

CARTER STEPHEN M  
 Form 4  
 January 30, 2012

**FORM 4**

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

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
 CARTER STEPHEN M

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
 CLECO CORP [CNL]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)  
 P.O. BOX 5000

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)  
 01/27/2012

\_\_\_\_ Director \_\_\_\_\_ 10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below) \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify below)  
 Vice President

(Street)  
 PINEVILLE, LA 71361-5000

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)  
 Form filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

(City) (State) (Zip)

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
|                                 |                                      |  | Code                           | V Amount (A) or (D) Price   |   |  |                                   |
| Common Stock, \$1 par           | 01/27/2012                           |  | A <sup>(1)</sup>               | 1,755 A <u>(2)</u>  | 21,659.8484   | D  |                                   |
| Common Stock, \$1 par           | 01/27/2012                           |  | A <sup>(3)</sup>               | 3,394 A <u>(2)</u>  | 25,053.8484   | D  |                                   |

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

Table with 9 columns: 1. Title of Derivative Security, 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security, 3. Transaction Date, 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any, 4. Transaction Code, 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D), 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date, 7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities, 8. Price of Derivative Security, 9. Number of Derivative Securities. Includes sub-columns for Date Exercisable, Expiration Date, and Title for the underlying securities.

Reporting Owners

Table with columns: Reporting Owner Name / Address, Relationships (Director, 10% Owner, Officer, Other). Entry for CARTER STEPHEN M, P.O. BOX 5000, PINEVILLE, LA 71361-5000, Vice President.

Signatures

Julia E. Callis, Attorney-in-Fact for Stephen M. Carter, 01/30/2012

\*\*Signature of Reporting Person Date

Explanation of Responses:

- \* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
\*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
(1) Shares acquired under the Company's 2000 Long-Term Incentive Compensation Plan as the result of the Company's above-target performance during the three-year period ending December 31, 2011.
(2) No value was exchanged for these shares.
Performance shares granted under the Company's 2010 Long-Term Incentive Compensation Plan. Shares are subject to forfeiture, in whole or in part, based on the Company's performance during a three-year period beginning January 1, 2012 and ending December 31, 2014. For the 2012 - 2014 performance cycle, the Compensation Committee has established total shareholder return (defined as the Company's common stock price appreciation plus dividends paid during the performance cycle) compared to companies in a peer group also selected by the Committee as the performance goal. Dividends will be accrued quarterly during the performance cycle, are subject to forfeiture in whole or in part, and will be paid only after the final determination of performance and in proportion to the target shares.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.