ 4.49	\$ (9.02	) \$ (26.86	) \$ 2.35
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	\$ 78,344	\$ 103,167	\$ 67,996	\$ 36,409	\$ 25,257

40

Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations.

The following discussion should be read in conjunction with the financial statements and the notes thereto of BNO included elsewhere in this annual report on Form 10-K.

*Forward-Looking Information*

This annual report on Form 10-K, including this "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations," contains forward-looking statements regarding the plans and objectives of management for future operations. This information may involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause BNO's actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by any forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements, which involve assumptions and describe BNO's future plans, strategies and expectations, are generally identifiable by use of the words "may," "will," "should," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "believe," "intend" or "project," the negative of these words or variations on these words or comparable terminology. These forward-looking statements are based on assumptions that may be incorrect, and BNO cannot assure investors that the projections included in these forward-looking statements will come to pass. BNO's actual results could differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements as a result of various factors.

BNO has based the forward-looking statements included in this annual report on Form 10-K on information available to it on the date of this annual report on Form 10-K, and BNO assumes no obligation to update any such forward-looking statements. Although BNO undertakes no obligation to revise or update any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, investors are advised to consult any additional disclosures that BNO may make directly to them or through reports that BNO in the future files with the SEC, including annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and current reports on Form 8-K.

**Introduction**

BNO, a Delaware limited partnership, is a commodity pool that issues shares that may be purchased and sold on the NYSE Arca. The investment objective of BNO is for the daily changes in percentage terms of its per share NAV to reflect the daily changes in percentage terms of the spot price of Brent crude oil, as measured by the daily changes, in percentage terms, in the price of a specified short-term futures contract on Brent crude oil traded on the ICE Futures that is the near month contract to expire, except when the near month contract is within two weeks of expiration, in

which case it will be measured by the futures contract that is the next month contract to expire (the “Benchmark Futures Contract”), plus interest earned on BNO’s collateral holdings, less BNO’s expenses. “Near month contract” means the next contract traded on the ICE Futures due to expire. “Next month contract” means the first contract traded on the ICE Futures due to expire after the near month contract. BNO’s investment objective is not for its NAV or market price of shares to equal, in dollar terms, the spot price of Brent crude oil or any particular futures contract based on light, sweet crude oil, nor is BNO’s investment objective for the percentage change in its NAV to reflect the percentage change of the price of any particular futures contract as measured over a time period greater than one day. USCF believes that it is not practical to manage the portfolio to achieve such an investment goal when investing in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments.

BNO seeks to achieve its investment objective by investing so that the average daily percentage change in BNO’s NAV for any period of 30 successive valuation days will be within plus/minus ten percent (10%) of the average daily percentage change in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract over the same period.

The regulation of commodity interest trading in the United States and other countries is an evolving area of the law. The various statements made in this summary are subject to modification by legislative action and changes in the rules and regulations of the SEC, FINRA, CFTC, the NFA, the futures exchanges, clearing organizations and other regulatory bodies. Pending final resolution of all applicable regulatory requirements, some examples of how new rules and regulations could impact BNO are discussed in “*Item 1. Business*” and “*Item 1A. Risk Factors*” in this annual report on Form 10-K.



## Price Movements

Brent crude oil futures prices were volatile and exhibited an uneven upward trend during the year ended December 31, 2017. The price of the Benchmark Futures Contract started the year at \$56.820 per barrel. The high of the year was on December 29, 2017 when the price reached \$66.870 per barrel. The low of the year was on June 21, 2017 when the price dropped to \$44.993 per barrel. The year ended with the Benchmark Futures Contract at \$66.870 per barrel, an increase of approximately 17.69% over the year. BNO's per share NAV began the year at \$15.70 and ended the year at \$18.18 on December 31, 2017, an increase of approximately 15.80% over the year. BNO's per share NAV reached its high for the year on December 29, 2017 at \$18.18 and reached its low for the year on June 21, 2017 at \$11.98. The Benchmark Futures Contract prices listed above began with the March 2017 contracts and ended with the March 2018 contracts. The increase of approximately 17.69% on the Benchmark Futures Contract listed above is a hypothetical return only and could not actually be achieved by an investor holding Futures Contracts. An investment in Futures Contracts would need to be rolled forward during the time period described in order to simulate such a result. Furthermore, the change in the nominal price of these differing Futures Contracts, measured from the start of the year to the end of the year, does not represent the actual benchmark results that BNO seeks to track, which are more fully described below in the section titled "*Tracking BNO's Benchmark.*"

During the year ended December 31, 2017, the Brent crude oil was primarily in a state of contango, meaning that the price of the near month crude Oil Futures Contract was lower than the price of the next month crude Oil Futures Contract, or contracts further away from expiration. On days when the market is in backwardation, the price of the near month crude Oil Futures Contract is typically higher than the price of the next month crude Oil Futures Contract or contracts further away from expiration. For a discussion of the impact of backwardation and contango on total returns, see "*Term Structure of Crude Oil Prices and the Impact on Total Returns*" below.

## Valuation of Futures Contracts and the Computation of the Per Share NAV

The per share NAV of BNO's shares is calculated once each NYSE Arca trading day. The per share NAV for a particular trading day is released after 4:00 p.m. New York time. Trading during the core trading session on the NYSE Arca typically closes at 4:00 p.m. New York time. The Administrator uses the ICE Futures settlement price (a weighted average price of trades during a three minute settlement period from 2:27 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. New York time) for the contracts held on the ICE Futures, but calculates or determines the value of all other BNO investments, including NYMEX contracts or other futures contracts, as of the earlier of the close of the NYSE Arca or 4:00 p.m. New York time.

## Results of Operations and the Crude Oil Market

*Results of Operations.* On June 2, 2010, BNO listed its shares on the NYSE Arca under the ticker symbol “BNO.” On that day, BNO established its initial offering price at \$50.00 per share and issued 200,000 shares to the initial Authorized Participant, Merrill Lynch Professional Clearing Corp., in exchange for \$10,000,000 in cash.

Since its initial offering of 50,000,000 shares, BNO has not registered any subsequent offerings of its shares. On August 26, 2013, BNO executed a 2-for-1 forward share split for all shareholders of record as of the close of markets on August 26, 2013. The 2-for-1 forward share split was payable after the close of markets on August 28, 2013. BNO began trading at its post-split price on August 29, 2013. As a result of the forward share split, every one pre-split share of BNO was automatically exchanged for two post-split units. Immediately prior to the forward share split, there were 450,000 units of BNO issued and outstanding, representing a per share NAV of \$89.92. After the forward share split, the number of issued and outstanding units of BNO increased to 900,000, and the per share NAV decreased to \$44.96. As of December 31, 2017, BNO had issued 22,500,000 shares, 5,200,000 of which were outstanding. As of December 31, 2017, there were 27,950,000 shares registered but not yet issued.

More shares may have been issued by BNO than are outstanding due to the redemption of shares. Unlike funds that are registered under the 1940 Act, shares that have been redeemed by BNO cannot be resold by BNO. As a result, BNO contemplates that additional offerings of its shares will be registered with the SEC in the future in anticipation of additional issuances and redemptions.

As of December 31, 2017, BNO had the following Authorized Participants: Citadel Securities LLC, Credit Suisse Securities USA LLC, Deutsche Bank Securities Inc., Goldman Sachs & Company, JP Morgan Securities Inc., Merrill Lynch Professional Clearing Corp., Morgan Stanley & Company Inc., Nomura Securities International Inc., RBC Capital Markets LLC, and Virtu Financial BD LLC.

For the Year Ended December 31, 2017 Compared to the Year Ended December 31, 2016; and for the Year Ended December 31, 2016, Compared to the Year Ended December 31, 2015

	For the Year Ended December 31, 2017	For the Year Ended December 31, 2016	For the Year Ended December 31, 2015		
Per share net asset value, end of period	\$ 18.18	\$ 15.70	\$ 12.22		
Average daily total net assets	\$ 100,871,878	\$ 111,022,270	\$ 92,048,893		
Dividend and interest income earned on Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents	\$ 828,656	\$ 357,219	\$ 65,611		
Annualized yield based on average daily total net assets	0.82	% 0.32	% 0.07		%
Management fee	\$ 756,539	\$ 832,667	\$ 690,367		
Total fees and other expenses excluding management fees	\$ 482,740	\$ 356,629	\$ 273,391		
Total amount of the expense waiver	\$ 331,433	\$ 190,095	\$ 135,317		
Expenses before allowance for the expense waiver	\$ 1,239,279	\$ 1,189,296	\$ 963,758		
Expenses after allowance for the expense waiver	\$ 907,846	\$ 999,201	\$ 828,441		
Total commissions accrued to brokers	\$ 132,707	\$ 165,409	\$ 114,922		
Total commissions as annualized percentage of average total net assets	0.13	% 0.15	% 0.12		%
Commissions accrued as a result of rebalancing	\$ 127,847	\$ 160,817	\$ 107,744		
Percentage of commissions accrued as a result of rebalancing	96.34	% 97.22	% 93.75		%
Commissions accrued as a result of creation and redemption activity	\$ 4,860	\$ 4,592	\$ 7,178		
Percentage of commissions accrued as a result of creation and redemption activity	3.66	% 2.78	% 6.25		%

*Portfolio Expenses.* BNO's expenses consist of investment management fees, brokerage fees and commissions, certain offering costs, licensing fees, registration fees, the fees and expenses of the independent directors of USCF and expenses relating to tax accounting and reporting requirements. The management fee that BNO pays to USCF is calculated as a percentage of the total net assets of BNO. The fee is accrued daily and paid monthly.

The increase in the per share NAV for the year ended December 31, 2017, compared to the year ended December 31, 2016, was due primarily to higher prices for crude oil and the related increase in the value of the Oil Futures Contracts in which BNO held and traded; and the increase in the per share NAV for the year ended December 31, 2016, compared to the year ended December 31, 2015, was due primarily to higher prices for crude oil and the

related increase in the value of the Oil Futures Contracts in which BNO held and traded.

Average interest rates earned on short-term investments held by BNO, including cash, cash equivalents and Treasuries, were higher during the year ended December 31, 2017, compared to the year ended December 31, 2016; and were higher during the year ended December 31, 2016, compared to the year ended December 31, 2015. As a result, the amount of income earned by BNO as a percentage of average daily total net assets was higher during the year ended December 31, 2017, compared to the year ended December 31, 2016; and was higher during the year ended December 31, 2016 compared to the year ended December 31, 2015. To the degree that the aggregate yield is higher, the net expense ratio, inclusive of income, will be lower.

The increase in total fees and other expenses excluding management fees for the year ended December 31, 2017, compared to the year ended December 31, 2016 was due primarily to increased professional fees; and the increase in total fees and other expenses excluding management fees for the year ended December 31, 2016, compared to the year ended December 31, 2015, was due primarily to BNO's larger size as measured by total net assets.

The decrease in total commissions accrued to brokers for the year ended December 31, 2017, compared to the year ended December 31, 2016, was due primarily to a lower number of Futures Contracts being held and traded; and the increase in total commissions accrued to brokers for the year ended December 31, 2016, compared to the year ended December 31, 2015, was due primarily to higher number of futures contracts being held and traded.

For the Three Months Ended December 31, 2017 Compared to the Three Months Ended December 31, 2016; and for the Three Months Ended December 31, 2016 Compared to the Three Months Ended December 31, 2015

	For the three months ended December 31, 2017	For the three months ended December 31, 2016	For the three months ended December 31, 2015		
Per share net asset value, end of period	\$ 18.18	\$ 15.70	\$ 12.22		
Average daily total net assets	\$ 96,931,038	\$ 113,285,999	\$ 80,770,903		
Dividend and interest income earned on Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents	\$ 267,476	\$ 108,107	\$ 24,345		
Annualized yield based on average daily total net assets	1.09	% 0.38	% 0.12		%
Management fee	\$ 183,239	\$ 213,572	\$ 152,690		
Total fees and other expenses excluding management fees	\$ 117,651	\$ 93,467	\$ 72,424		
Total amount of the expense waiver	\$ 81,105	\$ 50,753	\$ 43,991		
Expenses before allowance for the expense waiver	\$ 300,890	\$ 307,039	\$ 225,114		
Expenses after allowance for the expense waiver	\$ 219,785	\$ 256,286	\$ 181,123		
Total commissions accrued to brokers	\$ 29,184	\$ 34,739	\$ 31,142		
Total commissions as annualized percentage of average total net assets	0.12	% 0.12	% 0.15		%
Commissions accrued as a result of rebalancing	\$ 28,405	\$ 33,315	\$ 29,467		
Percentage of commissions accrued as a result of rebalancing	97.33	% 95.90	% 94.62		%
Commissions accrued as a result of creation and redemption activity	\$ 779	\$ 1,424	\$ 1,675		
Percentage of commissions accrued as a result of creation and redemption activity	2.67	% 4.10	% 5.38		%

The increase in the per share NAV for the three months ended December 31, 2017, compared to the three months ended December 31, 2016, was due primarily to higher prices for crude oil and the related increase in the value of the Oil Futures Contracts in which BNO held and traded; and the increase in the per share NAV for the three months ended December 31, 2016, compared to the three months ended December 31, 2015, was due primarily to higher prices for crude oil and the related increase in the value of the Oil Futures Contracts in which BNO held and traded.

Average interest rates earned on short-term investments held by BNO, including cash, cash equivalents and Treasuries, were higher during the three months ended December 31, 2017, compared to the three months ended December 31, 2016; and were higher during the three months ended December 31, 2016, compared to the three months ended December 31, 2015. As a result, the amount of income earned by BNO as a percentage of average daily total net assets was higher during the three months ended December 31, 2017, compared to the three months ended December 31, 2016; and was higher during the three months ended December 31, 2016 compared to the three months

ended December 31, 2015. To the degree that the aggregate yield is higher, the net expense ratio, inclusive of income, will be lower.

The increase in total fees and other expenses excluding management fees for the three months ended December 31, 2017, compared to the three months ended December 31, 2016 was due primarily to increased professional fees; and the increase in total fees and other expenses excluding management fees for the three months ended December 31, 2016, compared to the three months ended December 31, 2015, was due primarily to BNO's larger size as measured by total net assets.

The decrease in total commissions accrued to brokers for the three months ended December 31, 2017, compared to the three months ended December 31, 2016, was due primarily to a lower number of futures contracts being held and traded; and the increase in total commissions accrued to brokers for the three months ended December 31, 2016, compared to the three months ended December 31, 2015, was due primarily to higher number of futures contracts being held and traded.

## Tracking BNO's Benchmark

USCF seeks to manage BNO's portfolio such that changes in its average daily per share NAV, on a percentage basis, closely track the daily changes in the average price of the Benchmark Futures Contract, also on a percentage basis. Specifically, USCF seeks to manage the portfolio such that over any rolling period of 30-valuation days, the average daily change in BNO's per share NAV is within a range of 90% to 110% (0.9 to 1.1) of the average daily change in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract. As an example, if the average daily movement of the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract for a particular 30-valuation day time period was 0.50% per day, USCF would attempt to manage the portfolio such that the average daily movement of the per share NAV during that same time period fell between 0.45% and 0.55% (i.e., between 0.9 and 1.1 of the benchmark's results). BNO's portfolio management goals do not include trying to make the nominal price of BNO's per share NAV equal to the nominal price of the current Benchmark Futures Contract or the spot price for Brent crude oil. USCF believes that it is not practical to manage the portfolio to achieve such an investment goal when investing in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments.

For the 30-valuation days ended December 31, 2017, the simple average daily change in the Benchmark Futures Contract was 0.305%, while the simple average daily change in the per share NAV of BNO over the same time period was 0.306%. The average daily difference was 0.001% (or 0.1 basis points, where 1 basis point equals 1/100 of 1%). As a percentage of the daily movement of the Benchmark Futures Contract, the average error in daily tracking by the per share NAV was (0.793)%, meaning that over this time period BNO's tracking error was within the plus or minus 10% range established as its benchmark tracking goal. The first chart below shows the daily movement of BNO's per share NAV versus the daily movement of the Benchmark Futures Contract for the 30-valuation day period ended December 31, 2017, the last trading day in December. The second chart below shows the monthly total returns of BNO as compared to the monthly value of the Benchmark Futures Contract for the five years ended December 31, 2017.

Since the commencement of the offering of BNO's shares to the public on June 2, 2010 to December 31, 2017, the simple average daily change in the Benchmark Futures Contract was 0.005%, while the simple average daily change in the per share NAV of BNO over the same time period was 0.001%. The average daily difference was (0.004)% (or (0.4) basis points, where 1 basis point equals 1/100 of 1%). As a percentage of the daily movement of the Benchmark Futures Contract, the average error in daily tracking by the per share NAV was (0.883)%, meaning that over this time period BNO's tracking error was within the plus or minus 10% range established as its benchmark tracking goal.

***\*PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY INDICATIVE OF FUTURE RESULTS***

***\*PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY INDICATIVE OF FUTURE RESULTS***

45



An alternative tracking measurement of the return performance of BNO versus the return of its Benchmark Futures Contract can be calculated by comparing the actual return of BNO, measured by changes in its per share NAV, versus the expected changes in its per share NAV under the assumption that BNO's returns had been exactly the same as the daily changes in its Benchmark Futures Contract.

For the year ended December 31, 2017, the actual total return of BNO as measured by changes in its per share NAV was 15.80%. This is based on an initial per share NAV of \$15.70 as of December 31, 2016 and an ending per share NAV as of December 31, 2017 of \$18.18. During this time period, BNO made no distributions to its shareholders. However, if BNO's daily changes in its per share NAV had instead exactly tracked the changes in the daily total return of the Benchmark Futures Contract, BNO would have had an estimated per share NAV of \$18.20 as of December 31, 2017, for a total return over the relevant time period of 15.92%. The difference between the actual per share NAV total return of BNO of 15.80% and the expected total return based on the Benchmark Futures Contract of 15.92% was an error over the time period of (0.12)%, which is to say that BNO's actual total return underperformed the benchmark result by that percentage. BNO incurs expenses primarily composed of the management fee, brokerage commissions for the buying and selling of futures contracts, and other expenses. The impact of these expenses, offset by interest and dividend income, and net of positive or negative execution, tends to cause daily changes in the per share NAV of BNO to track slightly lower than daily changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract.

By comparison, for the year ended December 31, 2016, the actual total return of BNO as measured by changes in its per share NAV was 28.48%. This was based on an initial per share NAV of \$12.22 as of December 31, 2015 and an ending per share NAV as of December 31, 2016 of \$15.70. During this time period, BNO made no distributions to its shareholders. However, if BNO's daily changes in its per share NAV had instead exactly tracked the changes in the daily total return of the Benchmark Futures Contract, BNO would have had an estimated per share NAV of \$15.97 as of December 31, 2016, for a total return over the relevant time period of 30.69%. The difference between the actual per share NAV total return of BNO of 28.48% and the expected total return based on the Benchmark Futures Contract of 30.69% was an error over the time period of (2.21)%, which is to say that BNO's actual total return underperformed the benchmark result by that percentage. BNO incurs expenses primarily composed of the management fee, brokerage commissions for the buying and selling of futures contracts, and other expenses. The impact of these expenses, offset by interest and dividend income, and net of positive or negative execution, tended to cause daily changes in the per share NAV of BNO to track slightly lower than daily changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract.

By comparison, for the year ended December 31, 2015, the actual total return of BNO as measured by changes in its per share NAV was (45.42)%. This was based on an initial per share NAV of \$22.39 on December 31, 2014 and an ending per share NAV as of December 31, 2015 of \$12.22. During this time period, BNO made no distributions to its shareholders. However, if BNO's daily changes in its per share NAV had instead exactly tracked the changes in the daily total return of the Benchmark Futures Contract, BNO would have had an estimated per share NAV of \$12.32 as of December 31, 2015, for a total return over the relevant time period of (44.98)%. The difference between the actual per share NAV total return of BNO of (45.42)% and the expected total return based on the Benchmark Futures Contract of (44.98)% was an error over the time period of (0.44)%, which is to say that BNO's actual total return underperformed the benchmark result by that percentage. BNO incurs expenses primarily composed of the management fee, brokerage commissions for the buying and selling of futures contracts, and other expenses. The impact of these expenses, offset by interest and dividend income, and net of positive or negative execution, tended to

cause daily changes in the per share NAV of BNO to track slightly lower than daily changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract.

There are currently three factors that have impacted or are most likely to impact BNO's ability to accurately track its Benchmark Futures Contract.

First, BNO may buy or sell its holdings in the then current Benchmark Futures Contract at a price other than the closing settlement price of that contract on the day during which BNO executes the trade. In that case, BNO may pay a price that is higher, or lower, than that of the Benchmark Futures Contract, which could cause the changes in the daily per share NAV of BNO to either be too high or too low relative to the daily changes in the Benchmark Futures Contract. During the year ended December 31, 2017, USCF attempted to minimize the effect of these transactions by seeking to execute its purchase or sale of the Benchmark Futures Contract at, or as close as possible to, the end of the day settlement price. However, it may not always be possible for BNO to obtain the closing settlement price and there is no assurance that failure to obtain the closing settlement price in the future will not adversely impact BNO's attempt to track the Benchmark Futures Contract over time.

Second, BNO incurs expenses primarily composed of the management fee, brokerage commissions for the buying and selling of futures contracts, and other expenses. The impact of these expenses tends to cause daily changes in the per share NAV of BNO to track slightly lower than daily changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract. At the same time, BNO earns dividend and interest income on its cash, cash equivalents and Treasuries. BNO is not required to distribute any portion of its income to its shareholders and did not make any distributions to shareholders during the year ended December 31, 2017. Interest payments, and any other income, were retained within the portfolio and added to BNO's NAV. When this income exceeds the level of BNO's expenses for its management fee, brokerage commissions and other expenses (including ongoing registration fees, licensing fees and the fees and expenses of the independent directors of USCF), BNO will realize a net yield that will tend to cause daily changes in the per share NAV of BNO to track slightly higher than daily changes in the Benchmark Futures Contract. If short-term interest rates rise above the current levels, the level of deviation created by the yield would decrease. Conversely, if short-term interest rates were to decline, the amount of error created by the yield would increase. When short-term yields drop to a level lower than the combined expenses of the management fee and the brokerage commissions, then the tracking error becomes a negative number and would tend to cause the daily returns of the per share NAV to underperform the daily returns of the Benchmark Futures Contract. USCF anticipates that interest rates will continue to remain at historical lows and, therefore, it is anticipated that fees and expenses paid by BNO will continue to be higher than interest earned by BNO. As such, USCF anticipates that BNO will continue to underperform its benchmark until such a time when interest earned at least equals or exceeds the fees and expenses paid by BNO.

Third, BNO may hold Other Crude Oil-Related Investments in its portfolio that may fail to closely track the Benchmark Futures Contract's total return movements. In that case, the error in tracking the Benchmark Futures Contract could result in daily changes in the per share NAV of BNO that are either too high, or too low, relative to the daily changes in the Benchmark Futures Contract. During the year ended December 31, 2017, BNO did not hold any Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. If BNO increases in size, and due to its obligations to comply with regulatory limits, BNO may invest in Other Crude Oil-Related Investments which may have the effect of increasing transaction related expenses and may result in increased tracking error.

*Term Structure of Crude Oil Futures Prices and the Impact on Total Returns.* Several factors determine the total return from investing in futures contracts. One factor arises from "rolling" futures contracts that will expire at the end of the current month (the "near" or "front" month contract) forward each month prior to expiration. For a strategy that entails holding the near month contract, the price relationship between that futures contract and the next month futures contract will impact returns. For example, if the price of the near month futures contract is higher than the next futures month contract (a situation referred to as "backwardation"), then absent any other change, the price of a next month futures contract tends to rise in value as it becomes the near month futures contract and approaches expiration. Conversely, if the price of a near month futures contract is lower than the next month futures contract (a situation referred to as "contango"), then absent any other change, the price of a next month futures contract tends to decline in value as it becomes the near month futures contract and approaches expiration.

As an example, assume that the price of Brent crude oil for immediate delivery, is \$50 per barrel, and the value of a position in the near month futures contract is also \$50. Over time, the price of Brent crude oil will fluctuate based on a number of market factors, including demand for oil relative to supply. The value of the near month futures contract

will likewise fluctuate in reaction to a number of market factors. If an investor seeks to maintain a position in a near month futures contract and not take delivery of physical barrels of Brent crude oil, the investor must sell the current near month futures contract as it approaches expiration and invest in the next month futures contract. In order to continue holding a position in the current near month futures contract, this “roll” forward of the futures contract must be executed every month.

Contango and backwardation are natural market forces that have impacted the total return on an investment in BNO’s shares during the past year relative to a hypothetical direct investment in Brent crude oil. In the future, it is likely that the relationship between the market price of BNO’s shares and changes in the spot prices of Brent crude oil will continue to be impacted by contango and backwardation. It is important to note that this comparison ignores the potential costs associated with physically owning and storing Brent crude oil, which could be substantial.

If the futures market is in backwardation, e.g., when the price of the near month futures contract is higher than the price of the next month futures contract, the investor would buy a next month futures contract for a lower price than the current near month futures contract. Assuming the price of the next month futures contract was \$49 per barrel, or 2% cheaper than the \$50 near month futures contract, then, hypothetically, and assuming no other changes (e.g., to either prevailing Brent crude oil prices or the price relationship between the spot price, the near month contract and the next month contract, and, ignoring the impact of commission costs and the income earned on cash and/or cash equivalents), the value of the \$49 next month futures contract would rise to \$50 as it approaches expiration. In this example, the value of an investment in the next month futures contract would tend to outperform the spot price of Brent crude oil. As a result, it would be possible for the new near month futures contract to rise 12% while the spot price of Brent crude oil may have risen a lower amount, e.g., only 10%. Similarly, the spot price of Brent crude oil could have fallen 10% while the value of an investment in the futures contract might have fallen another amount, e.g., only 8%. Over time, if backwardation remained constant, this difference between the spot price and the futures contract price would continue to increase.

If the futures market is in contango, an investor would be buying a next month futures contract for a higher price than the current near month futures contract. Again, assuming the near month futures contract is \$50 per barrel, the price of the next month futures contract might be \$51 per barrel, or 2% more expensive than the front month futures contract. Hypothetically, and assuming no other changes, the value of the \$51 next month futures contract would fall to \$50 as it approaches expiration. In this example, the value of an investment in the second month would tend to underperform the spot price of Brent crude oil. As a result, it would be possible for the new near month futures contract to rise only 10% while the spot price of Brent crude oil may have risen a higher amount, e.g., 12%. Similarly, the spot price of Brent crude oil could have fallen 10% while the value of an investment in the second month futures contract might have fallen another amount, e.g., 12%. Over time, if contango remained constant, this difference between the spot price and the futures contract price would continue to increase.

The chart below compares the daily price of the near month Brent crude oil futures contract to the price of 13<sup>th</sup> month Brent crude oil futures contract (i.e., a contract one year forward) over the last 10 years. When the price of the near month futures contract is higher than the price of the 13<sup>th</sup> month futures contract, the market would be described as being in backwardation. When the price of the near month futures contract is lower than the 13<sup>th</sup> month futures contract, the market would be described as being in contango. Although the price of the near month futures contract and the price of the 13<sup>th</sup> month futures contract tend to move together, it can be seen that at times the near month futures contract prices are higher than the 13<sup>th</sup> month futures contract prices (backwardation) and, at other times, the near month futures contract prices are lower than the 13<sup>th</sup> month futures contract prices (contango).

***\*PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY INDICATIVE OF FUTURE RESULTS***

An alternative way to view the same data is to subtract the dollar price of the 13<sup>th</sup> month Brent crude oil futures contract from the dollar price of the near month Brent crude oil futures contract, as shown in the chart below. When the difference is positive, the market is in backwardation. When the difference is negative, the market is in contango. The Brent crude oil market spent time in both backwardation and contango during the last ten years. The chart below shows the results from subtracting the average dollar price of the near 12-month contracts from the near month price for the 10-year period between December 31, 2007 and December 31, 2017. Investors will note that the Brent crude oil market spent time in both backwardation and contango.

***\*PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY INDICATIVE OF FUTURE RESULTS***

Historically, the Brent crude oil futures markets have experienced periods of contango and backwardation, with backwardation being in place roughly as often as contango since oil futures trading started in 1982. Following the global financial crisis in the fourth quarter of 2008, the Brent crude oil market moved into contango and remained in contango for a period of several years. During parts of 2009, the level of contango was unusually steep as a combination of slack U.S. and global demand for Brent crude oil and issues involving the physical transportation and storage of Brent crude oil at Cushing, Oklahoma, the primary pricing point for oil traded in the U.S., led to unusually high inventories of Brent crude oil. A combination of improved transportation and storage capacity, along with growing demand for Brent crude oil globally, moderated the inventory build-up and led to reduced levels of contango by 2011. However, at the end of November, 2014, global Brent crude oil inventories grew rapidly after the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' ("OPEC") decided to defend its market share against U.S. shale-oil producers, resulting in another period during which the Brent crude oil market remained primarily in contango, sometimes steep contango. This period of contango continued through December 31, 2016. Brent crude oil markets moved into backwardation during the second quarter of 2017 as U.S. and global oil inventories declined significantly. If OPEC's recent cuts in oil production have their intended effect on the Brent crude oil market then such a decline may continue in 2018.

Periods of contango or backwardation do not materially impact BNO's investment objective of having the daily percentage changes in its per share NAV track the daily percentage changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract since the impact of backwardation and contango tend to equally impact the daily percentage changes in price of both BNO's shares and the Benchmark Futures Contract. It is impossible to predict with any degree of certainty whether backwardation or contango will occur in the future. It is likely that both conditions will occur during different periods.

*Brent Crude Oil Market.* During the year ended December 31, 2017, Brent crude oil prices were impacted by several factors. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' ("OPEC") decision in late 2014 to maintain production levels despite falling demand led to an oversupplied market worldwide. On the consumption side, demand growth remained flat to moderate inside and outside the United States. Brent crude oil prices finished 2016 approximately 52.41% higher than at the beginning of the year. Prices fluctuated as investors weighed the possibility that global inventories may stabilize in 2017. Should supply continue to grow or should the global economic situation decline, there is a meaningful possibility that crude oil prices could fall further, while disruptions due to conflict in the Middle East would likely have the opposite effect.

*Brent Crude Oil Price Movements in Comparison to Other Energy Commodities and Investment Categories.* USCF believes that investors frequently measure the degree to which prices or total returns of one investment or asset class move up or down in value in concert with another investment or asset class. Statistically, such a measure is usually done by measuring the correlation of the price movements of the two different investments or asset classes over some period of time. The correlation is scaled between 1 and -1, where 1 indicates that the two investment options move up or down in price or value together, known as "positive correlation," and -1 indicates that they move in completely opposite directions, known as "negative correlation." A correlation of 0 would mean that the movements of the two are neither positively nor negatively correlated, known as "non-correlation." That is, the investment options sometimes move up and down together and other times move in opposite directions.

For the ten-year time period between December 31, 2007 and December 31, 2017, the table below compares the monthly movements of Brent crude oil prices versus the monthly movements of the prices of several other energy commodities, such as natural gas, diesel-heating oil, and unleaded gasoline, as well as several major non-commodity investment asset classes, such as large cap U.S. equities, U.S. government bonds and global equities. It can be seen that over this particular time period, the movement of Brent crude oil on a monthly basis was somewhat correlated with the movements of large cap U.S. equities and global equities. However, movements in Brent crude oil were strongly correlated with movements in U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil and unleaded gasoline. Movements in Brent crude oil futures exhibited a somewhat inverse correlation with U.S. government bonds and limited correlation with diesel-heating oil.

U.S.  
Gov't.  
Bonds

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

Correlation Matrix	Large Cap U.S. Equities (S&P 500)	(EFFAS U.S. Gov't. Bond Index)	Global Equities (FTSE World Index)	Crude Oil	Unleaded Gasoline	Diesel-Heating Oil	Brent Oil
December 31, 2007 – December 31, 2017*	1.000	(0.277 )	0.965	0.467	0.448	0.442	0.463
U.S. Gov't. Bonds (EFFAS U.S. Gov't. Bond Index)		1.000	(0.250 )	(0.387)	(0.348 )	(0.337 )	(0.371)
Global Equities (FTSE World Index)			1.000	0.517	0.487	0.481	0.519
Crude Oil (WTI)				1.000	0.697	0.806	0.931
Unleaded Gasoline					1.000	0.729	0.756
Diesel-Heating Oil						1.000	0.218
Brent Oil							1.000

Source: Bloomberg, NYMEX

***\*PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY INDICATIVE OF FUTURE RESULTS***



The table below covers a more recent, but much shorter, range of dates than the above table. It can be seen that over the one-year period ended December 31, 2017, movement of Brent crude oil was somewhat correlated with the movements of large cap U.S. equities and global equities. However, movements in Brent crude oil were strongly correlated with movements in U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil. Movements in Brent crude oil futures exhibited a somewhat inverse correlation with U.S. government bonds and little to no correlation with unleaded gasoline and diesel-heating oil.

Correlation Matrix	Large Cap U.S. Equities (S&P 500)	U.S. Gov't. Bonds (EFFAS U.S. Gov't. Bond Index)	Global Equities (FTSE World Index)	Crude Oil	Unleaded Gasoline	Diesel-Heating Oil	Brent Oil
12 Months ended December 31, 2017*	1.000	(0.309 )	0.812	0.688	(0.300 )	0.174	0.460
U.S. Gov't. Bonds (EFFAS U.S. Gov't. Bond Index)		1.000	(0.200 )	(0.559)	0.602	(0.016 )	(0.449)
Global Equities (FTSE World Index)			1.000	0.678	(0.273 )	0.169	0.492
Crude Oil (WTI)				1.000	(0.213 )	0.621	0.934
Unleaded Gasoline					1.000	0.509	0.013
Diesel-Heating Oil						1.000	0.041
Brent Oil							1.000

Source: Bloomberg, NYMEX

***\*PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY INDICATIVE OF FUTURE RESULTS***

Investors are cautioned that the historical price relationships between Brent crude oil and various other energy commodities, as well as other investment asset classes, as measured by correlation may not be reliable predictors of future price movements and correlation results. The results pictured above would have been different if a different range of dates had been selected. USCF believes that Brent crude oil has historically not demonstrated a strong correlation with equities or bonds over long periods of time. However, USCF also believes that in the future it is possible that Brent crude oil could have long-term correlation results that indicate prices of Brent crude oil more closely track the movements of equities or bonds. In addition, USCF believes that, when measured over time periods shorter than ten years, there will always be some periods where the correlation of Brent crude oil to equities and bonds will be either more strongly positively correlated or more strongly negatively correlated than the long-term historical results suggest.

The correlations between Brent crude oil, WTI crude oil, diesel-heating oil and gasoline are relevant because USCF endeavors to invest BNO's assets in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments so that daily changes in percentage terms in BNO's per share NAV correlate as closely as possible with daily changes in percentage terms in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract. If certain other fuel-based commodity futures contracts do not closely correlate with the Benchmark Futures Contract, then their use could lead to greater tracking error. As noted above, USCF also believes that the changes in percentage terms in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract will closely correlate with changes in percentage terms in the spot price of Brent crude oil.

## Critical Accounting Policies

Preparation of the financial statements and related disclosures in compliance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires the application of appropriate accounting rules and guidance, as well as the use of estimates. BNO's application of these policies involves judgments and actual results may differ from the estimates used.

USCF has evaluated the nature and types of estimates that it makes in preparing BNO's financial statements and related disclosures and has determined that the valuation of its investments, which are not traded on a United States or internationally recognized futures exchange (such as forward contracts and OTC swaps) involves a critical accounting policy. The values which are used by BNO for its Futures Contracts are provided by its commodity broker who uses market prices when available, while OTC swaps are valued based on the present value of estimated future cash flows that would be received from or paid to a third party in settlement of these derivative contracts prior to their delivery date and valued on a daily basis. In addition, BNO estimates interest and dividend income on a daily basis using prevailing rates earned on its cash and cash equivalents. These estimates are adjusted to the actual amount received on a monthly basis and the difference, if any, is not considered material.

## Liquidity and Capital Resources

BNO has not made, and does not anticipate making, use of borrowings or other lines of credit to meet its obligations. BNO has met, and it is anticipated that BNO will continue to meet, its liquidity needs in the normal course of business from the proceeds of the sale of its investments, or from the Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents that it intends to hold at all times. BNO's liquidity needs include: redeeming shares, providing margin deposits for its existing Futures Contracts or the purchase of additional Futures Contracts and posting collateral for its OTC swaps, if applicable, and payment of its expenses, summarized below under "*Contractual Obligations.*"

BNO currently generates cash primarily from: (i) the sale of baskets consisting of 50,000 shares ("Creation Baskets") and (ii) income earned on Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents. BNO has allocated substantially all of its net assets to trading in Crude Oil Interests. BNO invests in Crude Oil Interests to the fullest extent possible without being leveraged or unable to satisfy its current or potential margin or collateral obligations with respect to its investments in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments. A significant portion of BNO's NAV is held in cash and cash equivalents that are used as margin and as collateral for its trading in Crude Oil Interests. The balance of the assets is held in BNO's account at its custodian bank and in Treasuries at the FCM. Income received from BNO's investments in money market funds and Treasuries is paid to BNO. During the year ended December 31, 2017, BNO's expenses exceeded the income BNO earned and the cash earned from the sale of Creation Baskets and the redemption of Redemption Baskets. During the year ended December 31, 2016, BNO's expenses exceeded the income BNO earned and the cash earned from the sale of Creation Baskets and the redemption of Redemption Baskets. To the

extent expenses exceed income, BNO's NAV will be negatively impacted.

BNO's investments in Crude Oil Interests may be subject to periods of illiquidity because of market conditions, regulatory considerations and other reasons. For example, most commodity exchanges limit the fluctuations in futures contracts prices during a single day by regulations referred to as "daily limits." During a single day, no trades may be executed at prices beyond the daily limit. Once the price of a futures contract has increased or decreased by an amount equal to the daily limit, positions in the contracts can neither be taken nor liquidated unless the traders are willing to effect trades at or within the specified daily limit. Such market conditions could prevent BNO from promptly liquidating its positions in Futures Contracts. During the year ended December 31, 2017, BNO did not purchase or liquidate any of its positions while daily limits were in effect; however, BNO cannot predict whether such an event may occur in the future.

Since the initial offering of shares, BNO has been responsible for expenses relating to: (i) management fees, (ii) brokerage fees and commissions, (iii) licensing fees for the use of intellectual property, (iv) ongoing registration expenses in connection with offers and sales of its shares subsequent to the initial offering, (v) other expenses, including tax reporting costs, (vi) fees and expenses of the independent directors of USCF and (vii) other extraordinary expenses not in the ordinary course of business, while USCF has been responsible for expenses relating to the fees of BNO's Marketing Agent, Administrator and Custodian and registration expenses relating to the initial offering of shares. If USCF and BNO are unsuccessful in raising sufficient funds to cover these respective expenses or in locating any other source of funding, BNO will terminate and investors may lose all or part of their investment.

## **Market Risk**

Trading in Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, such as forwards, involves BNO entering into contractual commitments to purchase or sell oil at a specified date in the future. The aggregate market value of the contracts will significantly exceed BNO's future cash requirements since BNO intends to close out its open positions prior to settlement. As a result, BNO is generally only subject to the risk of loss arising from the change in value of the contracts. BNO considers the "fair value" of its derivative instruments to be the unrealized gain or loss on the contracts. The market risk associated with BNO's commitments to purchase oil is limited to the aggregate market value of the contracts held. However, should BNO enter into a contractual commitment to sell oil, it would be required to make delivery of the oil at the contract price, repurchase the contract at prevailing prices or settle in cash. Since there are no limits on the future price of oil, the market risk to BNO could be unlimited.

BNO's exposure to market risk depends on a number of factors, including the markets for oil, the volatility of interest rates and foreign exchange rates, the liquidity of the Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments markets and the relationships among the contracts held by BNO. Drastic market occurrences could ultimately lead to the loss of all or substantially all of an investor's capital.

## **Credit Risk**

When BNO enters into Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, it is exposed to the credit risk that the counterparty will not be able to meet its obligations. The counterparty for the Futures Contracts traded on the ICE Futures and on most other futures exchanges is the clearinghouse associated with the particular exchange. In general, in addition to margin required to be posted by the clearinghouse in connection with cleared trades, clearinghouses are backed by their members who may be required to share in the financial burden resulting from the nonperformance of one of their members and, therefore, this additional member support should significantly reduce credit risk. BNO is not currently a member of any clearinghouse. Some foreign exchanges are not backed by their clearinghouse members but may be backed by a consortium of banks or other financial institutions. There can be no assurance that any counterparty, clearinghouse, or their members or their financial backers will satisfy their obligations to BNO in such circumstances.

USCF attempts to manage the credit risk of BNO by following various trading limitations and policies. In particular, BNO generally posts margin and/or holds liquid assets that are approximately equal to the market value of its obligations to counterparties under the Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments it holds. USCF has implemented procedures that include, but are not limited to, executing and clearing trades only with creditworthy parties and/or requiring the posting of collateral or margin by such parties for the benefit of BNO to limit its credit exposure. An FCM, when acting on behalf of BNO in accepting orders to purchase or sell Futures Contracts on United States exchanges, is required by CFTC regulations to separately account for and segregate as belonging to BNO, all

assets of BNO relating to domestic Futures Contracts trading. FCMs are not allowed to commingle BNO's assets with their other assets. In addition, the CFTC requires commodity brokers to hold in a secure account BNO's assets related to foreign Futures Contracts trading. During the year ended December 31, 2017, the only foreign exchange on which BNO made investments was the ICE Futures, which is a London based futures exchange,. Those crude oil contracts are denominated in U.S. dollars.

In the future, BNO may purchase OTC swaps, see "*Item 7A. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk*" in this annual report on Form 10-K for a discussion of OTC swaps.

As of December 31, 2017, BNO held cash deposits and investments in Treasuries and money market funds in the amount of \$92,511,503 with the custodian and FCM. Some or all of these amounts held by a custodian or an FCM, as applicable, may be subject to loss should BNO's custodian or FCM, as applicable, cease operations.

### **Off Balance Sheet Financing**

As of December 31, 2017, BNO had no loan guarantee, credit support or other off-balance sheet arrangements of any kind other than agreements entered into in the normal course of business, which may include indemnification provisions relating to certain risks that service providers undertake in performing services which are in the best interests of BNO. While BNO's exposure under these indemnification provisions cannot be estimated, they are not expected to have a material impact on BNO's financial position.

### **European Sovereign Debt**

BNO had no direct exposure to European sovereign debt as of December 31, 2017 and has no direct exposure to European sovereign debt as of the filing of this annual report on Form 10-K.

### **Redemption Basket Obligation**

In order to meet its investment objective and pay its contractual obligations described below, BNO requires liquidity to redeem shares, which redemptions must be in blocks of 50,000 shares called "Redemption Baskets." BNO has to date satisfied this obligation by paying from the cash or cash equivalents it holds or through the sale of its Treasuries in an amount proportionate to the number of shares being redeemed.

### **Contractual Obligations**

BNO's primary contractual obligations are with USCF. In return for its services, USCF is entitled to a management fee calculated daily and paid monthly as a fixed percentage of BNO's NAV, currently 0.75% of NAV on its average daily total net assets.

USCF agreed to pay the start-up costs associated with the formation of BNO, primarily its legal, accounting and other costs in connection with USCF's registration with the CFTC as a CPO and the registration and listing of BNO and its shares with the SEC, FINRA and NYSE Arca (formerly, AMEX), respectively. However, since BNO's initial offering of shares, offering costs incurred in connection with registering and listing additional shares of BNO have been directly borne on an ongoing basis by BNO, and not by USCF.

USCF pays the fees of the Marketing Agent and the fees of BBH&Co., as well as BBH&Co.'s fees for performing administrative services, including those in connection with the preparation of BNO's financial statements and its SEC, NFA and CFTC reports. BNO pays the fees and expenses associated with its tax accounting and reporting requirements. USCF has paid certain expenses normally borne by BNO on a discretionary basis where such expenses exceeded 0.15% (15 basis points) of BNO's NAV, on an annualized basis. USCF has no obligation to continue such payments into subsequent periods. This voluntary expense waiver is in addition to those amounts USCF is contractually obligated to pay as described in *Note 4* to the *Notes to Financial Statements* in *Item 8* of this quarterly report on Form 10-K.

In addition to USCF's management fee, BNO pays its brokerage fees (including fees to an FCM), OTC dealer spreads, any licensing fees for the use of intellectual property, and, subsequent to the initial offering, registration and other fees paid to the SEC, FINRA, or other regulatory agencies in connection with the offer and sale of shares, as well as legal, printing, accounting and other expenses associated therewith, and extraordinary expenses. The latter are expenses not incurred in the ordinary course of BNO's business, including expenses relating to the indemnification of any person against liabilities and obligations to the extent permitted by law and under the LP Agreement, the bringing or defending of actions in law or in equity or otherwise conducting litigation and incurring legal expenses and the settlement of claims and litigation. Commission payments to an FCM are on a contract-by-contract, or round turn, basis. BNO also pays a portion of the fees and expenses of the independent directors of USCF. See *Note 3* to the *Notes to Financial Statements* in *Item 8* of this annual report on Form 10-K.

The parties cannot anticipate the amount of payments that will be required under these arrangements for future periods, as BNO's per share NAVs and trading levels to meet its investment objective will not be known until a future date. These agreements are effective for a specific term agreed upon by the parties with an option to renew, or, in some cases, are in effect for the duration of BNO's existence. Either party may terminate these agreements earlier for certain reasons described in the agreements.

As of December 31, 2017, BNO's portfolio consisted of 1,414 Brent Crude Oil Futures CO Contracts traded on the ICE Futures. As of December 31, 2017, BNO did not hold any Futures Contracts traded on the NYMEX. For a list of BNO's current holdings, please see BNO's website at [www.uscfinvestments.com](http://www.uscfinvestments.com).



Item 7A. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk.

***Commodity Price Risk.***

BNO is exposed to commodity price risk. In particular, BNO is exposed to Brent crude oil price risk through its holdings of Futures Contracts together with any other derivatives in which it may invest, which are discussed below. As a result, fluctuations in the value of the Futures Contracts that BNO holds in its portfolio, as described in “*Contractual Obligations*” under “*Item 7. Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations*” above, are expected to directly affect the value of BNO’s shares.

***OTC Contract Risk***

BNO may purchase OTC Crude Oil Interests such as forward contracts or swap or spot contracts. Unlike most exchange-traded futures contracts or exchange-traded options on such futures, each party to an OTC swap bears the credit risk that the other party may not be able to perform its obligations under its contract.

BNO may enter into certain transactions where an OTC component is exchanged for a corresponding futures contract (“Exchange for Related Position” or “EFRP” transactions). In the most common type of EFRP transaction entered into by BNO, the OTC component is the purchase or sale of one or more baskets of BNO shares. These EFRP transactions may expose BNO to counterparty risk during the interim period between the execution of the OTC component and the exchange for a corresponding futures contract. Generally, the counterparty risk from the EFRP transaction will exist only on the day of execution.

Swap transactions, like other financial transactions, involve a variety of significant risks. The specific risks presented by a particular swap transaction necessarily depend upon the terms and circumstances of the transaction. In general, however, all swap transactions involve some combination of market risk, credit risk, counterparty credit risk, funding risk, liquidity risk and operational risk.

Highly customized swap transactions in particular may increase liquidity risk, which may result in a suspension of redemptions. Highly leveraged transactions may experience substantial gains or losses in value as a result of relatively small changes in the value or level of an underlying or related market factor.

In evaluating the risks and contractual obligations associated with a particular swap transaction, it is important to consider that a swap transaction may be modified or terminated only by mutual consent of the original parties and subject to agreement on individually negotiated terms. Therefore, it may not be possible for USCF to modify, terminate or offset BNO's obligations or its exposure to the risks associated with a transaction prior to its scheduled termination date.

To reduce the credit risk that arises in connection with such contracts, BNO will generally enter into an agreement with each counterparty based on the Master Agreement published by the International Swaps and Derivatives Association that provides for the netting of its overall exposure to its counterparty, if the counterparty is unable to meet its obligations to BNO due to the occurrence of a specified event, such as the insolvency of the counterparty.

USCF assesses or reviews, as appropriate, the creditworthiness of each potential or existing counterparty to an OTC swap pursuant to guidelines approved by USCF's board of directors (the "Board"). Furthermore, USCF on behalf of BNO only enters into OTC swaps with counterparties who are, or are affiliates of, (a) banks regulated by a United States federal bank regulator, (b) broker-dealers regulated by the SEC, (c) insurance companies domiciled in the United States, or (d) producers, users or traders of energy, whether or not regulated by the CFTC. Any entity acting as a counterparty shall be regulated in either the United States or the United Kingdom unless otherwise approved by the Board after consultation with its legal counsel. Existing counterparties are also reviewed periodically by USCF. BNO will also require that the counterparty be highly rated and/or provide collateral or other credit support. Even if collateral is used to reduce counterparty credit risk, sudden changes in the value of OTC transactions may leave a party open to financial risk due to a counterparty default since the collateral held may not cover a party's exposure on the transaction in such situations.

In general, valuing OTC derivatives is less certain than valuing actively traded financial instruments such as exchange-traded futures contracts and securities or cleared swaps because the price and terms on which such OTC derivatives are entered into or can be terminated are individually negotiated, and those prices and terms may not reflect the best price or terms available from other sources. In addition, while market makers and dealers generally quote indicative prices or terms for entering into or terminating OTC swaps, they typically are not contractually obligated to do so, particularly if they are not a party to the transaction. As a result, it may be difficult to obtain an independent value for an outstanding OTC derivatives transaction.

During the reporting period of this annual report on Form 10-K, BNO limited its OTC activities to EFRP transactions.

BNO anticipates that the use of Other Crude Oil-Related Investments together with its investments in Futures Contracts will produce price and total return results that closely track the investment goals of BNO. However, there can be no assurance of this. OTC swaps may result in higher transaction-related expenses than the brokerage commissions paid in connection with the purchase of Futures Contracts, which may impact BNO's ability to successfully track the Benchmark Futures Contract.



Item 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data.

**United States Brent Oil Fund, LP**

**Index to Financial Statements**

<b>Documents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<u>Management's Annual Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting.</u>	<u>57</u>
<u>Reports of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm.</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>Statements of Financial Condition at December 31, 2017 and 2016.</u>	<u>60</u>
<u>Schedule of Investments at December 31, 2017 and 2016.</u>	<u>61</u>
<u>Statements of Operations for the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015.</u>	<u>63</u>
<u>Statements of Changes in Partners' Capital for the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015.</u>	<u>64</u>
<u>Statements of Cash Flows for the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015.</u>	<u>65</u>
<u>Notes to Financial Statements for the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015.</u>	<u>66</u>

**Management's Annual Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting.**

USCF assessed the effectiveness of BNO's internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2017. In making this assessment, it used the criteria set forth by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission in Internal Control Integrated Framework (2013). Based on the assessment, USCF believes that, as of December 31, 2017, BNO's internal control over financial reporting is effective.

## **REPORT OF INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM**

To the Partners of

United States Brent Oil Fund, LP

### **Opinions on the Financial Statements and Internal Control over Financial Reporting**

We have audited the accompanying statements of financial condition of United States Brent Oil Fund, LP (the “Fund”) as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, including the schedule of investments as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, and the related statements of operations, changes in partners’ capital and cash flows for the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015. We also have audited the Fund’s internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2017, based on criteria established in Internal Control — Integrated Framework (2013) issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (“COSO”).

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of United States Brent Oil Fund, LP as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Also, in our opinion, the Fund maintained, in all material respects, effective internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2017 based on criteria established in Internal Control — Integrated Framework (2013) issued by COSO.

### **Basis for Opinion**

The Fund’s management is responsible for these financial statements, for maintaining effective internal control over financial reporting, and for its assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting included in the accompanying Management’s Annual Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Fund’s financial statements and an opinion on the Fund’s internal control over financial reporting based on our audits. We are a public accounting firm registered with the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States) (PCAOB) and are required to be independent with respect to the Fund in accordance with the U.S. federal securities laws and the applicable rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the PCAOB.

We conducted our audits in accordance with the standards of the PCAOB. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audits to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, whether due to error or fraud, and whether effective internal control over financial reporting was maintained in all material respects.

Our audits of the financial statements included performing procedures to assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to error or fraud, and performing procedures that respond to those risks. Such procedures included examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. Our audits also included evaluating the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. Our audit of internal control over financial reporting included obtaining an understanding of internal control over financial reporting, assessing the risk that a material weakness exists, and testing and evaluating the design and operating effectiveness of internal control based on the assessed risk. Our audits also included performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinions.

### **Definition and Limitations of Internal Control over Financial Reporting**

A company's internal control over financial reporting is a process designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of financial statements for external purposes in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. A company's internal control over financial reporting includes those policies and procedures that (1) pertain to the maintenance of records that, in reasonable detail, accurately and fairly reflect the transactions and dispositions of the assets of the company; (2) provide reasonable assurance that transactions are recorded as necessary to permit preparation of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and that receipts and expenditures of the company are being made only in accordance with authorizations of management and directors of the company; and (3) provide reasonable assurance regarding prevention or timely detection of unauthorized acquisition, use, or disposition of the company's assets that could have a material effect on the financial statements.

Because of its inherent limitations, internal control over financial reporting may not prevent or detect misstatements. Also, projections of any evaluation of effectiveness to future periods are subject to the risk that controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with the policies or procedures may deteriorate.

/s/ Spicer Jeffries LLP

We have served as the Fund's auditor since 2010.

Greenwood Village, Colorado

March 14, 2018



*United States Brent Oil Fund, LP**Statements of Financial Condition**At December 31, 2017 and 2016*

	December 31, 2017	December 31, 2016
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents (at cost \$78,344,087 and \$103,167,056, respectively) (Notes 2 and 5)	\$ 78,344,087	\$ 103,167,056
Equity in trading accounts:		
Cash and cash equivalents (at cost \$14,167,416 and \$8,297,821, respectively)	14,167,416	8,297,821
Unrealized gain (loss) on open commodity futures contracts	5,587,910	2,332,880
Receivable from General Partner (Note 3)	331,433	189,745
Dividends receivable	16,991	10,378
Interest receivable	9,575	—
ETF transaction fees receivable	350	700
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 98,457,762</b>	<b>\$ 113,998,580</b>
Liabilities and Partners' Capital		
Payable for shares redeemed	\$ 3,597,840	\$ 785,318
General Partner management fees payable (Note 3)	61,483	74,409
Professional fees payable	243,122	107,421
Brokerage commissions payable	5,316	7,176
Directors' fees and insurance payable	1,128	1,184
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>3,908,889</b>	<b>975,508</b>
Commitments and Contingencies (Notes 3, 4 and 5)		
Partners' Capital		
General Partner	—	—
Limited Partners	94,548,873	113,023,072
<b>Total Partners' Capital</b>	<b>94,548,873</b>	<b>113,023,072</b>
<b>Total liabilities and partners' capital</b>	<b>\$ 98,457,762</b>	<b>\$ 113,998,580</b>
Limited Partners' shares outstanding	5,200,000	7,200,000
Net asset value per share	\$ 18.18	\$ 15.70
Market value per share	\$ 18.10	\$ 15.68

*See accompanying notes to financial statements.*

*United States Brent Oil Fund, LP**Schedule of Investments**At December 31, 2017*

	Notional Amount	Number of Contracts	Value/ Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Open Commodity Contracts	% of Partners' Capital
Open Futures Contracts - Long Foreign Contracts				
ICE Brent Crude Oil Futures CO March 2018 contracts, expiring January 2018*	\$88,966,270	1,414	\$ 5,587,910	5.91
			Principal Amount	Market Value
Cash Equivalents				
United States Treasury Obligations				
U.S. Treasury Bills:				
1.12%, 1/04/2018			\$3,000,000	\$2,999,721 3.17
1.11%, 1/11/2018			3,000,000	2,999,079 3.17
1.10%, 1/18/2018			2,000,000	1,998,971 2.12
1.12%, 1/25/2018			3,000,000	2,997,770 3.17
1.12%, 2/01/2018			3,000,000	2,997,120 3.17
1.13%, 2/08/2018			2,000,000	1,997,625 2.11
1.12%, 2/15/2018			2,000,000	1,997,225 2.11
1.10%, 2/22/2018			2,000,000	1,996,851 2.11
1.09%, 3/01/2018			2,000,000	1,996,444 2.11
1.14%, 3/08/2018			2,000,000	1,995,847 2.11
1.14%, 3/15/2018			2,000,000	1,995,417 2.11
1.16%, 3/22/2018			2,000,000	1,994,889 2.11
1.17%, 3/29/2018			2,000,000	1,994,393 2.11
1.19%, 4/05/2018			3,000,000	2,990,718 3.16
1.22%, 4/12/2018			2,000,000	1,993,182 2.11
1.23%, 4/19/2018			2,000,000	1,992,695 2.11
1.25%, 4/26/2018			2,000,000	1,992,078 2.11
1.27%, 5/03/2018			2,000,000	1,991,460 2.11
1.32%, 5/10/2018			2,000,000	1,990,612 2.11
1.37%, 5/17/2018			3,000,000	2,984,615 3.16
1.43%, 5/24/2018			3,000,000	2,983,138 3.16
1.43%, 5/31/2018			3,000,000	2,982,250 3.15

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

1.45%, 6/07/2018	3,000,000	2,981,160	3.15
1.46%, 6/14/2018	2,000,000	1,986,834	2.10
1.49%, 6/21/2018	3,000,000	2,978,910	3.15
1.50%, 6/28/2018	3,000,000	2,977,898	3.15
Total Treasury Obligations		62,786,902	66.41
United States - Money Market Funds			
Fidelity Investments Money Market Funds - Government Portfolio	12,000,000	12,000,000	12.69
Goldman Sachs Financial Square Funds - Government Fund - Class FS	3,000,000	3,000,000	3.17
Morgan Stanley Institutional Liquidity Funds - Government Portfolio	5,000,000	5,000,000	5.29
Total Money Market Funds		20,000,000	21.15
Total Cash Equivalents		\$82,786,902	87.56

\* Collateral amounted to \$14,167,416 on open futures contracts.

*See accompanying notes to financial statements.*

**United States Brent Oil Fund, LP**  
**Schedule of Investments**  
**At December 31, 2016**

	Notional Amount	Number of Contracts	Value/ Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Open Commodity Contracts	% of Partners' Capital
Open Futures Contracts - Long				
Foreign Contracts				
ICE Brent Crude Oil Futures Co March 2017 contracts, expiring January 2017*	\$ 110,682,100	1,989	\$ 2,332,880	2.06
			Principal Amount	Market Value
Cash Equivalents				
United States Treasury Obligations				
U.S. Treasury Bills:				
0.34%, 1/05/2017			\$ 2,000,000	\$ 1,999,924 1.77
0.43%, 1/19/2017			1,000,000	999,788 0.88
0.40%, 2/02/2017			2,000,000	1,999,289 1.77
0.42%, 2/09/2017			2,000,000	1,999,090 1.77
0.45%, 2/16/2017			2,000,000	1,998,850 1.77
0.45%, 2/23/2017			2,000,000	1,998,690 1.77
0.45%, 3/02/2017			2,000,000	1,998,500 1.77
0.47%, 3/09/2017			3,000,000	2,997,376 2.65
0.50%, 3/16/2017			2,000,000	1,997,934 1.77
0.45%, 3/23/2017			3,000,000	2,996,996 2.65
0.43%, 3/30/2017			2,000,000	1,997,898 1.77
0.46%, 4/06/2017			3,000,000	2,996,398 2.65
0.47%, 4/13/2017			3,000,000	2,996,005 2.65
0.46%, 4/20/2017			3,000,000	2,995,867 2.65
0.47%, 4/27/2017			3,000,000	2,995,505 2.65
0.49%, 5/04/2017			3,000,000	2,994,952 2.65
0.55%, 5/11/2017			2,000,000	1,996,064 1.76
0.60%, 5/18/2017			3,000,000	2,993,207 2.65
0.61%, 5/25/2017			3,000,000	2,992,710 2.65
0.60%, 6/01/2017			3,000,000	2,992,513 2.65
0.62%, 6/08/2017			4,000,000	3,989,203 3.53
0.65%, 6/15/2017			3,000,000	2,991,131 2.65
0.64%, 6/22/2017			3,000,000	2,990,827 2.64
0.60%, 6/29/2017			3,000,000	2,991,050 2.65

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

Total Treasury Obligations		61,899,767	54.77
United States - Money Market Funds			
Fidelity Investments Money Market Funds (formerly Fidelity Institutional Money Market Funds) - Government Portfolio	16,000,000	16,000,000	14.15
Goldman Sachs Financial Square Funds - Government Fund - Class FS	12,000,000	12,000,000	10.62
Morgan Stanley Institutional Liquidity Funds - Government Portfolio	7,000,000	7,000,000	6.19
Total Money Market Funds		35,000,000	30.96
Total Cash Equivalents		\$96,899,767	85.73

\* Collateral amounted to \$8,297,821 on open futures contracts.

*See accompanying notes to financial statements.*

*United States Brent Oil Fund, LP**Statements of Operations**For the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015*

	Year ended December 31, 2017	Year ended December 31, 2016	Year ended December 31, 2015
Income			
Gain (loss) on trading of commodity futures contracts:			
Realized gain (loss) on closed futures contracts	\$ 12,264,400	\$ 27,857,540	\$ (41,811,240 )
Change in unrealized gain (loss) on open futures contracts	3,255,030	9,775,220	(1,095,250 )
Realized gain (loss) on short-term investments	—	—	10
Dividend income	173,888	66,811	1,936
Interest income*	654,768	290,408	63,675
ETF transaction fees	10,850	14,350	24,150
Total income (loss)	16,358,936	38,004,329	(42,816,719 )
Expenses			
General Partner management fees (Note 3)	756,539	832,667	690,367
Professional fees	336,708	179,655	147,894
Brokerage commissions	132,707	165,409	114,922
Directors' fees and insurance	13,325	11,565	10,575
Total expenses	1,239,279	1,189,296	963,758
Expense waiver (Note 3)	(331,433 )	(190,095 )	(135,317 )
Net expenses	907,846	999,201	828,441
Net income (loss)	\$ 15,451,090	\$ 37,005,128	\$ (43,645,160 )
Net income (loss) per limited partnership share	\$ 2.48	\$ 3.48	\$ (10.17 )
Net income (loss) per weighted average limited partnership share	\$ 2.24	\$ 4.49	\$ (9.02 )
Weighted average limited partnership shares outstanding	6,888,630	8,243,989	4,836,438

\* Interest income does not exceed paid in kind of 5%.

*See accompanying notes to financial statements.*



*United States Brent Oil Fund, LP**Statements of Changes in Partners' Capital**For the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015*

	General Partner	Limited Partners	Total
Balances, at December 31, 2014	\$ —	\$ 41,419,390	\$41,419,390
Addition of 6,800,000 partnership shares	—	123,526,846	123,526,846
Redemption of 1,900,000 partnership shares	—	(38,808,966 )	(38,808,966 )
Net income (loss)	—	(43,645,160 )	(43,645,160 )
Balances, at December 31, 2015	—	82,492,110	82,492,110
Addition of 3,600,000 partnership shares	—	39,802,240	39,802,240
Redemption of 3,150,000 partnership shares	—	(46,276,406 )	(46,276,406 )
Net income (loss)	—	37,005,128	37,005,128
Balances, at December 31, 2016	—	113,023,072	113,023,072
Addition of 3,150,000 partnership shares	—	40,082,469	40,082,469
Redemption of 5,150,000 partnership shares	—	(74,007,758 )	(74,007,758 )
Net income (loss)	—	15,451,090	15,451,090
Balances, at December 31, 2017	\$ —	\$ 94,548,873	\$94,548,873
Net Asset Value Per Share:			
At December 31, 2014			\$22.39
At December 31, 2015			\$12.22
At December 31, 2016			\$15.70
At December 31, 2017			\$18.18

*See accompanying notes to financial statements.*

*United States Brent Oil Fund, LP**Statements of Cash Flows**For the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015*

	Year ended December 31, 2017	Year ended December 31, 2016	Year ended December 31, 2015
Cash Flows from Operating Activities:			
Net income (loss)	\$ 15,451,090	\$ 37,005,128	\$ (43,645,160 )
Adjustments to reconcile net income (loss) to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:			
(Increase) decrease in commodity futures trading account - cash and cash equivalents	(5,869,595 )	12,434,314	(11,579,384 )
Unrealized (gain) loss on open futures contracts	(3,255,030 )	(9,775,220 )	1,095,250
(Increase) decrease in receivable from General Partner	(141,688 )	(54,380 )	(41,001 )
(Increase) decrease in dividends receivable	(6,613 )	(10,339 )	(13 )
(Increase) decrease in interest receivable	(9,575 )	—	—
(Increase) decrease in ETF transaction fees receivable	350	—	—
Increase (decrease) in General Partner management fees payable	(12,926 )	25,134	27,097
Increase (decrease) in professional fees payable	135,701	(5,790 )	(2,625 )
Increase (decrease) in brokerage commissions payable	(1,860 )	1,430	4,060
Increase (decrease) in directors' fees and insurance payable	(56 )	523	323
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	6,289,798	39,620,800	(54,141,453 )
Cash Flows from Financing Activities:			
Addition of partnership shares	40,082,469	41,041,049	124,538,212
Redemption of partnership shares	(71,195,236 )	(45,491,088 )	(38,808,966 )
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities	(31,112,767 )	(4,450,039 )	85,729,246
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	(24,822,969 )	35,170,761	31,587,793
Cash and Cash Equivalents, beginning of year	103,167,056	67,996,295	36,408,502
Cash and Cash Equivalents, end of year	\$ 78,344,087	\$ 103,167,056	\$ 67,996,295

*See accompanying notes to financial statements.*



**United States Brent Oil Fund, LP**

**Notes to Financial Statements**

**For the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015**

**NOTE 1 — ORGANIZATION AND BUSINESS**

The United States Brent Oil Fund, LP (“BNO”) was organized as a limited partnership under the laws of the state of Delaware on September 2, 2009. BNO is a commodity pool that issues limited partnership shares (“shares”) that may be purchased and sold on the NYSE Arca, Inc. (the “NYSE Arca”). BNO will continue in perpetuity, unless terminated sooner upon the occurrence of one or more events as described in its Fourth Amended and Restated Agreement of Limited Partnership dated as of December 15, 2017 (the “LP Agreement”). The investment objective of BNO is for the daily changes in percentage terms of its shares’ per share net asset value (“NAV”) to reflect the daily changes in percentage terms of the spot price of Brent crude oil as measured by the daily changes in the price of the futures contract for Brent crude oil traded on the ICE Futures Exchange (the “ICE Futures”) that is the near month contract to expire, except when the near month contract is within two weeks of expiration, in which case it will be measured by the futures contract that is the next month contract to expire (the “Benchmark Futures Contract”), less BNO’s expenses.

BNO’s investment objective is *not* for its NAV or market price of shares to equal, in dollar terms, the spot price of Brent crude oil or any particular futures contract based on Brent crude oil, *nor* is BNO’s investment objective for the percentage change in its NAV to reflect the percentage change of the price of any particular futures contract as measured over a time period *greater than one day*.

United States Commodity Funds LLC (“USCF”), the general partner of BNO, believes that it is not practical to manage the portfolio to achieve such an investment goal when investing in Futures Contracts (as defined below) and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments (as defined below). BNO accomplishes its objective through investments in futures contracts for crude oil, diesel-heating oil, gasoline, natural gas and other petroleum-based fuels that are traded on the ICE Futures, the New York Mercantile Exchange (the “NYMEX”), or other U.S. and foreign exchanges (collectively, “Futures Contracts”), and other crude oil-related investments such as cash-settled options on Futures Contracts, forward contracts for crude oil, cleared swap contracts and over-the-counter (“OTC”) transactions that are based on the price of crude oil and other petroleum-based fuels, Futures Contracts and indices based on the foregoing (collectively, “Other Crude Oil-Related Investments”). As of December 31, 2017, BNO held 1,414 Futures Contracts for Brent crude oil traded on the ICE Futures Europe and did not hold any Futures Contracts for Brent crude oil traded on the NYMEX.

BNO commenced investment operations on June 2, 2010 and has a fiscal year ending on December 31. USCF is responsible for the management of BNO. USCF is a member of the National Futures Association (the “NFA”) and

became registered as a commodity pool operator with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (the “CFTC”) effective December 1, 2005 and a swaps firm on August 8, 2013. USCF is also the general partner of the United States Oil Fund, LP (“USO”), the United States Natural Gas Fund, LP (“UNG”), the United States 12 Month Oil Fund, LP (“USL”), the United States Gasoline Fund, LP (“UGA”) and the United States Diesel-Heating Oil Fund, LP (“UHN”), which listed their limited partnership shares on the American Stock Exchange (the “AMEX”) under the ticker symbols “USO” on April 10, 2006, “UNG” on April 18, 2007, “USL” on December 6, 2007, “UGA” on February 26, 2008 and “UHN” on April 9, 2008, respectively. As a result of the acquisition of the AMEX by NYSE Euronext, each of USO’s, UNG’s, USL’s, UGA’s and UHN’s shares commenced trading on the NYSE Arca on November 25, 2008. USCF is also the general partner of the United States Short Oil Fund, LP (“DNO”) and the United States 12 Month Natural Gas Fund, LP (“UNL”), which listed their limited partnership shares on the NYSE Arca under the ticker symbols “DNO” on September 24, 2009 and “UNL” on November 18, 2009, respectively. USCF is also the sponsor of the United States Commodity Index Fund (“USCI”), the United States Copper Index Fund (“CPER”), the United States Agriculture Index Fund (“USAG”) and the USCF Canadian Crude Oil Index Fund (“UCCO”), each a series of the United States Commodity Index Funds Trust. USCI, CPER and USAG listed their shares on the NYSE Arca under the ticker symbol “USCI” on August 10, 2010, “CPER” on November 15, 2011 and “USAG” on April 13, 2012, respectively. UCCO is currently in registration and has not commenced operations.

In addition, USCF is the sponsor of the USCF Funds Trust, a Delaware statutory trust, and each of its series, the REX S&P MLP Fund (“RMLP”) and the REX S&P MLP Inverse Fund (“MLPD”), which are currently in registration and have not commenced operations (together, the “REX Funds”), and the United States 3x Oil Fund (“USOU”) and the United States 3x Short Oil Fund (“USOD”), which commenced operations on July 20, 2017.

All funds listed previously, other than UCCO and the REX Funds, are referred to collectively herein as the “Related Public Funds.”

BNO issues shares to certain authorized purchasers (“Authorized Participants”) by offering baskets consisting of 50,000 shares (“Creation Baskets”) through ALPS Distributors, Inc., as the marketing agent (the “Marketing Agent”). The purchase price for a Creation Basket is based upon the NAV of a share calculated shortly after the close of the core trading session on the NYSE Arca on the day the order to create the basket is properly received.

In addition, Authorized Participants pay BNO a \$350 fee for each order placed to create one or more Creation Baskets or to redeem one or more baskets (“Redemption Baskets”), consisting of 50,000 shares. Shares may be purchased or sold on a nationally recognized securities exchange in smaller increments than a Creation Basket or Redemption Basket. Shares purchased or sold on a nationally recognized securities exchange are not purchased or sold at the per share NAV of BNO but rather at market prices quoted on such exchange.

In May 2010, BNO initially registered 50,000,000 shares on Form S-1 with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”). On June 2, 2010, BNO listed its shares on the NYSE Arca under the ticker symbol “BNO”. BNO established its’ initial per share NAV by setting the price at \$50.00 and issued 200,000 shares in exchange for \$10,000,000. BNO also commenced investment operations on June 2, 2010, by purchasing Futures Contracts traded on the ICE Futures Europe based on Brent crude oil. As of December 31, 2017, BNO had registered a total of 50,000,000 shares.

## **NOTE 2 — SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **Basis of Presentation**

The financial statements have been prepared in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (“U.S. GAAP”) as detailed in the Financial Accounting Standards Board’s (“FASB”) Accounting Standards Codification. BNO is an investment company and follows the accounting and reporting guidance in FASB Topic 946.

### **Revenue Recognition**

Commodity futures contracts, forward contracts, physical commodities and related options are recorded on the trade date. All such transactions are recorded on the identified cost basis and marked to market daily. Unrealized gains or losses on open contracts are reflected in the statements of financial condition and represent the difference between the original contract amount and the market value (as determined by exchange settlement prices for futures contracts and related options and cash dealer prices at a predetermined time for forward contracts, physical commodities, and their related options) as of the last business day of the year or as of the last date of the financial statements. Changes in the unrealized gains or losses between periods are reflected in the statements of operations. BNO earns income on funds held at the custodian or futures commission merchant (“FCM”) at prevailing market rates earned on such investments.

## **Brokerage Commissions**

Brokerage commissions on all open commodity futures contracts are accrued on a full-turn basis.

## **Income Taxes**

BNO is not subject to federal income taxes; each partner reports his/her allocable share of income, gain, loss deductions or credits on his/her own income tax return.

In accordance with U.S. GAAP, BNO is required to determine whether a tax position is more likely than not to be sustained upon examination by the applicable taxing authority, including resolution of any tax related appeals or litigation processes, based on the technical merits of the position. BNO files an income tax return in the U.S. federal jurisdiction, and may file income tax returns in various U.S. states. BNO is not subject to income tax return examinations by major taxing authorities for years before 2014. The tax benefit recognized is measured as the largest amount of benefit that has a greater than fifty percent likelihood of being realized upon ultimate settlement. De-recognition of a tax benefit previously recognized results in BNO recording a tax liability that reduces net assets. However, BNO's conclusions regarding this policy may be subject to review and adjustment at a later date based on factors including, but not limited to, on-going analysis of and changes to tax laws, regulations and interpretations thereof. BNO recognizes interest accrued related to unrecognized tax benefits and penalties related to unrecognized tax benefits in income tax fees payable, if assessed. No interest expense or penalties have been recognized as of and for the year ended December 31, 2017.

## **Creations and Redemptions**

Authorized Participants may purchase Creation Baskets or redeem Redemption Baskets only in blocks of 50,000 shares at a price equal to the NAV of the shares calculated shortly after the close of the core trading session on the NYSE Arca on the day the order is placed.

BNO receives or pays the proceeds from shares sold or redeemed within two business days after the trade date of the purchase or redemption. The amounts due from Authorized Participants are reflected in BNO's statements of financial condition as receivable for shares sold, and amounts payable to Authorized Participants upon redemption are reflected as payable for shares redeemed.

Authorized Participants pay BNO a transaction fee of \$350 for each order placed to create one or more Creation Baskets or to redeem one or more Redemption Baskets.

## **Partnership Capital and Allocation of Partnership Income and Losses**

Profit or loss shall be allocated among the partners of BNO in proportion to the number of shares each partner holds as of the close of each month. USCF may revise, alter or otherwise modify this method of allocation as described in the LP Agreement.

## **Calculation of Per Share NAV**

BNO's per share NAV is calculated on each NYSE Arca trading day by taking the current market value of its total assets, subtracting any liabilities and dividing that amount by the total number of shares outstanding. BNO uses the closing price for the contracts on the relevant exchange on that day to determine the value of contracts held on such exchange.

## **Net Income (Loss) Per Share**



Net income (loss) per share is the difference between the per share NAV at the beginning of each period and at the end of each period. The weighted average number of shares outstanding was computed for purposes of disclosing net income (loss) per weighted average share. The weighted average shares are equal to the number of shares outstanding at the end of the period, adjusted proportionately for shares added and redeemed based on the amount of time the shares were outstanding during such period. There were no shares held by USCF at December 31, 2017.

### **Offering Costs**

Offering costs incurred in connection with the registration of additional shares after the initial registration of shares are borne by BNO. These costs include registration fees paid to regulatory agencies and all legal, accounting, printing and other expenses associated with such offerings. These costs are accounted for as a deferred charge and thereafter amortized to expense over twelve months on a straight-line basis or a shorter period if warranted.

### **Cash Equivalents**

Cash equivalents include money market funds and overnight deposits or time deposits with original maturity dates of six months or less.

### **Reclassification**

Certain amounts in the accompanying financial statements were reclassified to conform to the current presentation.

### **Use of Estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with U.S. GAAP requires USCF to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of the revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results may differ from those estimates and assumptions.

### **NOTE 3 — FEES PAID BY THE FUND AND RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

#### **USCF Management Fee**

Under the LP Agreement, USCF is responsible for investing the assets of BNO in accordance with the objectives and policies of BNO. In addition, USCF has arranged for one or more third parties to provide administrative, custody, accounting, transfer agency and other necessary services to BNO. For these services, BNO is contractually obligated to pay USCF a fee, which is paid monthly, equal to 0.75% per annum of average daily total net assets.

#### **Ongoing Registration Fees and Other Offering Expenses**

BNO pays all costs and expenses associated with the ongoing registration of its shares subsequent to the initial offering. These costs include registration or other fees paid to regulatory agencies in connection with the offer and sale of shares, and all legal, accounting, printing and other expenses associated with such offer and sale. For the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015, BNO did not incur registration fees and other offering expenses.

#### **Independent Directors' and Officers' Expenses**

BNO is responsible for paying its portion of the directors' and officers' liability insurance for BNO and the Related Public Funds and the fees and expenses of the independent directors who also serve as audit committee members of BNO and the Related Public Funds. BNO shares the fees and expenses on a pro rata basis with each Related Public Fund, as described above, based on the relative assets of each Related Public Fund computed on a daily basis. These fees and expenses for the year ended December 31, 2017 were \$536,375 for BNO and the Related Public Funds. BNO's portion of such fees and expenses for the year ended December 31, 2017 was \$13,325. For the year ended December 31, 2016, these fees and expenses were \$582,050 for BNO and the Related Public Funds. BNO's portion of such fees and expenses for the year ended December 31, 2016 was \$11,565. For the year ended December 31, 2015, these fees and expenses were \$569,303 for BNO and the Related Public Funds. BNO's portion of such fees and expenses for the year ended December 31, 2015 was \$10,575.

#### **Investor Tax Reporting Cost**

The fees and expenses associated with BNO's audit expenses and tax accounting and reporting requirements are paid by BNO. These costs were approximately \$190,000 for the year ended December 31, 2017, approximately \$174,000 for the year ended December 31, 2016 and approximately \$140,000 for the year ended December 31, 2015. Tax reporting costs fluctuate between years due to the number of shareholders during any given year.

#### **Other Expenses and Fees and Expense Waivers**

In addition to the fees described above, BNO pays all brokerage fees and other expenses in connection with the operation of BNO, excluding costs and expenses paid by USCF as outlined in *Note 4 – Contracts and Agreements* below. USCF paid certain expenses on a discretionary basis typically borne by BNO, where expenses exceed 0.15% (15 basis points) of BNO's NAV, on an annualized basis. USCF has no obligation to continue such payments into subsequent periods. For the year ended December 31, 2017, USCF waived \$331,433 of BNO's expenses. This voluntary expense waiver is in addition to those amounts USCF is contractually obligated to pay as described in *Note 4 – Contracts and Agreements*.

## **NOTE 4 — CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS**

### **Marketing Agent Agreement**

BNO is party to a marketing agent agreement, dated as of March 31, 2010, as amended from time to time, with the Marketing Agent and USCF, whereby the Marketing Agent provides certain marketing services for BNO as outlined in the agreement. The fee of the Marketing Agent, which is borne by USCF, is equal to 0.06% on BNO's assets up to \$3 billion and 0.04% on BNO's assets in excess of \$3 billion. In no event may the aggregate compensation paid to the Marketing Agent and any affiliate of USCF for distribution-related services exceed 10% of the gross proceeds of BNO's offering.

The above fee does not include website construction and development, which are also borne by USCF.

### **Brown Brothers Harriman & Co. Agreements**

BNO is also party to a custodian agreement, dated February 8, 2010, as amended from time to time, with Brown Brothers Harriman & Co. ("BBH&Co.") and USCF, whereby BBH&Co. holds investments on behalf of BNO. USCF pays the fees of the custodian, which are determined by the parties from time to time. In addition, BNO is party to an administrative agency agreement, dated February 8, 2010, as amended from time to time, with USCF and BBH&Co., whereby BBH&Co. acts as the administrative agent, transfer agent and registrar for BNO. USCF also pays the fees of BBH&Co. for its services under such agreement and such fees are determined by the parties from time to time.

Currently, USCF pays BBH&Co. for its services, in the foregoing capacities, a minimum amount of \$75,000 annually for its custody, fund accounting and fund administration services rendered to BNO and each of the Related Public Funds, as well as a \$20,000 annual fee for its transfer agency services. In addition, USCF pays BBH&Co. an asset-based charge of (a) 0.06% for the first \$500 million of the Related Public Funds' combined net assets, (b) 0.0465% for the Related Public Funds' combined net assets greater than \$500 million but less than \$1 billion, and (c) 0.035% once the Related Public Funds' combined net assets exceed \$1 billion. The annual minimum amount will not apply if the asset-based charge for all accounts in the aggregate exceeds \$75,000. USCF also pays BBH&Co. transaction fees ranging from \$7 to \$15 per transaction.

### **Brokerage and Futures Commission Merchant Agreements**

On October 8, 2013, BNO entered into a brokerage agreement with RBC Capital Markets, LLC (“RBC Capital” or “RBC”) to serve as BNO’s FCM effective October 10, 2013. The agreement with RBC requires it to provide services to BNO in connection with the purchase and sale of Futures Contracts and Other Crude Oil-Related Investments that may be purchased and sold by or through RBC Capital for BNO’s account. In accordance with the agreement, RBC Capital charges BNO commissions of approximately \$7 to \$8 per round-turn trade, including applicable exchange, clearing and NFA fees for Futures Contracts and options on Futures Contracts. Such fees include those incurred when purchasing Futures Contracts and options on Futures Contracts when BNO issues shares as a result of a Creation Basket, as well as fees incurred when selling Futures Contracts and options on Futures Contracts when BNO redeems shares as a result of a Redemption Basket. Such fees are also incurred when Futures Contracts and options on Futures Contracts are purchased or redeemed for the purpose of rebalancing the portfolio. BNO also incurs commissions to brokers for the purchase and sale of Futures Contracts, Other Crude Oil-Related Investments or short-term obligations of the United States of two years or less (“Treasuries”).

	For the Year Ended December 31, 2017		For the Year Ended December 31, 2016		For the Year Ended December 31, 2015	
Total commissions accrued to brokers	\$ 132,707		\$ 165,409		\$ 114,922	
Total commissions as annualized percentage of average total net assets	0.13	%	0.15	%	0.12	%
Commissions accrued as a result of rebalancing	\$ 127,847		\$ 160,817		\$ 107,744	
Percentage of commissions accrued as a result of rebalancing	96.34	%	97.22	%	93.75	%
Commissions accrued as a result of creation and redemption activity	\$ 4,860		\$ 4,592		\$ 7,178	
Percentage of commissions accrued as a result of creation and redemption activity	3.66	%	2.78	%	6.25	%

The decrease in total commissions accrued to brokers for the year ended December 31, 2017, compared to the year ended December 31, 2016, was due primarily to a lower number of Brent crude oil futures contracts being held and traded. The increase in total commissions accrued to brokers for the year ended December 31, 2016, compared to the year ended December 31, 2015, was due primarily to higher number of futures contracts being held and traded. However, there can be no assurance that commission costs and portfolio turnover will not cause commission expenses to rise in future quarters.

## NOTE 5 — FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS, OFF-BALANCE SHEET RISKS AND CONTINGENCIES

BNO may engage in the trading of futures contracts, options on futures contracts, cleared swaps and OTC swaps (collectively, “derivatives”). BNO is exposed to both market risk, which is the risk arising from changes in the market value of the contracts, and credit risk, which is the risk of failure by another party to perform according to the terms of a contract.

BNO may enter into futures contracts, options on futures contracts and cleared swaps to gain exposure to changes in the value of an underlying commodity. A futures contract obligates the seller to deliver (and the purchaser to accept) the future delivery of a specified quantity and type of a commodity at a specified time and place. Some futures contracts may call for physical delivery of the asset, while others are settled in cash. The contractual obligations of a buyer or seller may generally be satisfied by taking or making physical delivery of the underlying commodity or by making an offsetting sale or purchase of an identical futures contract on the same or linked exchange before the designated date of delivery. Cleared swaps are agreements that are eligible to be cleared by a clearinghouse, e.g., ICE Clear Europe, and provide the efficiencies and benefits that centralized clearing on an exchange offers to traders of futures contracts, including credit risk intermediation and the ability to offset positions initiated with different counterparties.

The purchase and sale of futures contracts, options on futures contracts and cleared swaps require margin deposits with an FCM. Additional deposits may be necessary for any loss on contract value. The Commodity Exchange Act requires an FCM to segregate all customer transactions and assets from the FCM’s proprietary activities.

Futures contracts, options on futures contracts and cleared swaps involve, to varying degrees, elements of market risk (specifically commodity price risk) and exposure to loss in excess of the amount of variation margin. The face or contract amounts reflect the extent of the total exposure BNO has in the particular classes of instruments. Additional risks associated with the use of futures contracts are an imperfect correlation between movements in the price of the futures contracts and the market value of the underlying securities and the possibility of an illiquid market for a futures contract. Buying and selling options on futures contracts exposes investors to the risks of purchasing or selling futures contracts.

All of the futures contracts held by BNO through December 31, 2017 were exchange-traded. The risks associated with exchange-traded contracts are generally perceived to be less than those associated with OTC swaps since, in OTC swaps, a party must rely solely on the credit of its respective individual counterparties. However, in the future, if BNO were to enter into non-exchange traded contracts, it would be subject to the credit risk associated with counterparty non-performance. The credit risk from counterparty non-performance associated with such instruments is the net unrealized gain, if any, on the transaction. BNO has credit risk under its futures contracts since the sole counterparty to all domestic and foreign futures contracts is the clearinghouse for the exchange on which the relevant contracts are

traded. In addition, BNO bears the risk of financial failure by the clearing broker.

BNO's cash and other property, such as Treasuries, deposited with an FCM are considered commingled with all other customer funds, subject to the FCM's segregation requirements. In the event of an FCM's insolvency, recovery may be limited to a pro rata share of segregated funds available. It is possible that the recovered amount could be less than the total of cash and other property deposited. The insolvency of an FCM could result in the complete loss of BNO's assets posted with that FCM; however, the majority of BNO's assets are held in investments in Treasuries, cash and/or cash equivalents with BNO's custodian and would not be impacted by the insolvency of an FCM. The failure or insolvency of BNO's custodian, however, could result in a substantial loss of BNO's assets.

USCF invests a portion of BNO's cash in money market funds that seek to maintain a stable per share NAV. BNO is exposed to any risk of loss associated with an investment in such money market funds. As of December 31, 2017 and December 31, 2016, BNO held investments in money market funds in the amounts of \$20,000,000 and \$35,000,000, respectively. BNO also holds cash deposits with its custodian. Pursuant to a written agreement with BBH&Co., uninvested overnight cash balances are swept to offshore branches of U.S. regulated and domiciled banks located in Toronto, Canada; London, United Kingdom; Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands; and Nassau, Bahamas; which are subject to U.S. regulation and regulatory oversight. As of December 31, 2017 and December 31, 2016, BNO held cash deposits and investments in Treasuries in the amounts of \$72,511,503 and \$76,464,877, respectively, with the custodian and FCM. Some or all of these amounts may be subject to loss should BNO's custodian and/or FCM cease operations.

For derivatives, risks arise from changes in the market value of the contracts. Theoretically, BNO is exposed to market risk equal to the value of futures contracts purchased and unlimited liability on such contracts sold short. As both a buyer and a seller of options, BNO pays or receives a premium at the outset and then bears the risk of unfavorable changes in the price of the contract underlying the option.

BNO's policy is to continuously monitor its exposure to market and counterparty risk through the use of a variety of financial, position and credit exposure reporting controls and procedures. In addition, BNO has a policy of requiring review of the credit standing of each broker or counterparty with which it conducts business.

The financial instruments held by BNO are reported in its statements of financial condition at market or fair value, or at carrying amounts that approximate fair value, because of their highly liquid nature and short-term maturity.

**NOTE 6 — FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

The following table presents per share performance data and other supplemental financial data for the years ended December 31, 2017, 2016 and 2015 for the shareholders. This information has been derived from information presented in the financial statements.

	Year ended December 31, 2017		Year ended December 31, 2016		Year ended December 31, 2015	
<b>Per Share Operating Performance:</b>						
Net asset value, beginning of year	\$ 15.70		\$ 12.22		\$ 22.39	
Total income (loss)	2.61		3.60		(10.00)	)
Net expenses	(0.13)	)	(0.12)	)	(0.17)	)
Net increase (decrease) in net asset value	2.48		3.48		(10.17)	)
Net asset value, end of year	\$ 18.18		\$ 15.70		\$ 12.22	
Total Return	15.80	%	28.48	%	(45.42)	)%
<b>Ratios to Average Net Assets</b>						
Total income (loss)	16.22	%	34.23	%	(46.52)	)%
Management fees	0.75	%	0.75	%	0.75	%
Total expenses excluding management fees	0.48	%	0.32	%	0.30	%
Expenses waived	(0.33)	)%	(0.17)	)%	(0.15)	)%
Net expenses excluding management fees	0.15	%	0.15	%	0.15	%
Net income (loss)	15.32	%	33.33	%	(47.42)	)%

Total returns are calculated based on the change in value during the period. An individual shareholder's total return and ratio may vary from the above total returns and ratios based on the timing of contributions to and withdrawals from BNO.

**NOTE 7 - QUARTERLY FINANCIAL DATA (Unaudited)**

The following summarized (unaudited) quarterly financial information presents the results of operations and other data for three-month periods ended March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31, 2017 and 2016.

First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
------------------	-------------------	------------------	-------------------



Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

	2017	2017	2017	2017
Total Income (Loss)	\$(8,301,247)	\$(8,631,948)	\$15,602,885	\$17,689,246
Total Expenses	358,711	287,274	292,404	300,890
Expense Waivers	(120,259 )	(63,219 )	(66,850 )	(81,105 )
Net Expenses	238,452	224,055	225,554	219,785
Net Income (Loss)	\$(8,539,699)	\$(8,856,003)	\$15,377,331	\$17,469,461
Net Income (Loss) per Share	\$(1.20 )	\$(1.53 )	\$2.22	\$2.99

	First Quarter 2016	Second Quarter 2016	Third Quarter 2016	Fourth Quarter 2016
Total Income (Loss)	\$6,608,262	\$23,198,440	\$(1,430,260)	\$9,627,887
Total Expenses	272,050	314,611	295,596	307,039
Expense Waivers	(59,762 )	(36,554 )	(43,026 )	(50,753 )
Net Expenses	212,288	278,057	252,570	256,286
Net Income (Loss)	\$6,395,974	\$22,920,383	\$(1,682,830)	\$9,371,601
Net Income (Loss) per Share	\$0.09	\$2.55	\$(0.27 )	\$1.11

**NOTE 8 — FAIR VALUE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

BNO values its investments in accordance with Accounting Standards Codification 820 – Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures (“ASC 820”). ASC 820 defines fair value, establishes a framework for measuring fair value in generally accepted accounting principles, and expands disclosures about fair value measurement. The changes to past practice resulting from the application of ASC 820 relate to the definition of fair value, the methods used to measure fair value, and the expanded disclosures about fair value measurement. ASC 820 establishes a fair value hierarchy that distinguishes between: (1) market participant assumptions developed based on market data obtained from sources independent of BNO (observable inputs) and (2) BNO’s own assumptions about market participant assumptions developed based on the best information available under the circumstances (unobservable inputs). The three levels defined by the ASC 820 hierarchy are as follows:

Level I – Quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for *identical* assets or liabilities that the reporting entity has the ability to access at the measurement date.

Level II – Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level I that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly. Level II assets include the following: quoted prices for *similar* assets or liabilities in active markets, quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in markets that are not active, inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability, and inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means (market-corroborated inputs).

Level III – Unobservable pricing input at the measurement date for the asset or liability. Unobservable inputs shall be used to measure fair value to the extent that observable inputs are not available.

In some instances, the inputs used to measure fair value might fall within different levels of the fair value hierarchy. The level in the fair value hierarchy within which the fair value measurement in its entirety falls shall be determined based on the lowest input level that is significant to the fair value measurement in its entirety.

The following table summarizes the valuation of BNO’s securities at December 31, 2017 using the fair value hierarchy:

At December 31, 2017	Total	Level I	Level II	Level III
Short-Term Investments	\$82,786,902	\$82,786,902	\$ —	\$ —

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

Exchange-Traded Futures Contracts				
United States Contracts	5,587,910	5,587,910	—	—

During the year ended December 31, 2017, there were no transfers between Level I and Level II.

The following table summarizes the valuation of BNO's securities at December 31, 2016 using the fair value hierarchy:

At December 31, 2016	Total	Level I	Level II	Level III
Short-Term Investments	\$96,899,767	\$96,899,767	\$ —	\$ —
Exchange-Traded Futures Contracts				
Foreign Contracts	2,332,880	2,332,880	—	—

During the year ended December 31, 2016, there were no transfers between Level I and Level II.

Effective January 1, 2009, BNO has adopted the provisions of Accounting Standards Codification 815 – Derivatives and Hedging, which require presentation of qualitative disclosures about objectives and strategies for using derivatives, quantitative disclosures about fair value amounts and gains and losses on derivatives.

**Fair Value of Derivative Instruments**

Derivatives not Accounted for as Hedging Instruments	Statements of Financial Condition Location	Fair Value At December 31, 2017	Fair Value At December 31, 2016
Futures - Commodity Contracts	Assets	\$ 5,587,910	\$ 2,332,880

**The Effect of Derivative Instruments on the Statements of Operations**

Derivatives not Accounted for as Hedging Instruments	Location of Gain (Loss) on Derivatives Recognized in Income	For the year ended December 31, 2017		For the year ended December 31, 2016		For the year ended December 31, 2015	
		Realized Gain (Loss) on Derivatives Recognized in Income	Change in Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Derivatives Recognized in Income	Realized Gain (Loss) on Derivatives Recognized in Income	Change in Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Derivatives Recognized in Income	Realized Gain (Loss) on Derivatives Recognized in Income	Change in Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Derivatives Recognized in Income
Futures - Commodity Contracts	Realized gain (loss) on closed positions	\$ 12,264,400		\$ 27,857,540		\$ (41,811,240)	
	Change in unrealized gain (loss) on open positions		\$ 3,255,030		\$ 9,775,220		\$ (1,095,250)

**NOTE 9 - RECENT ACCOUNTING PRONOUNCEMENTS**

In August 2015, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (“FASB”) issued Accounting Standard Update (“ASU”) 2015-14, Revenue from Contracts with Customers, modifying ASU 2014-09. The core principle of the guidance is that an entity should recognize revenue to depict the transfer of promised goods or services to customers in an amount that reflects the consideration to which the entity expects to be entitled in exchange for those goods or services. ASU 2015-14 is effective for fiscal years beginning on or after December 15, 2016, and interim periods within those annual periods. Early application is permitted. At this time, management does not believe there will be any impact to the

Fund's financial statements.

**NOTE 10 — SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

BNO has performed an evaluation of subsequent events through the date the financial statements were issued. This evaluation did not result in any subsequent events that necessitated disclosures and/or adjustments.

74

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

---

**Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
<u>Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm</u>	<u>F - 2</u>
<u>Statements of Financial Condition</u>	<u>F - 3</u>
<u>Notes to Statements of Financial Condition</u>	<u>F - 4</u>

F-1

## **Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm**

To the Board of Directors and Member of  
United States Commodity Funds LLC

### **Opinion on the Financial Statements**

We have audited the accompanying statements of financial condition of United States Commodity Funds LLC (the “Company”) as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, and the related notes to these financial statements (collectively referred to as the financial statements). In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Company as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

### **Basis for Opinion**

These financial statements are the responsibility of the Company’s management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Company’s financial statements based on our audits. We are a public accounting firm registered with the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States) (PCAOB) and are required to be independent with respect to the Company in accordance with the U.S. federal securities laws and the applicable rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the PCAOB.

We conducted our audits in accordance with the standards of the PCAOB. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, whether due to error or fraud. The Company is not required to have, nor were we engaged to perform, an audit of its internal control over financial reporting. As part of our audits, we are required to obtain an understanding of internal control over financial reporting, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company’s internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion.

Our audits included performing procedures to assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to error or fraud, and performing procedures that respond to those risks. Such procedures included examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. Our audits also

included evaluating the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

/s/ BPM LLP

We have served as the Company's auditor since 2015.

San Francisco, California

February 28, 2018

F-2



**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

## Statements of Financial Condition

December 31, 2017 and 2016

	2017	2016
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$4,071,378	\$5,941,128
Short-term investments	184,322	1,041
Management fees receivable - related party	1,596,581	2,199,866
Prepaid income taxes	-	931,556
Other current assets	157,321	100,526
Total current assets	6,009,602	9,174,117
Deferred tax assets, net	752,180	1,085,720
Other assets	8,558	8,558
Total assets	\$6,770,340	\$10,268,395
<b>LIABILITIES AND MEMBER'S EQUITY</b>		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$1,368,406	\$1,695,149
Dividend payable - related party	-	2,000,000
Expense waivers payable - related party	866,316	939,385
Total current liabilities	2,234,722	4,634,534
Commitments and contingencies (Note 5)		
Member's equity	4,535,618	5,633,861
Total liabilities and member's equity	\$6,770,340	\$10,268,395

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

Notes to the Financial Statements

**1. Business**

In May 2005, United States Commodity Funds, LLC (“USCF” or the “Company”), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Wainwright Holdings Inc. (“Wainwright”), was formed as a single member limited liability company in the State of Delaware. On December 9, 2016, Wainwright was acquired by Concierge Technologies, Inc., (“Concierge” or “CNCG”), a public company currently traded on the OTC Markets QB Exchange with majority ownership held by two shareholders who also are majority owners of Wainwright. CNCG will continue to operate USCF as an independent wholly-owned subsidiary of Wainwright. USCF will also maintain its current independent and management director structure. USCF is a registered commodity pool operator with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (“CFTC”) and a member of the National Futures Association (“NFA”) and serves as the General Partner (“General Partner”) for various limited partnerships (“LP”) as noted below.

The Company’s operating activities consist primarily of providing management services to thirteen active public funds.

The Company is currently the General Partner in the following Securities Act of 1933 LP commodity based index funds, and a Sponsor (“Sponsor”) for the fund series within the United States Commodity Index Funds Trust (“USCIF Trust”) and USCF Funds Trust:

**USCF as General Partner for the following Funds:**

United States Oil Fund, LP (“USO”)	Organized as a Delaware limited partnership in May 2005
United States Natural Gas Fund, LP (“UNG”)	Organized as a Delaware limited partnership in November 2006
United States Gasoline Fund, LP (“UGA”)	Organized as a Delaware limited partnership in April 2007
United States Diesel Heating Oil Fund, LP (“UHN”)	Organized as a Delaware limited partnership in April 2007
United States 12 Month Oil Fund, LP (“USL”)	Organized as a Delaware limited partnership in June 2007
United States 12 Month Natural Gas Fund, LP (“UNL”)	Organized as a Delaware limited partnership in June 2007
United States Short Oil Fund, LP (“DNO”)	Organized as a Delaware limited partnership in June 2008
United States Brent Oil Fund, LP (“BNO”)	Organized as a Delaware limited partnership in September 2009

**USCF as fund Sponsor - each a series within the USCIF Trust:**

United States Commodity Index Funds Trust (“USCIF Trust”)	A series trust formed in Delaware December 2009
United States Commodity Index Fund (“USCI”)	A commodity pool made public August 2010
United States Copper Index Fund (“CPER”)	A commodity pool made public November 2011
United States Agriculture Index Fund (“USAG”)	A commodity pool made public April 2012
USCF Canadian Crude Oil Index Fund (“UCCO”)	Currently in registration and has not commenced operations

**USCF as fund Sponsor - each a series within the USCF Funds Trust:**

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

USCF Funds Trust	A series trust formed in Delaware March 2016
United States 3x Oil Fund (“USOU”)	A commodity pool made public July 2017
United States 3x Short Oil Fund (“USOD”)	A commodity pool made public July 2017

In addition, USCF is the sponsor of the USCF Funds Trust, a Delaware statutory trust, and each of its series, the REX S&P MLP Fund (“RMLP”) and the REX S&P MLP Inverse Fund (“MLPD”), which are currently in registration and have not commenced operations (together, the “REX Funds”). All USCF funds are collectively referred to as the “Funds” hereafter.

F-4

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

Notes to the Financial Statements

**2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

***Basis of Presentation and Consolidation***

The accompanying statements of financial condition of the Company have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (“U.S. GAAP”).

***Use of Estimates***

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

***Revenue Recognition — Related Parties***

The Company recognizes revenue under the Funds’ respective Limited Partnership Agreements, as amended from time to time (the “Limited Partnership Agreements”) and the Trust Agreement, as amended from time to time (the “Trust Agreement”). These Agreements provide for fees based upon a percentage of the daily average net asset value of the Funds. The Company is responsible for investing the assets of the Funds in accordance with the objectives and policies of the respective Funds. In addition, the Company has arranged for one or more third parties to provide administrative, custody, accounting, transfer agency and other necessary services to the Funds and is contractually obligated to pay for these services. The Funds are contractually obligated to pay the Company a management fee, which is paid monthly, based on the average daily net assets of the Funds.

USO pays a management fee of 0.45% (45 basis points) per annum on its average daily net assets. UNG pays a fee equal to 0.60% (60 basis points) per annum on average daily net assets of \$1,000,000,000 or less and 0.50% (50 basis points) of average daily net assets that are greater than \$1,000,000,000. USL, UGA, UHN, and DNO each pay a fee of 0.60% (60 basis points) per annum on their average daily net assets. From inception through April 30, 2010, the Company has been charging UNL a management fee at a reduced rate of 0.60% (60 basis points) per annum of average daily net assets. Effective May 1, 2010, the Company resumed charging UNL its standard rate of 0.75% (75

basis points) per annum of average daily net assets. The difference of 0.15% (15 basis points) per annum of average daily net assets since inception through April 30, 2010 has been waived by the Company and will not be recouped from UNL. BNO pays a management fee of 0.75% (75 basis points) per annum on its average daily net assets. USOU and USOD each pay a management fee of 0.95% (95 basis points) per annum on its average daily net assets.

Effective January 1, 2014 and continuing through December 31, 2015, the Company contractually agreed to lower the management fee for USCI to 0.80% (80 basis points), 0.65% (65 basis points) for CPER and 0.65% (65 basis points) for USAG, per annum on its average daily net assets. Effective January 1, 2016, the Company permanently lowered the management fee to 0.80% (80 basis points) for USCI, 0.65% (65 basis points) for CPER and 0.65% (65 basis points) for USAG, per annum on its average daily net assets.

Management fees are recognized in the period earned in accordance with the terms of their respective agreements.

F-5

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

Notes to the Financial Statements

**2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies, continued**

***Expense Waivers***

The Company has voluntarily agreed to pay certain expenses normally borne by UGA, UHN, DNO, UNL, BNO, CPER and USAG to the extent such expenses exceed 0.15% (15 basis points) of the respective fund's average daily net assets, on an annualized basis. The Company has no obligation to continue such payments into subsequent periods. These expenses totaled \$866,316 and \$939,385 for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, and are included in general and administrative expense. Expense waivers payable totaled \$866,316 and \$939,385 as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

***Fund Startup Expenses***

The Company expenses all startup expenses associated with the registration of each fund and the expense is charged to general and administrative expense. Fund startup expenses include costs relating to the initial registration of shares and include, but are not limited to, legal fees pertaining to the initial registration of shares, SEC and FINRA registration fees, initial fees to be listed on an exchange, and other similar costs.

The Funds pay for all brokerage fees, taxes and other expenses, including registration or other fees paid to the SEC, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ("FINRA") formerly the National Association of Securities Dealers, or any other regulatory agency in connection with the offer and sale of subsequent shares after their initial registration and all legal, accounting, printing and other expenses associated therewith.

***Cash and Cash Equivalents***

The Company considers all highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less at the date of purchase to be cash equivalents. The Company places its cash with various high credit quality institutions. At times, the Company maintains cash deposits in excess of the United States Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation coverage of \$250,000, but the Company does not expect any losses.

***Management Fees Receivable – Related Party***

Management fees receivable generally consist of one month of management fees which are collected in the month after they are earned. The Company is the general partner or fund sponsor of various funds for which we earn a management fee.

Management closely monitors receivables and records an allowance for any balances that are determined to be uncollectible. As of December 31, 2017 and 2016, the Company considered all remaining accounts receivable to be fully collectible.

***Investments***

Management determines the appropriate classification of investments at the time of purchase based upon management's intent with respect to such investments. Short-term investments consist of equities, futures, and money market funds. Short-term investments are classified as available-for-sale securities. The Company measures the investments at estimated fair value at period end with any changes in estimated fair value reflected as unrealized gains (losses) in the accumulated other comprehensive income (loss).

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

Notes to the Financial Statements

**2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies, continued**

***Fair Value Measurements***

The Company's short-term investments are carried at estimated fair value. In determining fair value, the Company follows the guidance of Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") Accounting Standards Codification ("ASC") 820, *Fair Value Measurement* ("ASC 820"). Under ASC 820, the fair value is defined as the price that would be received upon the sale of an asset or paid to transfer a liability (i.e., the exit price) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

ASC 820 establishes a fair value hierarchy based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement in its entirety:

*Level 1* – Quoted prices in active markets that are accessible at the measurement date for identical, unrestricted assets or liabilities, without adjustment.

*Level 2* – Quoted prices in markets that are not considered to be active for identical or similar assets or liabilities, quoted prices in active markets of similar assets or liabilities, and inputs other than quoted prices that are observable or can be corroborated by observable market data.

*Level 3* – Pricing inputs are unobservable and include situations where there is little, if any, market activity for the investment.

Unrealized gains and losses on investments resulting from market fluctuations are recorded in the accumulated other comprehensive income (loss) account. Realized gains or losses on sales of investments are determined on a specific identification basis.

Short-term investments are valued at the closing price reported on the active market on which the individual securities are traded.



***Income Taxes***

The Company has filed an election with the Internal Revenue Service to be treated as an association taxable as a corporation. The Company files a federal consolidated income tax return with entities not included on these financials. In connection with filing a consolidated federal income tax return, the tax benefit of utilizing tax losses generated by the consolidated group is not reflected on USCF's statements of financial condition. The Company accounts for income taxes using the asset and liability method. Under this method, deferred tax assets and liabilities are recognized for the future tax consequences attributable to differences between financial statement carrying amounts of existing assets and liabilities and their respective tax bases, valuation of net operating losses and tax credit carryforwards, if any.

F-7

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

## Notes to the Financial Statements

**2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies, continued***Income Taxes, continued*

Deferred tax assets and liabilities are measured using enacted rates expected to apply to taxable income in the years in which those temporary differences are expected to be recovered or settled. If necessary, a valuation allowance is recorded to reduce the carrying amounts of deferred tax assets until it is more likely than not that such assets will be realized.

The Company provides for uncertain tax positions using guidance which prescribes a recognition threshold and measurement attribute for the financial statement recognition and measurement of a tax position taken or expected to be taken in a tax return. It provides that a tax benefit from an uncertain tax position may be recognized when it is more-likely-than-not recognition threshold at the effective date to be recognized upon the adoption of the accounting standard and in subsequent periods. In addition, the accounting standard provides guidance on derecognition, classification, interest and penalties, accounting in interim periods, disclosure and transition. The Company's policy is to recognize interest and penalties accrued on any unrecognized tax benefits as a component of income tax expense.

On December 22, 2017, the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act ("TCJA") was enacted into law with new legislation containing several key tax provisions which affects the Company including a reduction of the corporate income tax rate to 21% from 34%, effective January 1, 2018, among others. The Company is required to recognize the effect of the tax law changes in the period of enactment, such as re-measuring its U.S. deferred tax assets and liabilities as well as reassessing the net realizability of its deferred tax assets and liabilities.

*Concentration of Credit Risk*

Concentrations of management fees receivable as of December 31, 2017 and 2016 are as follows:

Fund	December 31, 2017		
	Management Fees Receivable		
USO	\$ 799,623	50	%

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

USCI	326,005	20	%
UNG	312,466	20	%
All Others	158,487	10	%
Total	\$ 1,596,581	100	%

Fund	December 31, 2016 Management Fees Receivable		
USO	\$ 1,256,213	57	%
USCI	445,163	20	%
UNG	303,354	14	%
All Others	195,136	9	%
Total	\$ 2,199,866	100	%

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

## Notes to the Financial Statements

**2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies, continued*****Recent Accounting Pronouncements***

In February 2016, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (“FASB”) issued Accounting Standards Update (“ASU”) No. 2016-02, *Leases*. In September 2017 the FASB issued ASU 2017-13, *Revenue Recognition* (Topic 605), *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* (Topic 606), *Leases* (Topic 840), and *Leases* (Topic 842): *Amendments to SEC Paragraphs Pursuant to the Staff Announcement at the July 20, 2017 EITF Meeting and Rescission of Prior SEC Staff Announcements and Observer Comments*, which further elaborates on the original ASU No. 2016-02. The new standard establishes a right-of-use (ROU) model that requires a lessee to record a ROU asset and a lease liability on the balance sheet for all leases with terms longer than 12 months. Leases will be classified as either finance or operating, with classification affecting the pattern of expense recognition in the income statement. The new standard is effective for public business entities with fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2018, including interim periods. All other entities are required to adopt ASC Topic 842 for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2019, and interim periods within fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2020. A modified retrospective transition approach is required for capital and operating leases existing at, or entered into after, the beginning of the earliest comparative period presented in the financial statements, with certain practical expedients available. The Company is currently evaluating the impact of its pending adoption of the new standard.

No other recently issued accounting pronouncements are expected to have a material impact on the Company’s financial statements.

**3. Investments and Fair Value Measurements**

Investments measured at estimated fair value consist of the following as of December 31, 2017 and 2016:

	December 31, 2017			
	Cost	Gross Unrealized Gains	Gross Unrealized (Losses)	Estimated Fair Value
Money market funds	\$96	\$ -	\$-	\$ 96
Futures	395,000	-	(211,912 )	183,088
Equities	1,577	-	(439 )	1,138

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

Total short-term investments \$396,673 \$ - \$(212,351) \$184,322

	December 31, 2016			
	Cost	Gross Unrealized Gains	Gross Unrealized Losses	Estimated Fair Value
Money market funds	\$96	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 96
Equities	1,577	-	(632 )	945
Total short-term investments	\$1,673	\$ -	\$ (632 )	\$ 1,041

As of December 31, 2017 and 2016, the Company did not have any investments with gross unrealized losses greater than 12 months on a continuous basis.

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

## Notes to the Financial Statements

**3. Investments and Fair Value Measurements, continued**

The following tables summarize the valuation of the Company's securities at December 31, 2017 and 2016 using the fair value hierarchy:

	December 31, 2017			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Money market funds	\$96	\$96	\$-	\$ -
Futures	183,088	-	183,088	-
Other equities	1,138	1,138	-	-
Total	\$184,322	\$1,234	\$183,088	\$ -

	December 31, 2016			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Money market funds	\$96	\$96	\$ -	\$ -
Other equities	945	945	-	-
Total	\$1,041	\$1,041	\$ -	\$ -

During the twelve months ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, there were no transfers between Level 1 and Level 2.

**4. Accumulated Other Comprehensive Income (Loss)**

Accumulated other comprehensive income (loss) is included in member's equity on the statements of financial condition. Changes in accumulated other comprehensive income (loss) are as follows:

Balance, December 31, 2015	\$(707 )
Other comprehensive income	75
Balance, December 31, 2016	\$(632 )
Other comprehensive (loss)	(211,719)

Balance, December 31, 2017    \$(212,351)

## **5. Commitments and Contingencies**

### *Operating Leases*

The Company leases office space in Oakland, California under an operating lease, which expires in October 2018.

Future minimum rental payments required under the operating lease, are as follows:

For the year ending December 31:	
2018	\$ 113,304
	\$ 113,304

### *Contingencies*

From time to time, the Company is involved in legal proceedings arising mainly from the ordinary course of its business. In management's opinion, the legal proceedings are not expected to have a material effect on the Company's financial position or results of operations.

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

## Notes to the Financial Statements

**6. Income Taxes**

The Company has filed an election with the Internal Revenue Service to be treated as an association taxable as a corporation. The Company files a federal consolidated income tax return with entities not included on these financials. In connection with filing a consolidated federal income tax return, the tax benefit of utilizing tax losses generated by the consolidated group is not reflected on USCF's statements of financial condition. In connection with filing a consolidated federal income tax return, the Company has recorded federal income tax expense and deferred tax assets at the legal entity level as if it was filing its own stand-alone taxes.

Deferred tax assets and liabilities reflect the net tax effects of temporary differences between the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities for financial reporting purposes and the amounts used for income tax purposes. Significant components of the Company's deferred tax assets as of December 31, 2017 and 2016 are as follows:

	2017	2016
Deferred tax assets:		
Fund start-up costs	\$730,270	\$1,041,325
Capital loss carryover	12,334	6,969
Accruals, reserves and other	21,910	44,395
Gross deferred tax assets	764,514	1,092,689
Less valuation allowance	(12,334)	(6,969)
Total deferred tax assets, net	\$752,180	\$1,085,720

The majority of the deferred tax assets relate to startup costs associated with the organization and registration of the Funds for which the Company is a general partner and having paid such costs.

On December 22, 2017, the TCJA (Tax Cut and Jobs Act) was enacted into law, which significantly changes existing U.S. tax law. The reduction of the U.S. federal statutory tax rate from 34% to 21% is effective January 1, 2018.

During the fourth quarter of 2017, the Company remeasured the deferred taxes to reflect the reduced rate that will apply when these deferred taxes are settled or realized in future periods. This write down resulted in a decrease in the



deferred tax asset and created tax expense that is recorded in the Statement of Operations. The reduction in the deferred tax asset was \$403,000 for the year ended December 31, 2017.

Realization of the deferred tax assets is dependent upon future taxable income, if any, the amount and timing of which is uncertain. Based upon available objective evidence, management believes it is more likely than not that the net deferred tax assets will not be fully realizable for capital loss carryover. Accordingly, management has established a valuation allowance related to this deferred tax asset. The valuation allowance increased by approximately \$5,000 during 2017 and decreased \$13,000 during 2016. The change in the valuation allowance is due to additional capital losses during the year.

The Company is subject to income taxes in the U.S. federal jurisdiction and various state jurisdictions. Tax regulations within each jurisdiction are subject to the interpretation of the related tax laws and regulations and require significant judgment to apply. The Company's tax years 2013 through 2017 will remain open for examination by the federal and state authorities for three and four years, respectively. As of December 31, 2017, there were no active taxing authority examinations.

The Company had unrecognized tax benefits ("UTBs") of approximately \$15,000 and \$29,000 as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively. The Company will recognize interest and penalties, when they occur, related to uncertain tax provisions as a component of tax expense. There is no interest or penalties to be recognized for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016. The Company does not expect its UTBs to change significantly over the next 12 months.

**United States Commodity Funds LLC**

Notes to the Financial Statements

**7. Related Party Transactions**

The Funds are deemed by management to be related parties. The Company's revenues, totaling \$21,045,593 and \$25,425,892 for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, were earned from these related parties. Accounts receivable, totaling \$1,596,581 and \$2,199,866 as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, were owed from these relate parties. Expense waivers, totaling \$866,316 and \$939,385 for the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, were incurred on behalf of these related parties. Waivers payable, totaling \$866,316 and \$939,385 as of December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, were owed to these related parties.

During the years ended December 31, 2017 and 2016, the Company paid \$6,600,000 and \$2,100,000, respectively, in distributions to its member Wainwright.

The Company files a federal consolidated income tax return with entities not included on these financials. In connection with filing a consolidated federal income tax return, the tax benefit of utilizing tax losses generated by the consolidated group is not reflected on USCF's statements of financial condition. The Company's taxes are computed as if it files on a stand-alone basis (see Note 6).

**8. Subsequent Events**

The Company evaluated subsequent events for recognition and disclosure through February 28, 2018, the date the statements of financial condition were issued or filed. Nothing has occurred outside normal operations since that required recognition or disclosure in these statements of financial condition other than the items noted below.

On January 3, 2018, the Company approved a \$1,000,000 dividend to Wainwright and was paid on January 18, 2018.

Item 9. Changes in and Disagreements With Accountants on Accounting and Financial Disclosure.

Not applicable.

Item 9A. Controls and Procedures.

**Disclosure Controls and Procedures**

BNO maintains disclosure controls and procedures that are designed to ensure that information required to be disclosed in BNO's periodic reports filed or submitted under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, is recorded, processed, summarized and reported within the time period specified in the SEC's rules and forms.

The duly appointed officers of USCF, including its chief executive officer and chief financial officer, who perform functions equivalent to those of a principal executive officer and principal financial officer of BNO if BNO had any officers, have evaluated the effectiveness of BNO's disclosure controls and procedures and have concluded that the disclosure controls and procedures of BNO have been effective as of the end of the period covered by this annual report on Form 10-K.

**Management's Annual Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting**

BNO is responsible for establishing and maintaining adequate internal control over financial reporting. BNO's internal control system is designed to provide reasonable assurance to USCF and the Board of USCF regarding the preparation and fair presentation of published financial statements. All internal control systems, no matter how well designed, have inherent limitations. Therefore, even those systems determined to be effective can provide only reasonable assurance with respect to financial statement preparation and presentation. USCF's report on internal control over financial reporting is set forth above under the heading, "*Management's Annual Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting*" in Item 8 of this annual report on Form 10-K.

**Change in Internal Control Over Financial Reporting**

There were no changes in BNO's internal control over financial reporting during BNO's last fiscal quarter that have materially affected, or are reasonably likely to materially affect, BNO's internal control over financial reporting.

Item 9B. Other Information.

### **Monthly Account Statements**

Pursuant to the requirement under Rule 4.22 under the CEA, each month BNO publishes an account statement for its shareholders, which includes a Statement of Income (Loss) and a Statement of Changes in Net Asset Value. The account statement is furnished to the SEC on a current report on Form 8-K pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act and posted each month on BNO's website at [www.uscfinvestments.com](http://www.uscfinvestments.com).

75

## Part III.

## Item 10. Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance.

**Principals and Key Personnel of USCF.** BNO has no executive officers. Pursuant to the terms of the LP Agreement, BNO's affairs are managed by USCF. The following principals of USCF serve in the below mentioned capacities:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Capacity</b>
Nicholas D. Gerber	55	Chairman of the Board of Directors, Vice President
Andrew F Ngim	57	Chief Operating Officer, Management Director and Portfolio Manager
Robert Nguyen	58	Management Director
John P. Love	46	Management Director, President and Chief Executive Officer
Stuart P. Crumbaugh	54	Chief Financial Officer, Secretary and Treasurer
Carolyn M. Yu	59	General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer
Ray W. Allen	61	Portfolio Manager
Kevin A. Baum	47	Chief Investment Officer, Portfolio Manager
Gordon L. Ellis	71	Independent Director
Malcolm R. Fobes	53	Independent Director
Peter M. Robinson	60	Independent Director

**Ray W. Allen**, 61, Portfolio Manager of USCF since January 2008. Mr. Allen was the portfolio manager of: (1) UGA from February 2008 until March 2010, and then portfolio manager since May 2015, (2) UHN from April 2008 until March 2010, and then portfolio manager since May 2015, (3) UNL from November 2009 until March 2010, and then portfolio manager since May 2015. In addition, he has been the portfolio manager of: (1) DNO since September 2009, (2) USO and USL since March 2010, (3) BNO since June 2010, (4) UNG since May 2015, and (4) USOU and USOD since July 2017. Mr. Allen also has served as the portfolio manager of the USCF Commodity Strategy Fund, a series of USCF Mutual Funds Trust, since October 2017. Mr. Allen has been a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since March 2009 and has been registered as an associated person of USCF since July 2015 and from March 2008 to November 2012. Additionally, Mr. Allen has been approved as an NFA swaps associated person of USCF since July 2015. As of February 2017, he also is an associated person and swap associated person of USCF Advisers LLC. USCF Advisers LLC, an affiliate of USCF, is an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and, as of February 2017, is registered as a commodity pool operator, NFA member and swap firm. Mr. Allen earned a B.A. in Economics from the University of California at Berkeley and holds an NFA Series 3 registration.

**Kevin A. Baum**, 47, has served as a Portfolio Manager of USCF since March 2016 and as the Chief Investment Officer of USCF since September 1, 2016. Prior to joining USCF, Mr. Baum temporarily retired from December 2015 to March 2016. Mr. Baum served as the Vice President and Senior Portfolio Manager for Invesco PowerShares

Capital Management LLC, an investment manager that manages a family of exchange-traded funds, from October 2014 through December 2015. Mr. Baum was temporarily retired from May 2012 through September 2014. From May 1993 to April 2012, Mr. Baum worked as the Senior Portfolio Manager, Head of Commodities for OppenheimerFunds, Inc., a global asset manager. Mr. Baum has been an NFA member since March 2016 and a principal, swap associated person, and associated person of USCF since April 2016 and, as of January 2017, a branch manager of USCF. As of February 2017, he also is an associated person, swap associated person, and branch manager of USCF Advisers LLC. USCF Advisers LLC, an affiliate of USCF, is an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and, as of February 2017, is registered as a commodity pool operator, NFA member and swap firm. Mr. Baum is a CFA Charterholder, CAIA Charterholder, and earned a B.B.A. in Finance from Texas Tech University.

**Stuart P. Crumbaugh**, 54, Chief Financial Officer, Secretary and Treasurer of USCF since May 2015 and also the Chief Financial Officer of Concierge Technologies, Inc., the parent of Wainwright Holdings, Inc. (“Wainwright”) since December 2017. In addition, Mr. Crumbaugh has served as a director of Wainwright, the parent and sole member of USCF, since December 2016. Mr. Crumbaugh has been a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since July 1, 2015 and, as of January 2017, he is a principal of USCF Advisers LLC. USCF Advisers LLC, an affiliate of USCF, is an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and, as of February 2017, is registered as a commodity pool operator, NFA member and swap firm. Since June 2015, Mr. Crumbaugh has been the Treasurer and Secretary of USCF Advisers LLC. He also serves as a Management Trustee of USCF ETF Trust from May 2015 to present and as Management Trustee of the USCF Mutual Funds Trust from October 2016 to present. Mr. Crumbaugh joined USCF as the Assistant Chief Financial Officer on April 6, 2015. Prior to joining USCF, Mr. Crumbaugh was the Vice President Finance and Chief Financial Officer of Sikka Software Corporation, a software service healthcare company providing optimization software and data solutions from April 2014 to April 6, 2015. Mr. Crumbaugh served as a consultant providing technical accounting, IPO readiness and M&A consulting services to various early stage companies with the Connor Group, a technical accounting consulting firm, for the periods of January 2014 through March 2014; October 2012 through November 2012; and January 2011 through February 2011. From December 2012 through December 2013, Mr. Crumbaugh was Vice President, Corporate Controller and Treasurer of Auction.com, LLC, a residential and commercial real estate online auction company. From March 2011 through September 2012, Mr. Crumbaugh was Chief Financial Officer of IP Infusion Inc., a technology company providing network routing and switching software enabling software-defined networking solutions for major mobile carriers and network infrastructure providers. Mr. Crumbaugh earned a B.A. in Accounting and Business Administration from Michigan State University in 1987 and is a Certified Public Accountant – Michigan (inactive).

**Nicholas D. Gerber**, 55, Chairman of the Board of Directors of USCF since June 2005. Mr. Gerber also served as President and Chief Executive Officer of USCF from June 2005 through June 2015 and Vice President since June 2015. Mr. Gerber co-founded USCF in 2005 and prior to that, he co-founded Ameristock Corporation in March 1995, a California-based investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 from March 1995 until January 2013. From January 26, 2015 to the present, Mr. Gerber is also the Chief Executive Officer, President and Secretary of Concierge Technologies, Inc. (“Concierge”), which is a company publicly traded under the ticker symbol “CNGC.” Concierge is the sole shareholder of Wainwright. From August 1995 to January 2013, Mr. Gerber served as Portfolio Manager of Ameristock Mutual Fund, Inc. On January 11, 2013, the Ameristock Mutual Fund, Inc. merged with and into the Drexel Hamilton Centre American Equity Fund, a series of Drexel Hamilton Mutual Funds. Drexel Hamilton Mutual Funds is not affiliated with Ameristock Corporation, the Ameristock Mutual Fund, Inc. or USCF. From the period June 2014 to the present, Mr. Gerber also serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of USCF ETF Trust, an investment company registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, and has previously served as President of USCF Advisers LLC. From October 2016 to the present, Mr. Gerber also serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of USCF Mutual Funds Trust, an investment company registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended. USCF Advisers LLC, an affiliate of USCF, is an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and, as of February 2017, is registered as a commodity pool operator, NFA member and swap firm. In addition to his role as Chairman of the Board of USCF ETF Trust, he also served as its President and Chief Executive Officer from June 2014 until December 2015. Mr. Gerber also has served USCF Advisers on the Board of Managers since June 2013 and as the Vice President since June 2015. In the above roles, Mr. Gerber has gained extensive experience in evaluating and retaining third-party service providers, including custodians, accountants, transfer agents, and distributors. Mr. Gerber has been a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since November 2005, an NFA associate member and associated person of USCF since December 2005 and a Branch Manager of USCF since May 2009. Mr. Gerber is a principal of USCF Advisers LLC as of January 2017. Additionally, as of February 2017, he is an associated person, swap associated person, and branch manager of USCF Advisers LLC. Mr. Gerber earned an MBA degree in finance from the University of San Francisco, a B.A. from Skidmore College and holds an NFA Series 3 registration.

**John P. Love**, 46, President and Chief Executive Officer of USCF since June 2015 and Management Director of USCF since October 2016. Mr. Love previously served as a Senior Portfolio Manager for the Related Public Funds from March 2010 through June 2015. Prior to that, while still at USCF, he was a Portfolio Manager beginning with the launch of USO in April 2006. Mr. Love was the portfolio manager of USO from April 2006 until March 2010 and the portfolio manager for USL from December 2007 until March 2010. Mr. Love has been the portfolio manager of UNG since April 2007, and the portfolio manager of UGA, UHN, and UNL since March 2010. USCF Advisers LLC, an affiliate of USCF, is an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and, as of February 2017, is registered as a commodity pool operator, NFA member and swap firm. He also acted as co-portfolio manager of the Stock Split Index Fund, a series of the USCF ETF Trust for the period from September 2014 to December 2015, when he was promoted to the position of President and Chief Executive Officer upon Mr. Gerber’s resignation from those positions. In addition, Mr. Love has served as on the Board of Managers of USCF Advisers LLC since November 2016 and as its President since June 2015. Mr. Love also is a director of Wainwright Holdings Inc., a position he has held since December 2016. Mr. Love has been a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since January 17, 2006. Mr. Love has been registered as an associated person of USCF since February 2015 and from December 1, 2005 to April 16, 2009. Mr. Love has also been registered as a branch manager of USCF since March 2016. Additionally, Mr. Love has been approved as an NFA swaps associated person since February 2015. Mr. Love is a principal of USCF Advisers LLC as of January 2017. Additionally, as of February 2017, he is an associated person, swap associated person, and branch manager of USCF Advisers LLC. Mr. Love earned a B.A. from the

University of Southern California, holds an NFA Series 3 and FINRA Series 7 registrations and is a CFA Charterholder.

**Andrew F Ngim**, 57, co-founded USCF in 2005 and has served as a Management Director since May 2005 and, since August 15, 2016, has served as the Chief Operating Officer of USCF. Mr. Ngim has served as the portfolio manager for USCI, CPER and USAG since January 2013. Mr. Ngim also served as USCF's Treasurer from June 2005 to February 2012. In addition, he has been on the Board of Managers and has served as the Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer of USCF Advisers since its inception in June 2013. Prior to and concurrent with his services to USCF and USCF Advisers, from January 1999 to January 2013, Mr. Ngim served as a Managing Director for Ameristock Corporation, a California-based investment adviser, which he co-founded in March 1995, and was Co-Portfolio Manager of Ameristock Mutual Fund, Inc. from January 2000 to January 2013., Mr. Ngim also served as portfolio manager of (1) the Stock Split Index Fund from September 2014 to October 2017, and (2) the USCF Restaurant Leaders Fund from November 2016 to October 2017, both series of the USCF ETF Trust. From December 2017 to the present, Mr. Ngim also serves as the portfolio manager for the USCF SummerHaven SHPEI Index Fund and the USCF SummerHaven SHPEN Index Fund, both of which are series of the USCF ETF Trust. Mr. Ngim serves as a Management Trustee of the USCF ETF Trust from August 2014 to the present and as a Management Trustee for the USCF Mutual Funds Trust from October 2016 to present. Mr. Ngim has been a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since November 2005 and a principal of USCF Advisers LLC since January 2017. USCF Advisers LLC, an affiliate of USCF, is an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and, as of February 2017, is registered as a commodity pool operator, NFA member and swap firm. Mr. Ngim earned his B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley.



**Robert L. Nguyen**, 58, Management Director and principal since July 2015. Mr. Nguyen served on the Board of Wainwright from December 2014 to December 2016. Mr. Nguyen co-founded USCF in 2005 and served as a Management Director until March 2012. Mr. Nguyen was an Investment Manager with Ribera Investment Management, an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, from January 2013 to March 2015. Prior to and concurrent with his services to USCF, from January 2000 to January 2013, Mr. Nguyen served as a Managing Principal for Ameristock Corporation, a California-based investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, which he co-founded in March 1995. Mr. Nguyen was a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA from November 2005 through March 2012 and an associated person of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA from November 2007 through March 2012. Mr. Nguyen has been a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since July 2015 and an associated person and a swap associated person of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since December 2015. As of February 2017, he also is an associated person and swap associated person of USCF Advisers LLC. USCF Advisers LLC, an affiliate of USCF, is an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and, as of February 2017, is registered as a commodity pool operator, NFA member and swap firm. Mr. Nguyen earned his B.S. from California State University at Sacramento, and holds NFA Series 3 and FINRA Series 7 registrations.

**Carolyn M. Yu**, 59, General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer of USCF since May 2015 and February 2013, respectively, and from August 2011 through April 2015, Ms. Yu served as Assistant General Counsel. Since May 2015, Ms. Yu has served as Chief Legal Officer and Chief Compliance Officer of USCF Advisers LLC and USCF ETF Trust as well as Chief AML Officer of USCF ETF Trust. Prior to May 2015, Ms. Yu was the Assistant Chief Compliance Officer and AML Officer of the USCF ETF Trust. Previously, Ms. Yu served as Branch Chief with the Securities Enforcement Branch for the State of Hawaii, Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs from February 2008 to August 2011. Since August 2013, in the case of USCF, and January 2017, in the case of USCF Advisers LLC, Ms. Yu has been a principal listed with the CFTC and NFA. USCF Advisers LLC, an affiliate of USCF, is an investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, and, as of February 2017, is registered as a commodity pool operator, NFA member and swap firm. Ms. Yu earned her JD from Golden Gate University School of Law and a B.S. in business administration from San Francisco State University.

**Gordon L. Ellis**, 71, Independent Director of USCF since September 2005. Previously, Mr. Ellis was a founder of International Absorbents, Inc., Director and Chairman since July 1985 and July 1988, respectively, and Chief Executive Officer and President since November 1996. He also served as Chairman of Absorption Corp., a wholly-owned subsidiary of International Absorbents, Inc., which is a leading developer and producer of environmentally friendly pet care and industrial products, from May July 1985 until July 2010 when it was sold to Kinderhook Industries, a private investment banking firm and remained as a director until March 2013 when Absorption Corp was sold again to J. Rettenmaier & Söhne Group, a German manufacturing firm. Concurrent with that, he founded and has served as Chairman from November 2010 to present of Lupaka Gold Corp., a firm that acquires, explores, develops, and evaluates gold mining properties in Peru, South America. Mr. Ellis has his Chartered Directors designation from The Director's College (a joint venture of McMaster University and The Conference Board of Canada). He has been a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since November 2005. Mr. Ellis is an engineer and earned an MBA in international finance.

**Malcolm R. Fobes III**, 53, Independent Director of USCF and Chairman of USCF's audit committee since September 2005. He founded and is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Berkshire Capital Holdings, Inc., a California-based investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 that has been sponsoring and providing portfolio management services to mutual funds since June 1997. Mr. Fobes serves as Chairman and President of The Berkshire Funds, a mutual fund investment company registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940. Since 1997, Mr. Fobes has also served as portfolio manager of the Berkshire Focus Fund, a mutual fund registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, which concentrates its investments in the electronic technology industry. He was also contributing editor of *Start a Successful Mutual Fund: The Step-by-Step Reference Guide to Make It Happen* (JV Books, 1995). Mr. Fobes has been a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since November 2005. He earned a B.S. in finance with a minor in economics from San Jose State University in California.

**Peter M. Robinson**, 60, Independent Director of USCF since September 2005. Mr. Robinson has been a Research Fellow since 1993 with the Hoover Institution, a public policy think tank located on the campus of Stanford University. He authored three books and has been published in the *New York Times*, *Red Herring*, and *Forbes ASAP* and is the editor of *Can Congress Be Fixed?: Five Essays on Congressional Reform* (Hoover Institution Press, 1995). Mr. Robinson has been a principal of USCF listed with the CFTC and NFA since December 2005. He earned an MBA from the Stanford University Graduate School of Business, graduated from Oxford University in 1982 after studying politics, philosophy, and economics and graduated summa cum laude from Dartmouth College in 1979.

The following are individual Principals, as that term is defined in CFTC Rule 3.1, for USCF: John P. Love, Stuart P. Crumbaugh, Nicholas D. Gerber, Andrew Ngim, Robert Nguyen, Peter Robinson, Gordon Ellis, Malcolm Fobes, Ray Allen, Kevin Baum, Carolyn Yu and Wainwright Holdings Inc. The individuals who are Principals due to their positions are John P. Love, Stuart P. Crumbaugh, Nicholas D. Gerber, Andrew Ngim, Robert Nguyen, Peter Robinson, Gordon Ellis, Malcolm Fobes, Ray Allen, Kevin Baum and Carolyn Yu. In addition, Wainwright is a Principal because it is the sole member of USCF. None of the Principals owns or has any other beneficial interest in BNO. Ray Allen and John P. Love make trading and investment decisions for BNO. John P. Love and Ray Allen execute trades on behalf of BNO. In addition, Nicholas D. Gerber, John P. Love, Robert Nguyen, Ray Allen, Kevin Baum, Kathryn Rooney, Maya Lowry, and Ryan Katz are registered with the CFTC as Associated Persons of USCF and are NFA Associate Members. John P. Love, Robert Nguyen, Ray Allen, Kevin Baum, Kathryn Rooney, Maya Lowry, and Ryan Katz are also registered with the CFTC as Swaps Associated Persons.

### **Audit Committee**

The Board of USCF has an audit committee which is made up of the three independent directors (Gordon L. Ellis, Malcolm R. Fobes III, and Peter M. Robinson). The audit committee is governed by an audit committee charter that is posted on BNO's website at [www.uscfinvestments.com](http://www.uscfinvestments.com). Any shareholder of BNO may also obtain a printed copy of the audit committee charter, free of charge, by calling 1-800-920-0259. The Board has determined that each member of the audit committee meets the financial literacy requirements of the NYSE Arca and the audit committee charter. The Board has further determined that each of Messrs. Ellis and Fobes have accounting or related financial management expertise, as required by the NYSE Arca, such that each of them is considered an "Audit Committee Financial Expert" as such term is defined in Item 407(d)(5) of Regulation S-K.

### **Other Committees**

Since the individuals who perform work on behalf of BNO are not compensated by BNO, but instead by USCF, BNO does not have a compensation committee. Similarly, since the directors noted above serve on the Board of USCF, there is no nominating committee of the Board that acts on behalf of BNO. USCF believes that it is necessary for each member of the Board to possess many qualities and skills. USCF further believes that all directors should possess a considerable amount of business management and educational experience. When vacancies in USCF's Board occur, the members of the Board consider a candidate's management experience as well as his/her background, stature, conflicts of interest, integrity and ethics. In connection with this, the Board also considers issues of diversity, such as diversity of gender, race and national origin, education, professional experience and differences in viewpoints and skills. The Board does not have a formal policy with respect to diversity; however, the Board believes that it is essential that the Board members represent diverse viewpoints.

### **Corporate Governance Policy**

The Board of USCF has adopted a Corporate Governance Policy that applies to BNO and the Related Public Funds. BNO has posted the text of the Corporate Governance Policy on its website at [www.uscfinvestments.com](http://www.uscfinvestments.com). Any shareholder of BNO may also obtain a printed copy of the Corporate Governance Policy, free of charge, by calling 1-800-920-0259.

### **Code of Ethics**

USCF has adopted a Code of Business Conduct and Ethics (the “Code of Ethics”) that applies to its principal executive officer, principal financial officer, principal accounting officer or controller, or persons performing similar functions, and also to BNO. BNO has posted the text of the Code of Ethics on its website at [www.uscfinvestments.com](http://www.uscfinvestments.com). Any shareholder of BNO may also obtain a printed copy of the Code of Ethics, free of charge, by calling 1-800-920-0259. BNO intends to disclose any amendments or waivers to the Code of Ethics applicable to USCF’s principal executive officer, principal financial officer, principal accounting officer or controller, or persons performing similar functions, on its website.

### **Executive Sessions of the Non-Management Directors**

In accordance with the Corporate Governance Policy of USCF, the non-management directors of the Board (who are the same as the independent directors of the Board) meet separately from the other directors in regularly scheduled executive sessions, without the presence of Management Directors or executive officers of USCF. The non-management directors have designated Gordon L. Ellis to preside over each such executive session. Interested parties who wish to make their concerns known to the non-management directors may communicate directly with Mr. Ellis by writing to 475 Milan Drive, No. 103, San Jose, CA 95134-2453 or by e-mail at [uscf.director@gmail.com](mailto:uscf.director@gmail.com).

### **Board Leadership Structure and Role in Risk Oversight**

The Board of USCF is led by a Chairman, Nicholas Gerber. Mr. John P. Love separately serves as USCF's President and Chief Executive Officer. The Board's responsibilities include: (i) the selection, evaluation, retention and succession of the Chief Executive Officer and the oversight of the selection and performance of other executive officers, (ii) understanding, reviewing and monitoring the implementation of strategic plans, annual operating plans and budgets, (iii) the selection and oversight of BNO's independent auditors and the oversight of BNO's financial statements, (iv) advising management on significant issues, (v) the review and approval of significant company actions and certain other matters, (vi) nominating directors and committee members and overseeing effective corporate governance and (vii) the consideration of other constituencies, such as USCF's and BNO's customers, employees, suppliers and the communities impacted by BNO. The non-management directors have designated Gordon L. Ellis as the presiding independent director. Mr. Ellis' role as the presiding independent director includes presiding over each executive session of the non-management directors, facilitating communications by shareholders and employees with the non-management directors and may also include representing the non-management directors with respect to certain matters as to which the views of the non-management directors are sought pursuant to BNO's Corporate Governance Policy.

The Board believes that Mr. Gerber is best situated to serve as Chairman of USCF because he is the director most familiar with the business of USCF as the founder of USCF. Because of his background, he is most capable of effectively leading discussions and execution of new strategic objectives while facilitating information flow between USCF and the full Board, including the independent directors, which is essential to effective governance. The independent directors of USCF are actively involved in the oversight of USCF and, because of their varied backgrounds, provide different perspectives in connection with the oversight of USCF, BNO and the Related Public Funds. USCF's independent directors bring expertise from outside USCF and the commodities industry, while Mr. Gerber brings company-specific and industry-specific experience and expertise.

### **Risk Management**

The full Board is actively involved in overseeing the management and operation of USCF, including oversight of the risks that face BNO and the Related Public Funds. For example, the Board has adopted an Investment Policy and a Policy for Use of Derivatives. The policies are intended to ensure that USCF takes prudent and careful action while entering into and managing investments taken by BNO, including Futures Contracts or Other Crude Oil-Related Investments such as OTC swap contracts. Additionally, the policies are intended to provide assurance that there is sufficient flexibility in controlling risks and returns associated with the use of investments by BNO. The policies, among other things, limit BNO's ability to have too high of a concentration of its assets in non-exchange traded futures contracts or cleared swap contracts or concentrating its investments in too few counterparties, absent prior approval from the Board. Existing counterparties are reviewed periodically by the Board to ensure that they continue to meet the criteria outlined in the policies. The Board tasks USCF with assessing risks, including market risk, credit risk, liquidity risk, cash flow risk, basis risk, legal and tax risk, settlement risk, and operational risk.

There are certain risks that may arise as a result of a growth in assets under management. For example, if position limits are imposed on BNO and the assets under management continue to increase, then BNO may not be able to invest solely in the Benchmark Futures Contract and may have to invest in OTC swap contracts or Other Crude Oil-Related Investments as it seeks to track its benchmark. Other Futures Contracts in which BNO may invest may not track changes in the price of the Benchmark Futures Contract. Other Crude Oil-Related Investments, including OTC swap contracts, may also expose BNO to increased counterparty credit risk and may be less liquid and more difficult to value than Futures Contracts. BNO and the Related Public Funds ameliorate the potential credit, liquidity and valuation risks by fully collateralizing any OTC swap contracts or other investments.

## **Other Information**

In addition to the certifications of the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer of USCF filed or furnished with this annual report on Form 10-K regarding the quality of BNO's public disclosure, BNO will submit, within 30 days after filing this annual report on Form 10-K, to the NYSE Arca a certification of the Chief Executive Officer of USCF certifying that he is not aware of any violation by BNO of NYSE Arca corporate governance listing standards.

## **Section 16(a) Beneficial Ownership Reporting Compliance**

Section 16(a) of the Exchange Act requires directors and executive officers of USCF and persons who are beneficial owners of at least 10% of BNO's shares to file with the SEC an Initial Statement of Beneficial Ownership of Securities on Form 3 within 10 calendar days of first becoming a director, executive officer or beneficial owner of at least 10% of BNO's shares and a Statement of Changes of Beneficial Ownership of Securities on Form 4 within 2 business days of a subsequent acquisition or disposition of shares of BNO. To BNO's knowledge, based upon a review of copies of reports furnished to it with respect to the fiscal year ended December 31, 2017 and upon the written representations of the directors and executive officers of USCF, all of such persons have filed all required reports.

Item 11. Executive Compensation.

## **Compensation to USCF and Other Compensation**

BNO does not directly compensate any of the executive officers noted above. The executive officers noted above are compensated by USCF for the work they perform on behalf of BNO and other entities controlled by USCF. BNO does not reimburse USCF for, nor does it set the amount or form of any portion of, the compensation paid to the executive officers by USCF. BNO pays fees to USCF pursuant to the LP Agreement under which it is obligated to pay USCF an annualized fee of 0.45% of average daily net assets. For 2017, BNO accrued aggregate management fees of \$756,539.

## **Director Compensation**

The following table sets forth compensation earned during the year ended December 31, 2017, by the directors of USCF. BNO's portion of the aggregate fees paid for director's fees and insurance for the year ended December 31,

2017 was \$13,325.

Name	Fees Earned or Paid in Cash	Stock Awards	Option Awards	Non-Equity Incentive Plan Compensation	Change in Pension Value and Nonqualified Deferred Compensation Plan	All Other Compensation	Total
<b>Management Directors</b>							
Nicholas Gerber	\$—	NA	NA	NA	\$ —	\$ —	\$—
John P. Love	\$—	NA	NA	NA	\$ —	\$ —	\$—
Andrew F Ngim	\$—	NA	NA	NA	\$ —	\$ —	\$—
Robert L. Nguyen	\$—	NA	NA	NA	\$ —	\$ —	\$—
<b>Independent Directors</b>							
Peter M. Robinson	\$2,552	NA	NA	NA	\$ —	\$ —	\$2,552
Gordon L. Ellis	\$2,552	NA	NA	NA	\$ —	\$ —	\$2,552
Malcolm R. Fobes III <sup>(1)</sup>	\$3,063	NA	NA	NA	\$ —	\$ —	\$3,063

- (1) Mr. Fobes serves as chairman of the audit committee of USCF and receives additional compensation from USCF, in recognition of the additional responsibilities he has undertaken in this role.



Item 12. Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Stockholder Matters.

None of the directors or executive officers of USCF, nor the employees of BNO own any shares of BNO. In addition, BNO is not aware of any 5% holder of its shares.

Item 13. Certain Relationships and Related Transactions, and Director Independence.

**Certain Relationships and Related Transactions**

BNO has and will continue to have certain relationships with USCF and its affiliates. However, there have been no direct financial transactions between BNO and the directors or officers of USCF that have not been disclosed herein. See *“Item 11. Executive Compensation”* and *“Item 12. Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Stockholder Matters.”* Any transaction with a related person that must be disclosed in accordance with SEC Regulation S-K item 404(a), including financial transactions by BNO with directors or executive officers of USCF or holders of beneficial interests in USCF or BNO of more than 5%, will be subject to the provisions regarding “Resolutions of Conflicts of Interest; Standard of Care” as set forth in Section 7.7 of the LP Agreement and will be reviewed and approved by the audit committee of the Board of USCF.

**Director Independence**

In February 2017, the Board undertook a review of the independence of the directors of USCF and considered whether any director has a material relationship or other arrangement with USCF, BNO or the Related Public Funds that could compromise his ability to exercise independent judgment in carrying out his responsibilities. As a result of this review, the Board determined that each of Messrs. Fobes, Ellis and Robinson is an “independent director,” as defined under the rules of NYSE Arca.

Item 14. Principal Accountant Fees and Services.

The fees for services billed to BNO by its independent auditors for the last two fiscal years are as follows:

Edgar Filing: United States Brent Oil Fund, LP - Form 10-K

	2017	2016
Audit fees	\$35,000	\$35,000
Audit-related fees	—	—
Tax fees	—	—
All other fees	—	—
	\$35,000	\$35,000

Audit fees consist of fees paid to Spicer Jeffries LLP for (i) the audit of BNO's annual financial statements included in the annual report on Form 10-K, and review of financial statements included in the quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and certain of BNO's current reports on Form 8-K; (ii) the audit of BNO's internal control over financial reporting included in the annual report on Form 10-K; and (iii) services that are normally provided by the Independent Registered Public Accountants in connection with statutory and regulatory filings of registration statements.

Tax fees consist of fees paid to Spicer Jeffries LLP for professional services rendered in connection with tax compliance and partnership income tax return filings.

The audit committee has established policies and procedures which are intended to control the services provided by BNO's independent auditors and to monitor their continuing independence. Under these policies and procedures, no audit or permitted non-audit services (including fees and terms thereof), except for the de minimis exceptions for non-audit services described in Section 10A(i)(1)(B) of the Exchange Act, may be undertaken by BNO's independent auditors unless the engagement is specifically pre-approved by the audit committee. The audit committee may form and delegate authority to subcommittees consisting of one or more members when appropriate, including the authority to grant pre-approvals of audit and permitted non-audit services, provided that decisions of such subcommittee to grant pre-approvals must be presented to the full audit committee at its next scheduled meeting.

#### Part IV

#### Item 15. Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules.

1. See Index to Financial Statements on page 56.
2. No financial statement schedules are filed herewith because (i) such schedules are not required or (ii) the information required has been presented in the aforementioned financial statements.
3. Exhibits required to be filed by Item 601 of Regulation S-K.

#### Exhibit Index

Listed below are the exhibits which are filed or furnished as part of this annual report on Form 10-K (according to the number assigned to them in Item 601 of Regulation S-K):

<b>Exhibit Number</b>	<b>Description of Document</b>
<u>3.1(1)</u>	<u>Certificate of Limited Partnership of the Registrant.</u>
<u>3.2(6)</u>	<u>Sixth Amended and Restated Limited Liability Company Agreement of USCF.</u>
<u>3.3(7)</u>	<u>Fourth Amended and Restated Agreement of Limited Partnership.</u>
<u>10.1(8)</u>	<u>Form of Authorized Participant Agreement.</u>
<u>10.2(3)</u>	<u>Custodian Agreement.</u>

- 10.3(4) Amendment No. 1 to the Custodian Agreement.
- 10.4(3) Administrative Agency Agreement.
- 10.5(4) Amendment No. 1 to the Administrative Agency Agreement.
- 10.6(5) Marketing Agent Agreement
- 10.7(4) Amendment No. 1 to the Marketing Agent Agreement.
- 14.1(6) Code of Ethics.
- 23.1(9) Consent of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm.
- 23.2(9) Consent of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm.
- 31.1(9) Certification of Principal Executive Officer Pursuant to Rule 13a-14(a) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.
- 31.2(9) Certification of Principal Financial Officer Pursuant to Rule 13a-14(a) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.
- 32.1(9) Certification of Principal Executive Officer Pursuant to Section 906 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (18 U. S. C. 1350).
- 32.2(9) Certification of Principal Financial Officer Pursuant to Section 906 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (18 U. S. C. 1350).
- 101.INS XBRL Instance Document.
- 101.SCH XBRL Taxonomy Extension Schema.
- 101.CAL XBRL Taxonomy Extension Calculation Linkbase.
- 101.DEF XBRL Taxonomy Extension Definition Linkbase.
- 101.LAB XBRL Taxonomy Extension Label Linkbase.
- 101.PRE XBRL Taxonomy Extension Presentation Linkbase.

- (1) Incorporated by reference to Registrant's Registration Statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-162015) filed on September 18, 2009.
- (3) Incorporated by reference to Registrant's Registration Statement on Form S-1/A (File No. 333-162015) filed on April 2, 2010.
- (4) Incorporated by reference to Registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the Quarter ended June 30, 2012, filed on August 14, 2012.
- (5) Incorporated by reference to Registrant's Registration Statement on Form S-1/A (File No. 333-162015) filed on April 16, 2010.
- (6) Incorporated by reference to Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2015, filed on March 11, 2016.
- (7) Incorporated by reference to Registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K, filed on December 15, 2017.
- (8) Incorporated by reference to Registrant's Post-Effective Amendment No. 2 to Form S-1 (File No. 333-187501), filed on April 6, 2015.
- (9) Filed herewith.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duly authorized.

**United States Brent Oil Fund, LP  
(Registrant)**

By: United States Commodity Funds LLC, its  
general partner

By: /s/ John P. Love  
John P. Love  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
(Principal executive officer)

Date: March 14, 2018

By: /s/ Stuart P. Crumbaugh  
Stuart P. Crumbaugh  
Chief Financial Officer  
(Principal financial and accounting officer)

Date: March 14, 2018

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, this Report has been signed below by the following persons on behalf of the Registrant in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

<b>Signature</b>	<b>Title (Capacity)</b>	<b>Date</b>
/s/ Nicholas D. Gerber Nicholas D. Gerber	Management Director	March 14, 2018
/s/ John P. Love John P. Love	Management Director	March 14, 2018
/s/ Andrew F Ngim Andrew F Ngim	Management Director	March 14, 2018
/s/ Robert L. Nguyen Robert L. Nguyen	Management Director	March 14, 2018
/s/ Peter M. Robinson Peter M. Robinson	Independent Director	March 14, 2018
/s/ Gordon L. Ellis Gordon L. Ellis	Independent Director	March 14, 2018
/s/ Malcolm R. Fobes III Malcolm R. Fobes III	Independent Director	March 14, 2018