

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

FORM 487

Pre-effective pricing amendment filed pursuant to Securities Act Rule 487

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FT 3971

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

Amendment No. 2 to Form S-6

FOR REGISTRATION UNDER THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933 OF SECURITIES
OF UNIT INVESTMENT TRUSTS REGISTERED ON FORM N-8B-2

A. Exact name of trust:

FT 3971

B. Name of depositor:

FIRST TRUST PORTFOLIOS L.P.

C. Complete address of depositor's principal executive offices:

120 East Liberty Drive
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

D. Name and complete address of agents for service:

	Copy to:
JAMES A. BOWEN	ERIC F. FESS
c/o First Trust Portfolios L.P.	c/o Chapman and Cutler LLP
120 East Liberty Drive	111 West Monroe Street
Wheaton, Illinois 60187	Chicago, Illinois 60603

E. Title of Securities Being Registered:

An indefinite number of Units pursuant to Rule 24f-2
promulgated under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as
amended

F. Approximate date of proposed sale to public:

As soon as practicable after the effective date of the
Registration Statement.

Check box if it is proposed that this filing will become
effective on January 9, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. pursuant to Rule 487.

Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17

FT 3971

FT 3971 is a series of a unit investment trust, the FT Series. FT 3971 consists of a single portfolio known as Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17 (the "Trust"). The Trust invests in a diversified portfolio of common stocks ("Common Stocks") and closed-end funds which invest in senior loan floating rate securities and multi-strategy securities ("Closed-End Funds"). Collectively, the Common Stocks and Closed-End Funds are referred to as the "Securities." Certain of the Closed-End Funds invest in high-yield securities. See "Risk Factors" for a discussion of the risk of investing in high-yield securities or "junk" bonds. The Trust seeks current income, with total return as a secondary objective.

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION HAS NOT APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED
OF THESE SECURITIES OR PASSED UPON THE ADEQUACY OF THIS PROSPECTUS. ANY
REPRESENTATION TO THE CONTRARY IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE.

FIRST TRUST (R)

1-800-621-1675

The date of this prospectus is January 9, 2013

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Summary of Essential Information

Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17
FT 3971

At the Opening of Business on the Initial Date of Deposit-January 9, 2013

Sponsor: First Trust Portfolios L.P.
Trustee: The Bank of New York Mellon
FTPS Unit Servicing Agent: FTP Services LLC
Evaluator: First Trust Advisors L.P.

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

<S>	<C>
Initial Number of Units (1)	15,962
Fractional Undivided Interest in the Trust per Unit (1)	1/15,962
Public Offering Price:	
Public Offering Price per Unit (2)	\$ 10.000
Less Initial Sales Charge per Unit (3)	(.100)

Aggregate Offering Price Evaluation of Securities per Unit (4)	9.900
Less Deferred Sales Charge per Unit (3)	(.245)

Redemption Price per Unit (5)	9.655
Less Creation and Development Fee per Unit (3) (5)	(.050)
Less Organization Costs per Unit (5)	(.031)

Net Asset Value per Unit	\$ 9.574
	=====
Estimated Net Annual Distribution per Unit for the first year (6)	\$.6678
Cash CUSIP Number	302698 101
Reinvestment CUSIP Number	302698 119
Fee Accounts Cash CUSIP Number	302698 127
Fee Accounts Reinvestment CUSIP Number	302698 135
FTPS CUSIP Number	302698 143
Pricing Line Product Code	082396
Ticker Symbol	FKRPAX

</TABLE>

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

<S>	<C>
First Settlement Date	January 14, 2013
Mandatory Termination Date (7)	January 12, 2015
Income Distribution Record Date	Tenth day of each month, commencing February 10, 2013.
Income Distribution Date (6)	Twenty-fifth day of each month, commencing February 25, 2013.

(1) As of the Evaluation Time on the Initial Date of Deposit, we may adjust the number of Units of the Trust so that the Public Offering Price per Unit will equal approximately \$10.00. If we make such an adjustment, the fractional undivided interest per Unit will vary from the amount indicated above.

(2) The Public Offering Price shown above reflects the value of the Securities on the business day prior to the Initial Date of Deposit. No investor will purchase Units at this price. The price you pay for your Units will be based on their valuation at the Evaluation Time on the date you purchase your Units. On the Initial Date of Deposit, the Public Offering Price per Unit will not include any accumulated dividends on the Securities. After this date, a pro rata share of any accumulated dividends on the Securities will be included.

(3) You will pay a maximum sales charge of 3.95% of the Public Offering Price per Unit (equivalent to 3.99% of the net amount invested) which consists of an initial sales charge, a deferred sales charge and a creation and development fee. The sales charges are described in the "Fee Table."

(4) Each listed Security is valued at its last closing sale price. If a Security is not listed, or if no closing sale price exists, it is valued at its closing ask price. Evaluations for purposes of determining the purchase, sale or redemption price of Units are made as of the close of trading on the New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE") (generally 4:00 p.m. Eastern time) on each day on which it is open (the "Evaluation Time").

(5) The creation and development fee will be deducted from the assets of the Trust at the end of the initial offering period and the estimated organization costs per Unit will be deducted from the assets of the Trust at the earlier of six months after the Initial Date of Deposit or the end of the initial offering period. If Units are redeemed prior to any such reduction, these fees will not be deducted from the redemption proceeds. See "Redeeming Your Units."

(6) The estimated net annual distribution per Unit for subsequent years, \$.6608, is expected to be less than the amount for the first year because a portion of the Securities included in the Trust will be sold during the first year to pay for organization costs, the deferred sales charge and the creation and development fee. We base our estimate of the dividends the Trust will receive from the Securities by annualizing the most recent dividends declared by the issuers of the Securities (such figure adjusted to reflect any change in dividend policy announced subsequent to the most recently declared dividend). There is no guarantee that the issuers of the Closed-End Funds will receive consistent distributions from the underlying securities in which they invest and, therefore, that they, or the issuers of the Common Stocks will declare dividends in the future or that if declared they will either remain at current levels or increase over time. Due to this, and various other factors, actual dividends received from the Securities may be less than their most recent annualized dividends. In this case, the actual net annual distribution you receive will be less than the estimated amount set forth above. The actual net annual distribution per Unit you receive will also vary from that set forth above with changes in the Trust's fees and expenses and with the sale of Securities. See "Fee Table," "Risk Factors" and "Expenses and Charges." The Trustee will distribute money from the Capital Account monthly on the twenty-fifth day of each month to Unit holders of record on the tenth day of each month if the amount available for distribution equals at least \$1.00 per 100 Units. In any case, the Trustee will distribute any funds in the Capital Account in December of each year and as part of the final liquidation distribution. See "Income and Capital Distributions."

(7) See "Amending or Terminating the Indenture."

</TABLE>

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Fee Table

This Fee Table describes the fees and expenses that you may, directly or indirectly, pay if you buy and hold Units of the Trust. See "Public Offering" and "Expenses and Charges." Although the Trust has a term of approximately two years and is a unit investment trust rather than a mutual fund, this information allows you to compare fees.

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

Amount

<u><S></u>	<u><C></u>	<u>per Unit</u>
Unit Holder Sales Fees (as a percentage of public offering price)		<u><C></u>
Maximum Sales Charge		
Initial sales charge	1.00% (a)	\$.100
Deferred sales charge	2.45% (b)	\$.245
Creation and development fee	0.50% (c)	\$.050
	<u>3.95%</u>	<u>\$.395</u>
	=====	=====
Organization Costs (as a percentage of public offering price)		
Estimated organization costs	.310% (d)	\$.0310
	=====	=====
Estimated Annual Trust Operating Expenses(e) (as a percentage of average net assets)		
Portfolio supervision, bookkeeping, administrative, evaluation and FTFS Unit servicing fees	0.081%	\$.0080
Trustee's fee and other operating expenses	0.139% (f)	\$.0138
Acquired Fund fees and expenses	0.880% (g)	\$.0871
	<u>1.100%</u>	<u>\$.1089</u>
	=====	=====

Example

This example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Trust with the cost of investing in other investment products. The example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Trust for the periods shown. The example also assumes a 5% return on your investment each year and that the Trust's operating expenses stay the same. The example does not take into consideration transaction fees which may be charged by certain broker/dealers for processing redemption requests. Although your actual costs may vary, based on these assumptions your costs, assuming you sell or redeem your Units at the end of each period, would be:

1 Year	2 Years
<u>\$536</u>	<u>\$646</u>

The example will not differ if you hold rather than sell your Units at the end of each period.

<FN>

(a) The combination of the initial and deferred sales charge comprises what we refer to as the "transactional sales charge." The initial sales charge is actually equal to the difference between the maximum sales charge of 3.95% and the sum of any remaining deferred sales charge and creation and development fee.

(b) The deferred sales charge is a fixed dollar amount equal to \$.245 per Unit which, as a percentage of the Public Offering Price, will vary over time. The deferred sales charge will be deducted in three monthly installments commencing April 19, 2013.

(c) The creation and development fee compensates the Sponsor for creating and developing the Trust. The creation and development fee is a charge of \$.050 per Unit collected at the end of the initial offering period, which is expected to be approximately three months from the Initial Date of Deposit. If the price you pay for your Units exceeds \$10 per Unit, the creation and development fee will be less than 0.50%; if the price you pay for your Units is less than \$10 per Unit, the creation and development fee will exceed 0.50%.

(d) Estimated organization costs will be deducted from the assets of the Trust at the earlier of six months after the Initial Date of Deposit or the end of the initial offering period. Estimated organization costs are assessed on a fixed dollar amount per Unit basis which, as a percentage of average net assets, will vary over time.

(e) With the exception of the underlying Closed-End Fund expenses, each of the fees listed herein is assessed on a fixed dollar amount per Unit basis which, as a percentage of average net assets, will vary over time.

(f) Other operating expenses do not include brokerage costs and other portfolio transaction fees. In certain circumstances the Trust may incur additional expenses not set forth above. See "Expenses and Charges."

(g) Although not actual Trust operating expenses, the Trust, and therefore Unit holders, will indirectly bear similar operating expenses of the Closed-End Funds in which the Trust invests in the estimated amounts set forth in the table. These expenses are estimated based on the actual Closed-End Fund expenses disclosed in an Closed-End Fund's most recent Securities and Exchange Commission filing but are subject to change in the future. An investor in the Trust will therefore indirectly pay higher expenses than if the underlying Closed-End Fund shares were held directly.

</FN>
</TABLE>

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Report of Independent
Registered Public Accounting Firm

The Sponsor, First Trust Portfolios L.P., and Unit Holders
FT 3971

We have audited the accompanying statement of net assets, including the schedule of investments, of FT 3971, comprising Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17 (the "Trust"), as of the opening of business on January 9, 2013 (Initial Date of Deposit). This statement of net assets is the responsibility of the Trust's Sponsor. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on this statement of net assets based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the statement of net assets is free of material misstatement. The Trust is not required to have, nor were we engaged to perform, an audit of the Trust's internal control over financial reporting. Our audit included consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Trust's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the statement of net assets, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the Trust's Sponsor, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the statement of net assets. Our procedures included confirmation of the irrevocable letter of credit held by The Bank of New York Mellon, the Trustee, and deposited in the Trust for the purchase of Securities, as shown in the statement of net assets, as of the opening of business on January 9, 2013, by correspondence with the Trustee. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the statement of net assets referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of FT 3971, comprising Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17, as of the opening of business on January 9, 2013 (Initial Date of Deposit), in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

/s/ DELOITTE & TOUCHE LLP

Chicago, Illinois
January 9, 2013

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Statement of Net Assets

Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17
FT 3971

At the Opening of Business on the
Initial Date of Deposit-January 9, 2013

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

<S>		<C>
	NET ASSETS	
Investment in Securities represented by purchase contracts (1) (2)		\$158,022
Less liability for reimbursement to Sponsor for organization costs (3)		(495)
Less liability for deferred sales charge (4)		(3,911)
Less liability for creation and development fee (5)		(798)
Net assets		<u>\$152,818</u>
		=====
Units outstanding		15,962
Net asset value per Unit (6)		\$ 9.574
	ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS	
Cost to investors (7)		\$159,618
Less maximum sales charge (7)		(6,305)
Less estimated reimbursement to Sponsor for organization costs (3)		(495)
Net assets		<u>\$152,818</u>
		=====

<FN>

NOTES TO STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS

The Sponsor is responsible for the preparation of financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States which require the Sponsor to make estimates and assumptions that affect amounts reported herein. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

(1) The Trust invests in a diversified portfolio of Common Stocks and Closed-End Funds. Aggregate cost of the Securities listed under "Schedule of Investments" is based on their aggregate underlying value. The Trust has a Mandatory Termination Date of January 12, 2015.

(2) An irrevocable letter of credit issued by The Bank of New York Mellon, of which approximately \$200,000 has been allocated to the Trust, has been deposited with the Trustee as collateral, covering the monies necessary for the purchase of the Securities according to their purchase contracts.

(3) A portion of the Public Offering Price consists of an amount sufficient to reimburse the Sponsor for all or a portion of the costs of establishing the Trust. These costs have been estimated at \$.0310 per Unit. A payment will be made at the earlier of six months after the Initial Date of Deposit or the end of the initial offering period to an account maintained by the Trustee from which the obligation of the investors to the Sponsor will be satisfied. To the extent that actual organization costs of the Trust are greater than the estimated amount, only the estimated organization costs added to the Public Offering Price will be reimbursed to the Sponsor and deducted from the assets of the Trust.

(4) Represents the amount of mandatory deferred sales charge distributions of \$.245 per Unit, payable to the Sponsor in three approximately equal monthly installments beginning on April 19, 2013 and on the twentieth day of each month thereafter (or if such date is not a business day, on the preceding business day) through June 20, 2013. If Unit holders redeem Units before June 20, 2013, they will have to pay the remaining amount of the deferred sales charge applicable to such Units when they redeem them.

(5) The creation and development fee (\$.050 per Unit) is payable by the Trust on behalf of Unit holders out of assets of the Trust at the end of the initial offering period. If Units are redeemed prior to the close of the initial offering period, the fee will not be deducted from the proceeds.

(6) Net asset value per Unit is calculated by dividing the Trust's net assets by the number of Units outstanding. This figure includes organization costs and the creation and development fee, which will only be assessed to Units outstanding at the earlier of six months after the Initial Date of Deposit or the end of the initial offering period in the case of organization costs or the close of the initial offering period in the case of the creation and development fee.

(7) The aggregate cost to investors in the Trust includes a maximum sales charge (comprised of an initial and a deferred sales charge and the creation and development fee) computed at the rate of 3.95% of the Public Offering Price (equivalent to 3.99% of the net amount invested, exclusive of the deferred sales charge and the creation and development fee), assuming no reduction of the maximum sales charge as set forth under "Public Offering."

</FN>
</TABLE>

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Schedule of Investments

Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17
FT 3971

At the Opening of Business on the
Initial Date of Deposit-January 9, 2013

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

Ticker Symbol and Name of Issuer of Securities (1) (3)	Percentage of Aggregate Offering Price	Number of Shares	Market Value per Share	Cost of Securities to the Trust (2)
<S>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>
CLOSED-END FUNDS (50.02%):				
Convertible Securities Funds (22.50%):				
AVK Advent Claymore Convertible Securities and Income Fund	5.00%	471	\$ 16.79	\$ 7,908
AGC Advent Claymore Convertible Securities and Income Fund II	2.50%	583	6.78	3,953
NCV AGIC Convertible & Income Fund	5.00%	872	9.06	7,900
NCZ AGIC Convertible & Income Fund II	5.00%	948	8.33	7,897
CHI Calamos Convertible Opportunities and Income Fund	5.00%	636	12.43	7,905
Income & Preferred Stock Fund (2.50%):				
JDD Nuveen Diversified Dividend and Income Fund	2.50%	329	12.00	3,948
Loan Participation Funds (25.02%):				
FRA BlackRock Floating Rate Income Strategies Fund, Inc.	4.17%	428	15.39	6,587
EVF Eaton Vance Senior Income Trust	4.17%	861	7.65	6,587
VTA Invesco Dynamic Credit Opportunities Fund	4.17%	507	12.99	6,586
VVR Invesco Senior Income Trust	4.17%	1,226	5.37	6,584
JQC Nuveen Credit Strategies Income Fund	4.17%	666	9.89	6,587
JRO Nuveen Floating Rate Income Opportunity Fund	4.17%	527	12.50	6,587
COMMON STOCKS (49.98%):				
Consumer Discretionary (5.00%):				
BKE The Buckle, Inc.	1.01%	36	44.37	1,597
DDAIF Daimler AG +	0.99%	28	55.76	1,561
RGC Regal Entertainment Group (Class A)	1.00%	111	14.22	1,578
VCI Valassis Communications, Inc.	1.00%	58	27.18	1,576
WYNN Wynn Resorts, Limited	1.00%	13	121.08	1,574
Consumer Staples (2.01%):				
DEG Delhaize Group (ADR) +	1.00%	38	41.47	1,576
LO Lorillard, Inc.	1.01%	14	113.94	1,595
Energy (6.01%):				
DO Diamond Offshore Drilling, Inc.	0.99%	22	70.94	1,561
EC Ecopetrol S.A. (ADR) +	1.01%	26	61.27	1,593
HFC HollyFrontier Corporation	0.99%	36	43.52	1,567
LUKOY LUKOIL (ADR) +	1.01%	24	66.58	1,598
TOT Total S.A. (ADR) +	1.01%	31	51.58	1,599
YZC Yanzhou Coal Mining Company Ltd. (ADR) +	1.00%	88	18.04	1,588

</TABLE>

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Schedule of Investments (cont'd.)

Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17
FT 3971

At the Opening of Business on the
Initial Date of Deposit-January 9, 2013

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

Ticker Symbol and Name of Issuer of Securities (1) (3)	Percentage of Aggregate Offering Price	Number of Shares	Market Value per Share	Cost of Securities to the Trust (2)
---	--	---------------------	------------------------------	---

<S>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>
COMMON STOCKS (CONT'D.):				
Financials (12.95%):				
PVD Administradora de Fondos de Pensiones Provida SA (ADR) +	0.98%	14	\$ 110.60	\$ 1,548
CWH Commonwealth REIT (4)	0.50%	49	16.11	789
CYS CYS Investments Inc. (4)	0.50%	63	12.59	793
EPR EPR Properties (4)	0.49%	17	45.93	781
FII Federated Investors, Inc. (Class B)	1.00%	73	21.73	1,586
FSP Franklin Street Properties Corp. (4)	0.50%	62	12.72	789
GOV Government Properties Income Trust (4)	0.50%	32	24.53	785
HIW Highwood Properties, Inc. (4)	0.50%	23	34.33	790
HPT Hospitality Properties Trust (4)	0.50%	33	24.02	793
IVR Invesco Mortgage Capital Inc. (4)	0.50%	37	21.26	787
LXP Lexington Realty Trust (4)	0.50%	73	10.76	785
LTC LTC Properties, Inc. (4)	0.50%	22	36.14	795
CLI Mack Cali Realty Corporation (4)	0.50%	30	26.41	792
MPW Medical Properties Trust Inc. (4)	0.50%	63	12.62	795
MCY Mercury General Corporation	0.99%	41	38.35	1,572
MFA MFA Financial, Inc.(4)	0.50%	92	8.59	790
NHI National Health Investors, Inc. (4)	0.49%	13	59.30	771
NCT Newcastle Investment Corp. (4)	0.50%	80	9.88	790
OHI OMEGA Healthcare Investors, Inc. (4)	0.50%	32	24.72	791
PMT PennyMac Mortgage Investment Trust (4)	0.50%	29	27.28	791
RWT Redwood Trust, Inc. (4)	0.50%	44	17.90	788
SNH Senior Housing Properties Trust (4)	0.50%	33	24.04	793
STWD Starwood Property Trust Inc. (4)	0.50%	33	23.97	791
Health Care (1.01%):				
AZN AstraZeneca Plc (ADR) +	1.01%	33	48.15	1,589
Industrials (3.00%):				
LMT Lockheed Martin Corporation	1.00%	17	92.96	1,580
PBI Pitney Bowes Inc.	1.00%	134	11.78	1,579
WERN Werner Enterprises, Inc.	1.00%	71	22.34	1,586

</TABLE>

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Schedule of Investments (cont'd.)

Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17
FT 3971

At the Opening of Business on the
Initial Date of Deposit-January 9, 2013

<TABLE>
<CAPTION>

Ticker Symbol and Name of Issuer of Securities (1) (3)	Percentage of Aggregate Offering Price	Number of Shares	Market Value per Share	Cost of Securities to the Trust (2)
<S>	<C>	<C>	<C>	<C>
COMMON STOCKS (CONT'D.):				
Information Technology (4.99%):				
GA Giant Interactive Group, Inc. (ADR) +	1.00%	249	\$ 6.35	\$ 1,581
LXX Lexmark International, Inc.	1.00%	62	25.45	1,578
STX Seagate Technology +	0.99%	50	31.40	1,570
SFUN SouFun Holdings Ltd. (ADR) +	1.00%	58	27.13	1,574
STM STMicroelectronics N.V. +	1.00%	208	7.61	1,583
Materials (5.01%):				
CLF Cliffs Natural Resources Inc.	1.01%	42	38.02	1,597
LYB LyondellBasell Industries NV +	0.98%	26	59.74	1,553
SCCO Southern Copper Corporation	1.01%	41	38.80	1,591
TROX Tronox Ltd. (Class A) +	1.00%	76	20.72	1,575
VALE Vale S.A. (ADR) +	1.01%	78	20.37	1,589
Telecommunication Services (5.01%):				
CTL CenturyLink, Inc.	1.01%	40	39.73	1,589
KT KT Corporation (ADR) +	1.00%	92	17.21	1,583
SKM SK Telecom Co., Ltd. (ADR) +	1.00%	98	16.07	1,575
TEO Telecom Argentina S.A. (ADR) +	1.00%	128	12.35	1,581
VIV Telefonica Brasil, S.A. (ADR) +	1.00%	64	24.70	1,581
Utilities (4.99%):				
JE Just Energy Group Inc. +	1.00%	153	10.35	1,584
POM Pepco Holdings, Inc.	1.00%	79	20.11	1,589
PPL PPL Corporation	1.00%	55	28.79	1,583
UIL UIL Holdings Corporation	1.00%	44	35.97	1,583
VVC Vectren Corporation	0.99%	53	29.66	1,572

<FN>

See "Notes to Schedule of Investments" on page 10.

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NOTES TO SCHEDULE OF INVESTMENTS

(1) All Securities are represented by regular way contracts to purchase such Securities which are backed by an irrevocable letter of credit deposited with the Trustee. The Sponsor entered into purchase contracts for the Securities on January 9, 2013. Such purchase contracts are expected to settle within three business days.

(2) The cost of the Securities to the Trust represents the aggregate underlying value with respect to the Securities acquired (generally determined by the closing sale prices of the listed Securities and the ask prices of over-the-counter traded Securities at the Evaluation Time on the business day prior to the Initial Date of Deposit). The valuation of the Securities has been determined by the Evaluator, an affiliate of the Sponsor. In accordance with Accounting Standards Codification 820, "Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures," the Trust's investments are classified as Level 1, which refers to securities traded in an active market. The cost of the Securities to the Sponsor and the Sponsor's loss (which is the difference between the cost of the Securities to the Sponsor and the cost of the Securities to the Trust) are \$158,732 and \$710, respectively.

(3) Common Stocks of companies headquartered or incorporated outside the United States comprise approximately 19.99% of the investments of the Trust.

(4) This Security represents the common stock of a real estate investment trust ("REIT"). REITs comprise approximately 9.98% of the investments in the Trust.

+ This Security represents the common stock of a foreign company which trades directly, or through an American Depositary Receipt ("ADR"), on a U.S. national securities exchange.

</FN>
</TABLE>

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The FT Series

The FT Series Defined.

We, First Trust Portfolios L.P. (the "Sponsor"), have created hundreds of similar yet separate series of a unit investment trust which we have named the FT Series. The series to which this prospectus relates, FT 3971, consists of a single portfolio known as Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17.

The Trust was created under the laws of the State of New York by a Trust Agreement (the "Indenture") dated the Initial Date of Deposit. This agreement, entered into among First Trust Portfolios L.P., as Sponsor, The Bank of New York Mellon as Trustee, FTP Services LLC ("FTPS") as FTPS Unit Servicing Agent and First Trust Advisors L.P. as Portfolio Supervisor and Evaluator, governs the operation of the Trust.

YOU MAY GET MORE SPECIFIC DETAILS CONCERNING THE NATURE, STRUCTURE AND RISKS OF THIS PRODUCT IN AN "INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT" BY CALLING THE SPONSOR AT 1-800-621-1675, EXT. 1.

How We Created the Trust.

On the Initial Date of Deposit, we deposited a portfolio of Common Stocks and Closed-End Funds with the Trustee and in turn, the Trustee delivered documents to us representing our ownership of the Trust in the form of units ("Units").

After the Initial Date of Deposit, we may deposit additional Securities in the Trust, or cash (including a letter of credit or the equivalent) with instructions to buy more Securities to create new Units for sale. If we create additional Units, we will attempt, to the extent practicable, to maintain the percentage relationship established among

the Securities on the Initial Date of Deposit (as set forth under "Schedule of Investments"), adjusted to reflect the sale, redemption or liquidation of any of the Securities or any stock split or merger or other similar event affecting the issuer of the Securities.

Since the prices of the Securities will fluctuate daily, the ratio of Securities in the Trust, on a market value basis, will also change daily. The portion of Securities represented by each Unit will not change as a result of the deposit of additional Securities or cash in the Trust. If we deposit cash, you and new investors may experience a dilution of your investment. This is because prices of Securities will fluctuate between the time of the cash deposit and the purchase of the Securities, and because the Trust pays the associated brokerage fees. To reduce this dilution, the Trust will try to buy the Securities as close to the Evaluation Time and as close to the evaluation price as possible. In addition, because the Trust pays the brokerage fees associated with the creation of new Units and with the sale of Securities to meet redemption and exchange requests, frequent redemption and exchange activity will likely result in higher brokerage expenses.

An affiliate of the Trustee may receive these brokerage fees or the Trustee may retain and pay us (or our affiliate) to act as agent for the Trust to buy Securities. If we or an affiliate of ours act as agent to the Trust, we will be subject to the restrictions under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the "1940 Act").

We cannot guarantee that the Trust will keep its present size and composition for any length of time. Securities may be periodically sold under certain circumstances to satisfy Trust obligations, to meet redemption requests and, as described in "Removing Securities from the Trust," to maintain the sound investment character of the Trust, and the proceeds received by the Trust will be used to meet Trust obligations or distributed to Unit holders, but will not be reinvested. However, Securities will not be sold to take advantage of market fluctuations or changes in anticipated rates of appreciation or depreciation, or if they no longer meet the criteria by which they were selected. You will not be able to dispose of or vote any of the Securities in the Trust. As the holder of the Securities, the Trustee will vote the Securities and will endeavor to vote the Securities such that the Securities are voted as closely as possible in the same manner and the same general proportion as are the Securities held by owners other than such Trust.

Neither we nor the Trustee will be liable for a failure in any of the Securities. However, if a contract for the purchase of any of the Securities initially deposited in the Trust fails, unless we can purchase substitute Securities ("Replacement Securities"), we will refund to you that portion of the purchase price and transactional sales charge resulting from the failed contract on the next Income Distribution Date. Any Replacement Security the Trust acquires will be identical to those from the failed contract.

Portfolio

Objectives.

The Trust seeks current income, with total return as a secondary objective.

Investors who are looking for income while still retaining growth potential have limited alternatives when faced with the possibility of rising interest rates. Bonds tend to lose value in a rising interest rate environment. Equities, on the other hand, have often historically

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provided positive returns after the Federal Reserve's initial rate hike. Like stock returns, economic growth and inflation, interest rates are one of those variables that you can't control. But, as an investor, you can control how your investment dollars are allocated.

Investing for Rising Interest Rates.

The Tactical Income Portfolio is a unit investment trust that invests in a diversified portfolio of closed-end funds ("CEFs"), common stocks and REITs. The portfolio is weighted based on the following allocation:

Multi-Strategy CEFs	25%
Senior Loan CEFs	25%
Dividend Paying Stocks and REITs	50%

- The multi-strategy segment of the portfolio consists of CEFs which

invest in types of securities which typically react favorably to rising interest rates.

- The interest paid on a senior loan resets every 30-90 days based on prevailing short-term interest rates. Therefore, should short-term rates move higher, investors in senior loans would receive a higher income stream due to the floating rate nature of the interest on the loans.
- Unlike securities with a fixed rate coupon, a senior loan's floating rate feature provides a natural hedge against rising interest rates.
- While senior loans are generally loans which have been made to companies whose debt is typically rated below investment grade, they are senior in the asset structure of a company and historical recovery rates in the event of a default tend to be much higher relative to junior high-yield corporate debt.
- The dividend paying stocks and REITs are selected by applying a disciplined investment strategy which adheres to pre-determined screens and factors. These screens and factors are designed to identify companies that, in our opinion, have above-average dividend yields and trade at attractive valuations.

Closed-End Fund Selection.

The Closed-End Funds were selected by our research department based on a number of factors including, but not limited to, the size and liquidity of the Closed-End Fund, the current dividend yield of the Closed-End Fund, the quality and character of the securities held by the Closed-End Fund, and the expense ratio of the Closed-End Fund, while attempting to limit the overlap of the securities held by the Closed-End Funds.

Please note that we applied the strategy which makes up a portion of the portfolio for the Trust at a particular time. If we create additional Units of the Trust after the Initial Date of Deposit, we will deposit the Securities originally selected by applying the strategy at such time. This is true even if a later application of the strategy would have resulted in the selection of different securities. In addition, companies which, based on publicly available information as of the date the Securities were selected, are the subject of an announced business combination which we expect will happen within six months of the date of this prospectus have been excluded from the universe of securities from which the Trust's Securities are selected.

The Common Stocks for the strategy were selected as of the strategy's selection date using closing market prices on such date or, if a particular market was not open for trading on such date, closing market prices on the day immediately prior to the strategy's selection date in which such market was open. In addition, companies which, based on publicly available information on or before their respective selection date, are subject to any of the limited circumstances which warrant removal of a Security from the Trust as described under "Removing Securities from the Trust" have been excluded from the universe of securities from which the Trust's Securities are selected.

Of course, as with any similar investments, there can be no assurance that the objectives of the Trust will be achieved. See "Risk Factors" for a discussion of the risks of investing in the Trust.

Risk Factors

Price Volatility. The Trust invests in Common Stocks and Closed-End Funds. The value of the Trust's Units will fluctuate with changes in the value of these Securities.

Because the Trust is not managed, the Trustee will not sell Securities in response to or in anticipation of market fluctuations, as is common in managed investments. As with any investment, we cannot guarantee that the performance of any Trust will be positive over any period of time or that you won't lose money. Units of the Trust are not deposits of any bank and are not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other government agency.

Current Economic Conditions. The National Bureau of Economic Research announced that the U.S. economy's recession which began in December 2007 technically ended in June 2009. Despite this announcement, economic activity remains below average levels, the United States continues to experience increased unemployment and stock markets remain below pre-recession levels. The recession began with problems in the housing and

mortgages and mortgage-backed securities, eventually leading to the failures of some large financial institutions and has negatively impacted all sectors of the economy. The current economic crisis has also affected the global economy with European and Asian markets suffering historic losses. Due to the current state of uncertainty in the economy, the value of the Securities held by the Trust may be subject to steep declines or increased volatility due to changes in performance or perception of the issuers. Extraordinary steps have been taken by the governments of several leading economic countries to combat the economic crisis; however, the impact of these measures is not yet known and cannot be predicted.

On August 5, 2011, Standard & Poor's Ratings Services lowered its long-term sovereign credit rating on the United States of America to "AA+" from "AAA." In reaching its decision, Standard & Poor's cited the prolonged controversy over raising the statutory debt ceiling and the related fiscal policy debate and their belief that further near-term progress containing the growth in public spending, especially on entitlements, or on reaching an agreement on revenues is less likely than they previously assumed. The impact of the downgrade of the U.S. long-term sovereign credit rating by Standard & Poor's is uncertain, but will likely lead to increased interest rates and volatility in the short-term.

Distributions. As stated under "Summary of Essential Information," the Trust will generally make monthly distributions of income. The Closed-End Funds held by the Trust make distributions on a monthly or quarterly basis. As a result of changing interest rates, refundings, sales or defaults on the underlying securities held by the Closed-End Funds, and other factors, there is no guarantee that distributions will either remain at current levels or increase over time. There is also no guarantee that the issuers of the Common Stocks will declare dividends in the future or that, if declared, they will either remain at current levels or increase over time.

Closed-End Funds. A percentage of the Trust consists of closed-end funds. Closed-end funds are actively managed investment companies which invest in various types of securities. Closed-end funds issue shares of common stock that are traded on a securities exchange. Closed-end funds are subject to various risks, including management's ability to meet the closed-end fund's investment objective, and to manage the closed-end fund portfolio when the underlying securities are redeemed or sold, during periods of market turmoil and as investors' perceptions regarding closed-end funds or their underlying investments change.

Shares of closed-end funds frequently trade at a discount from their net asset value in the secondary market. This risk is separate and distinct from the risk that the net asset value of closed-end fund shares may decrease. The amount of such discount from net asset value is subject to change from time to time in response to various factors.

Certain of the Closed-End Funds included in the Trust may employ the use of leverage in their portfolios through borrowings or the issuance of preferred stock. While leverage often serves to increase the yield of a closed-end fund, this leverage also subjects the closed-end fund to increased risks, including the likelihood of increased volatility and the possibility that the closed-end fund's common share income will fall if the dividend rate on the preferred shares or the interest rate on any borrowings rises.

Common Stocks. A percentage of the Trust consists of common stocks. Common stocks represent a proportional share of ownership in a company. Common stock prices fluctuate for several reasons including changes in investors' perceptions of the financial condition of an issuer or the general condition of the relevant stock market, such as the market volatility recently exhibited, or when political or economic events affecting the issuers occur. Common stock prices may also be particularly sensitive to rising interest rates, as the cost of capital rises and borrowing costs increase.

Convertible Securities. Certain of the Closed-End Funds held by the Trust invest in convertible securities. Convertible securities are bonds, preferred stocks, and other securities that pay interest or dividends and are convertible into common stocks. As such, convertible securities have some characteristics of both bonds and common stocks. Like a bond (or some preferred stocks), a convertible security typically pays a fixed rate of interest (or dividends) and promises to repay principal at a given date in the future. However, an investor can exchange the convertible security for a specific number of shares of the issuing company's common stock at a "conversion price" specified at the time the convertible security is issued. Convertible securities are typically issued at prices which represent a premium to their conversion value. Accordingly, the value of the convertible security increases (or

decreases) as the price of the underlying common stock increases (or

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decreases). Convertible securities typically pay income yields that are higher than the dividend yields of the issuer's common stock, but lower than the yields of the issuer's debt securities. Convertible securities are generally subject to the following risks:

- **Market Risk.** Market risk is the risk that the value of the Securities in the Trust will fluctuate. The Closed-End Fund shares in which the Trust invests will fluctuate with changes to the value of the convertible securities in which they invest. In general, a convertible security performs more like a stock when the underlying common stock's price is closer to the conversion price of the convertible security (because it is assumed that it will be converted into the stock) and more like a bond when the underlying common stock's price is significantly lower than the convertible security's conversion price (because it is assumed that it will not be converted). For these reasons Unit holders must be willing to accept the market risks of both bonds and common stocks. However, because convertible securities have characteristics of both common stocks and bonds, they tend to be less sensitive to interest rate changes than bonds of comparable maturity and quality, and less sensitive to stock market changes than common stocks. Because of these factors and the hybrid nature of convertible securities, Unit holders should recognize that convertible securities are likely to perform quite differently than broadly-based measures of the stock and bond markets. The value of common stocks fluctuates in response to issuer, political, market, and economic developments.

- **Interest Rate Risk.** Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of the convertible securities will fall if interest rates increase. When the price of its underlying common stock is low, a convertible security will trade more like a bond. Bonds typically fall in value when interest rates rise and rise in value when interest rates fall. Bonds with a longer period before maturity are often more sensitive to interest rate changes. However, the existence of the conversion option tends to lessen a convertible security's volatility.

- **Credit Risk.** Credit risk is the risk that a convertible security's issuer will be unable to meet its obligation to pay interest or dividends and principal on the security. Companies that issue convertible securities often do not have high credit ratings. In addition, the credit rating of a company's convertible securities is typically lower than the rating of the company's conventional debt securities, because convertibles are normally considered junior or subordinate securities. The convertible securities in which the Funds invest are predominantly high-yield securities. See "High-Yield Securities" in this section for a discussion of the risks involved in investing in these securities.

- **Quality Risk.** Quality risk is the risk that a convertible security will fall in value if a credit rating agency decreases the security's rating. Credit rating changes can occur for a variety of reasons, including issuer performance and outlook, and sector, market, political and economic developments.

- **Liquidity Risk.** Liquidity risk is the risk that the value of a convertible security will fall if trading in the security is limited or absent. While all markets are prone to change over time, the generally high rate at which convertible securities are retired (through conversion or redemption) and replaced with newly issued convertible securities causes the convertible securities market to change more rapidly than other markets. Due to the smaller, less liquid market for convertible securities, the bid-offer spread on such securities is generally greater than it is for investment grade bonds, and the purchase or sale of such securities may take longer to complete. Moreover, convertible securities with innovative structures, such as mandatory conversion securities and equity-linked securities, have increased the sensitivity of this market to the volatility of the equity markets and to the special risks of those innovations. No one can guarantee that a liquid trading market will exist for any convertible security because these securities generally trade in the over-the-counter market (they are not listed on a securities exchange).

Senior Loans. Certain of the Closed-End Funds in the Trust invest in Senior Loans issued by banks, other financial institutions and other investors to corporations, partnerships, limited liability companies and other entities to finance leveraged buyouts, recapitalizations, mergers, acquisitions, stock repurchases, debt refinancings and, to a lesser extent, for general operating and other purposes. An investment by the Closed-End Funds in Senior Loans involves risk that the borrowers under Senior Loans may default on their obligations to pay principal or

interest when due. Although Senior Loans may be secured by specific collateral, there can be no assurance that liquidation of collateral would satisfy the borrower's obligation in the event of non-payment or that such collateral could be readily liquidated. Senior Loans are typically structured as floating rate instruments in which the interest rate payable on the obligation fluctuates with interest rate changes. As

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a result, the yield on Closed-End Funds investing in Senior Loans will generally decline in a falling interest rate environment and increase in a rising interest rate environment. Senior Loans are generally below investment grade quality and may be unrated at the time of investment; are generally not registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") or state securities commissions; and are generally not listed on any securities exchange. See "High-Yield Securities" below for a description of the risks involved in investing in below investment grade securities. In addition, the amount of public information available on Senior Loans is generally less extensive than that available for other types of assets.

High-Yield Securities. Certain of the Closed-End Funds held by the Trust, representing approximately 50.02% of the Trust's portfolio on the Initial Date of Deposit, invest a majority of their assets in securities rated below investment grade by one or more rating agencies (high-yield securities or "junk" bonds). Certain of the other Closed-End Funds held by the Trust may also invest a portion of their assets in high-yield securities. High-yield, high-risk securities are subject to greater market fluctuations and risk of loss than securities with higher investment ratings. The value of these securities will decline significantly with increases in interest rates, not only because increases in rates generally decrease values, but also because increased rates may indicate an economic slowdown. An economic slowdown, or a reduction in an issuer's creditworthiness, may result in the issuer being unable to maintain earnings at a level sufficient to maintain interest and principal payments.

High-yield securities or "junk" bonds, the generic names for securities rated below "BBB-" by Standard & Poor's or below "Baa3" by Moody's, are frequently issued by corporations in the growth stage of their development or by established companies that are highly leveraged or whose operations or industries are depressed. Obligations rated below "BBB-" should be considered speculative as these ratings indicate a quality of less than investment grade, and therefore carry an increased risk of default as compared to investment grade issues. Because high-yield securities are generally subordinated obligations and are perceived by investors to be riskier than higher rated securities, their prices tend to fluctuate more than higher rated securities and are affected by short-term credit developments to a greater degree.

The market for high-yield securities is smaller and less liquid than that for investment grade securities. High-yield securities are generally not listed on a national securities exchange but trade in the over-the-counter markets. Due to the smaller, less liquid market for high-yield securities, the bid-offer spread on such securities is generally greater than it is for investment grade securities and the purchase or sale of such securities may take longer to complete.

Preferred Stocks. Certain of the Closed-End Funds held by the Trust invest in preferred stocks. Preferred stocks are unique securities that combine some of the characteristics of both common stocks and bonds. Preferred stocks generally pay a fixed rate of return and are sold on the basis of current yield, like bonds. However, because they are equity securities, preferred stocks provide equity ownership of a company and the income is paid in the form of dividends. Preferred stocks typically have a yield advantage over common stocks as well as comparably-rated fixed income investments. Preferred stocks are typically subordinated to bonds and other debt instruments in a company's capital structure, in terms of priority to corporate income, and therefore will be subject to greater credit risk than those debt instruments.

REITs. Certain of the Common Stocks in the Trust are, and certain of the Closed-End Funds in the Trust invest in, securities issued by REITs. REITs are financial vehicles that pool investors' capital to purchase or finance real estate. REITs may concentrate their investments in specific geographic areas or in specific property types, i.e., hotels, shopping malls, residential complexes and office buildings. The value of the REITs and the ability of the REITs to distribute income may be adversely affected by several factors, including rising interest rates, changes in the national, state and local economic climate and real estate conditions, perceptions of prospective tenants of the safety,

convenience and attractiveness of the properties, the ability of the owner to provide adequate management, maintenance and insurance, the cost of complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act, increased competition from new properties, the impact of present or future environmental legislation and compliance with environmental laws, changes in real estate taxes and other operating expenses, adverse changes in governmental rules and fiscal policies, adverse changes in zoning laws, and other factors beyond the control of the issuers of the REITs.

Foreign Securities. Certain of the Common Stocks in the Trust are, and certain of the Closed-End Funds in the Trust invest in, securities issued by foreign entities, which makes the Trust subject to more risks

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than if it invested solely in domestic securities and Closed-End Funds which invest solely in domestic securities. These Common Stocks are either directly listed on a U.S. securities exchange or are in the form of ADRs which are listed on a U.S. Securities exchange. Risks of foreign securities include higher brokerage costs; different accounting standards; expropriation, nationalization or other adverse political or economic developments; currency devaluations, blockages or transfer restrictions; restrictions on foreign investments and exchange of securities; inadequate financial information; lack of liquidity of certain foreign markets; and less government supervision and regulation of exchanges, brokers, and issuers in foreign countries. Recent turmoil in the Middle East and natural disasters in Japan have increased the volatility of certain foreign markets. Investments in debt securities of foreign governments present special risks, including the fact that issuers may be unable or unwilling to repay principal and/or interest when due in accordance with the terms of such debt, or may be unable to make such repayments when due in the currency required under the terms of the debt. Political, economic and social events also may have a greater impact on the price of debt securities issued by foreign governments than on the price of U.S. securities.

Emerging Markets. Certain of the Common Stocks in the Trust are, and certain of the Closed-End Funds in the Trust invest in, securities issued by companies headquartered in countries considered to be emerging markets. Risks of investing in developing or emerging countries are even greater than the risks associated with foreign investments in general. These increased risks include, among other risks, the possibility of investment and trading limitations, greater liquidity concerns, higher price volatility, greater delays and disruptions in settlement transactions, greater political uncertainties and greater dependence on international trade or development assistance. In addition, emerging market countries may be subject to overburdened infrastructures, obsolete financial systems and environmental problems. For these reasons, investments in emerging markets are often considered speculative.

Small-Cap Companies. Certain of the Securities in the Trust are issued by companies which have been designated by the Sponsor as small-cap. Smaller companies present some unique investment risks. Small-caps may have limited product lines, as well as shorter operating histories, less experienced management and more limited financial resources than larger companies. Stocks of smaller companies may be less liquid than those of larger companies and may experience greater price fluctuations than larger companies. In addition, small-cap stocks may not be widely followed by the investment community, which may result in low demand.

Legislation/Litigation. From time to time, various legislative initiatives are proposed in the United States and abroad which may have a negative impact on certain companies represented in the Trust. In addition, litigation regarding any of the issuers of the Securities, such as that concerning Lorillard, Inc. or any of the industries represented by these issuers, may negatively impact the value of these Securities. We cannot predict what impact any pending or proposed legislation or pending or threatened litigation will have on the value of the Securities.

Public Offering

The Public Offering Price.

Units will be purchased at the Public Offering Price, the price per Unit of which is comprised of the following:

- The aggregate underlying value of the Securities;

- The amount of any cash in the Income and Capital Accounts;
- Dividends receivable on Securities; and
- The maximum sales charge (which combines an initial upfront sales charge, a deferred sales charge and the creation and development fee).

The price you pay for your Units will differ from the amount stated under "Summary of Essential Information" due to various factors, including fluctuations in the prices of the Securities and changes in the value of the Income and/or Capital Accounts.

Although you are not required to pay for your Units until three business days following your order (the "date of settlement"), you may pay before then. You will become the owner of Units ("Record Owner") on the date of settlement if payment has been received. If you pay for your Units before the date of settlement, we may use your payment during this time and it may be considered a benefit to us, subject to the limitations of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

Organization Costs. Securities purchased with the portion of the Public Offering Price intended to be used to reimburse the Sponsor for the Trust's organization costs (including costs of preparing the registration statement, the Indenture and other closing documents, registering Units with the SEC and states, the initial audit of the Trust's statement of net assets, legal fees and the initial fees and expenses of the Trustee) will be purchased in the same proportionate relationship as all the Securities contained in the Trust. Securities will be sold to reimburse the Sponsor for the Trust's organization costs at the earlier of six months after the Initial Date of Deposit or the end of the initial offering period (a significantly shorter time period than the life of the Trust). During the period ending with the earlier

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of six months after the Initial Deposit Date or the end of the initial offering period, there may be a decrease in the value of the Securities. To the extent the proceeds from the sale of these Securities are insufficient to repay the Sponsor for Trust organization costs, the Trustee will sell additional Securities to allow the Trust to fully reimburse the Sponsor. In that event, the net asset value per Unit of the Trust will be reduced by the amount of additional Securities sold. Although the dollar amount of the reimbursement due to the Sponsor will remain fixed and will never exceed the per Unit amount set forth in "Notes to Statement of Net Assets," this will result in a greater effective cost per Unit to Unit holders for the reimbursement to the Sponsor. To the extent actual organization costs are less than the estimated amount, only the actual organization costs will ultimately be charged to the Trust. When Securities are sold to reimburse the Sponsor for organization costs, the Trustee will sell Securities, to the extent practicable, which will maintain the same proportionate relationship among the Securities contained in the Trust as existed prior to such sale.

Minimum Purchase.

The minimum amount per account you can purchase of the Trust is generally \$1,000 worth of Units (\$500 if you are purchasing Units for your Individual Retirement Account or any other qualified retirement plan), but such amounts may vary depending on your selling firm.

Maximum Sales Charge.

The maximum sales charge is comprised of a transactional sales charge and a creation and development fee. After the initial offering period the maximum sales charge will be reduced by 0.50%, to reflect the amount of the previously charged creation and development fee.

Transactional Sales Charge.

The transactional sales charge you will pay has both an initial and a deferred component.

Initial Sales Charge. The initial sales charge, which you will pay at the time of purchase, is equal to the difference between the maximum sales charge of 3.95% of the Public Offering Price and the sum of the maximum remaining deferred sales charge and creation and development fee (initially \$.295 per Unit). On the Initial Date of Deposit, the initial sales charge is equal to approximately 1.00% of the Public Offering Price of a Unit. Thereafter, it will vary from 1.00% depending on the purchase price of your Units and as deferred sales charge and creation and development fee payments are made. When the Public Offering Price exceeds \$10.00 per Unit, the initial sales charge will exceed 1.00% of the Public Offering Price.

Monthly Deferred Sales Charge. In addition, three monthly deferred sales charges of approximately \$.0817 per Unit will be deducted from the Trust's assets on approximately the twentieth day of each month from April 19, 2013 through June 20, 2013. If you buy Units at a price of less than \$10.00 per Unit, the dollar amount of the deferred sales charge will not change, but the deferred sales charge on a percentage basis will be more than 2.45% of the Public Offering Price.

If you purchase Units after the last deferred sales charge payment has been assessed, your transactional sales charge will consist of a one-time initial sales charge of 3.45% of the Public Offering Price (equivalent to 3.573% of the net amount invested). The transactional sales charge will be reduced by 1/2 of 1% on each subsequent January 31, commencing January 31, 2014, to a minimum transactional sales charge of 3.00%.

Creation and Development Fee.

As Sponsor, we will also receive, and the Unit holders will pay, a creation and development fee. See "Expenses and Charges" for a description of the services provided for this fee. The creation and development fee is a charge of \$.050 per Unit collected at the end of the initial offering period. If you buy Units at a price of less than \$10.00 per Unit, the dollar amount of the creation and development fee will not change, but the creation and development fee on a percentage basis will be more than 0.50% of the Public Offering Price.

Discounts for Certain Persons.

The maximum sales charge is 3.95% per Unit and the maximum dealer concession is 3.15% per Unit. However, if you invest at least \$50,000 including any proceeds as described below (except if you are purchasing for "Fee Accounts" as described below), the maximum sales charge for the amount of the investment eligible to receive the reduced sales charge is reduced as follows:

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If you invest (in thousands):*	Your maximum sales charge will be:	Dealer concession will be:
\$50 but less than \$100	3.70%	2.90%
\$100 but less than \$250	3.45%	2.65%
\$250 but less than \$500	3.10%	2.35%
\$500 but less than \$1,000	2.95%	2.25%
\$1,000 or more	2.45%	1.80%

*The breakpoints will be adjusted to take into consideration purchase orders stated in dollars which cannot be completely fulfilled due to the requirement that only whole Units be issued.

The reduced sales charge for quantity purchases will apply only to purchases not eligible for the redemption or termination proceeds discount set forth below made by the same person on any one day from any one dealer. To help you reach the above levels, you can combine the Units you purchase of the Trust with any other same day purchases of other trusts for which we are Principal Underwriter and are currently in the initial offering period. In addition, we will also consider Units you purchase in the name of your spouse, or the equivalent if recognized under local law, or child (including step-children) under the age of 21 living in the same household to be purchases by you. The reduced sales charges will also apply to a trustee or other fiduciary purchasing Units for a single trust estate or single fiduciary account including pension, profit sharing or employee benefit plans, as well as multiple-employee benefit plans of a single employer or affiliated employers (provided they are not aggregated with personal accounts). You must inform your dealer of any combined purchases before the sale in order to be eligible for the reduced sales charge.

You are entitled to use your redemption or termination proceeds from any unit investment trust (regardless of who was sponsor) to purchase Units of the Trust during the initial offering period at the Public Offering Price less 1.00% (for purchases of \$1,000,000 or more, the maximum sales charge will be limited to 2.45% of the Public Offering Price), but you will not be eligible to receive the reduced sales charges described in the above table with respect to such proceeds. Please note that if you purchase Units of the Trust in this manner using redemption proceeds from trusts which assess the amount of any remaining deferred sales charge at redemption, you should be aware that any deferred sales charge remaining on these units will be deducted from those redemption

proceeds. In order to be eligible to receive the reduced sales charge described in this paragraph, the trade date of the redemption or termination resulting in the receipt of such proceeds must have occurred within 30 calendar days prior to your Unit purchase. In addition, this program will only be available for investors that utilize the same broker/dealer (or a different broker/dealer with appropriate notification) for both the Unit purchase and the transaction resulting in the receipt of the termination or redemption proceeds used for the Unit purchase and such transaction must be from the same account. You may be required to provide appropriate documentation or other information to your broker/dealer to evidence your eligibility for this reduced sales charge program.

Investors purchasing Units through registered broker/dealers who charge periodic fees in lieu of commissions or who charge for financial planning, investment advisory or asset management services or provide these or comparable services as part of an investment account where a comprehensive "wrap fee" or similar charge is imposed ("Fee Accounts") will not be assessed the transactional sales charge described in this section on the purchase of Units in the primary market. Certain Fee Accounts Unit holders may be assessed transaction or other account fees on the purchase and/or redemption of such Units by their broker/dealer or other processing organizations for providing certain transaction or account activities. Fee Accounts Units are not available for purchase in the secondary market. We reserve the right to limit or deny purchases of Units not subject to the transactional sales charge by investors whose frequent trading activity we determine to be detrimental to the Trust.

Employees, officers and directors (and immediate family members) of the Sponsor, our related companies, and dealers and their affiliates will purchase Units at the Public Offering Price less the applicable dealer concession, subject to the policies of the related selling firm. Immediate family members include spouses, or the equivalent if recognized under local law, children or step-children under the age of 21 living in the same household, parents or step-parents and trustees, custodians or fiduciaries for the benefit of such persons. Only employees, officers and directors of companies that allow their employees to participate in this employee discount program are eligible for the discounts.

You will be charged the deferred sales charge per Unit regardless of any discounts. However, if you are eligible to receive a discount such that the maximum sales charge you must pay is less than the applicable maximum deferred sales charge, including Fee Accounts Units, you will be credited additional Units with a dollar value equal to the difference between your maximum sales charge and the maximum deferred sales charge at the time you buy your Units. If you elect to have distributions

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reinvested into additional Units of the Trust, in addition to the reinvestment Units you receive you will also be credited additional Units with a dollar value at the time of reinvestment sufficient to cover the amount of any remaining deferred sales charge and creation and development fee to be collected on such reinvestment Units. The dollar value of these additional credited Units (as with all Units) will fluctuate over time, and may be less on the dates deferred sales charges or the creation and development fee are collected than their value at the time they were issued.

The Value of the Securities.

The Evaluator will determine the aggregate underlying value of the Securities in the Trust as of the Evaluation Time on each business day and will adjust the Public Offering Price of the Units according to this valuation. This Public Offering Price will be effective for all orders received before the Evaluation Time on each such day. If we or the Trustee receive orders for purchases, sales or redemptions after that time, or on a day which is not a business day, they will be held until the next determination of price. The term "business day" as used in this prospectus shall mean any day on which the NYSE is open.

The aggregate underlying value of the Securities in the Trust will be determined as follows: if the Securities are listed on a securities exchange or The NASDAQ Stock Market(R), their value is generally based on the closing sale prices on that exchange or system (unless it is determined that these prices are not appropriate as a basis for valuation, as may be the case with certain foreign Securities listed on a foreign securities exchange). For purposes of valuing Securities traded on The NASDAQ Stock Market(R), closing sale price shall mean the NASDAQ(R) Official Closing Price as determined by The NASDAQ Stock Market LLC. However, if there is no closing sale price on that exchange or system, they are valued based on the closing ask prices. If the

Securities are not so listed, or, if so listed and the principal market for them is other than on that exchange or system, their value will generally be based on the current ask prices on the over-the-counter market (unless it is determined that these prices are not appropriate as a basis for valuation). If current ask prices are unavailable, or if available but determined by the Evaluator to not be appropriate, the valuation is generally determined:

- a) On the basis of current ask prices for comparable securities;
- b) By appraising the value of the Securities on the ask side of the market; or
- c) By any combination of the above.

After the initial offering period is over, the aggregate underlying value of the Securities will be determined as set forth above, except that bid prices are used instead of ask prices when necessary.

Distribution of Units

We intend to qualify Units of the Trust for sale in a number of states. All Units will be sold at the then current Public Offering Price.

The Sponsor compensates intermediaries, such as broker/dealers and banks, for their activities that are intended to result in sales of Units of the Trust. This compensation includes dealer concessions described in the following section and may include additional concessions and other compensation and benefits to broker/dealers and other intermediaries.

Dealer Concessions.

Dealers and other selling agents can purchase Units at prices which represent a concession or agency commission of 3.15% of the Public Offering Price per Unit (or 65% of the maximum transactional sales charge for secondary market sales), subject to the reduced concession applicable to volume purchases as set forth in "Public Offering-Discounts for Certain Persons." However, for Units subject to a transactional sales charge which are purchased with redemption or termination proceeds, this amount will be reduced to 2.15% of the sales price of these Units (1.80% for purchases of \$1,000,000 or more).

Eligible dealer firms and other selling agents who, during the previous consecutive 12-month period through the end of the most recent month, sold primary market units of unit investment trusts sponsored by us in the dollar amounts shown below will be entitled to the following additional sales concession on primary market sales of units during the current month of unit investment trusts sponsored by us:

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Total sales (in millions)	Additional Concession
\$25 but less than \$100	0.050%
\$100 but less than \$150	0.075%
\$150 but less than \$250	0.100%
\$250 but less than \$500	0.115%
\$500 but less than \$750	0.125%
\$750 but less than \$1,000	0.130%
\$1,000 but less than \$1,500	0.135%
\$1,500 but less than \$2,000	0.140%
\$2,000 but less than \$3,000	0.150%
\$3,000 but less than \$4,000	0.160%
\$4,000 but less than \$5,000	0.170%
\$5,000 or more	0.175%

Dealers and other selling agents will not receive a concession on the sale of Units which are not subject to a transactional sales charge, but such Units will be included in determining whether the above volume sales levels are met. Eligible dealer firms and other selling agents include clearing firms that place orders with First Trust and provide First Trust with information with respect to the representatives who initiated such transactions. Eligible dealer firms and other selling agents will not include firms that solely provide clearing services to other broker/dealer firms or firms who place orders through clearing firms that are eligible dealers. We reserve the right to change the amount of concessions or agency commissions from time to time. Certain commercial banks may be making Units of the Trust available to their customers on an agency basis. A portion of the transactional sales charge paid by these customers is kept by or given to the banks in the

amounts shown above.

Other Compensation and Benefits to Broker/Dealers.

The Sponsor, at its own expense and out of its own profits, currently provides additional compensation and benefits to broker/dealers who sell Units of this Trust and other First Trust products. This compensation is intended to result in additional sales of First Trust products and/or compensate broker/dealers and financial advisors for past sales. A number of factors are considered in determining whether to pay these additional amounts. Such factors may include, but are not limited to, the level or type of services provided by the intermediary, the level or expected level of sales of First Trust products by the intermediary or its agents, the placing of First Trust products on a preferred or recommended product list, access to an intermediary's personnel, and other factors. The Sponsor makes these payments for marketing, promotional or related expenses, including, but not limited to, expenses of entertaining retail customers and financial advisers, advertising, sponsorship of events or seminars, obtaining information about the breakdown of unit sales among an intermediary's representatives or offices, obtaining shelf space in broker/dealer firms and similar activities designed to promote the sale of the Sponsor's products. The Sponsor makes such payments to a substantial majority of intermediaries that sell First Trust products. The Sponsor may also make certain payments to, or on behalf of, intermediaries to defray a portion of their costs incurred for the purpose of facilitating Unit sales, such as the costs of developing trading or purchasing trading systems to process Unit trades. Payments of such additional compensation described in this and the preceding paragraph, some of which may be characterized as "revenue sharing," may create an incentive for financial intermediaries and their agents to sell or recommend a First Trust product, including the Trust, over products offered by other sponsors or fund companies. These arrangements will not change the price you pay for your Units.

Advertising and Investment Comparisons.

Advertising materials regarding the Trust may discuss several topics, including: developing a long-term financial plan; working with your financial professional; the nature and risks of various investment strategies and unit investment trusts that could help you reach your financial goals; the importance of discipline; how the Trust operates; how securities are selected; various unit investment trust features such as convenience and costs; and options available for certain types of unit investment trusts. These materials may include descriptions of the principal businesses of the companies represented in the Trust, research analysis of why they were selected and information relating to the qualifications of the persons or entities providing the research analysis. In addition, they may include research opinions on the economy and industry sectors included and a list of investment products generally appropriate for pursuing those recommendations.

From time to time we may compare the estimated returns of the Trust (which may show performance net of the expenses and charges the Trust would have incurred) and returns over specified periods of other similar trusts we sponsor in our advertising and sales materials, with (1) returns on other taxable investments such as the common stocks comprising various market indexes, corporate or U.S. Government bonds, bank CDs and money market accounts or funds, (2) performance data from Morningstar Publications, Inc. or (3) information from publications such as Money, The New York Times, U.S. News and World Report, Bloomberg Businessweek, Forbes or Fortune. The investment characteristics of the Trust differ from other comparative investments. You should not assume that these performance comparisons will be representative of the Trust's

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future performance. We may also, from time to time, use advertising which classifies trusts or portfolio securities according to capitalization and/or investment style.

The Sponsor's Profits

We will receive a gross sales commission equal to the maximum transactional sales charge per Unit for the Trust less any reduction as stated in "Public Offering." We will also receive the amount of any collected creation and development fee. Also, any difference between our cost to purchase the Securities and the price at which we sell them to the Trust is considered a profit or loss (see Note 2 of "Notes to Schedules of Investments"). During the initial offering period, dealers and others may also realize profits or sustain losses as a result of fluctuations in the Public Offering Price they receive when they sell the Units.

In maintaining a market for the Units, any difference between the price at which we purchase Units and the price at which we sell or redeem them will be a profit or loss to us.

The Secondary Market

Although not obligated, we may maintain a market for the Units after the initial offering period and continuously offer to purchase Units at prices based on the Redemption Price per Unit.

We will pay all expenses to maintain a secondary market, except the Evaluator fees and Trustee costs to transfer and record the ownership of Units. We may discontinue purchases of Units at any time. IF YOU WISH TO DISPOSE OF YOUR UNITS, YOU SHOULD ASK US FOR THE CURRENT MARKET PRICES BEFORE MAKING A TENDER FOR REDEMPTION TO THE TRUSTEE (OR THE FTFS UNIT SERVICING AGENT IN THE CASE OF FTFS UNITS). If you sell or redeem your Units before you have paid the total deferred sales charge on your Units, you will have to pay the remainder at that time.

How We Purchase Units

The Trustee (or the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent in the case of FTFS Units) will notify us of any tender of Units for redemption. If our bid at that time is equal to or greater than the Redemption Price per Unit, we may purchase the Units. You will receive your proceeds from the sale no later than if they were redeemed by the Trustee. We may tender Units we hold to the Trustee for redemption as any other Units. If we elect not to purchase Units, the Trustee (or the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent in the case of FTFS Units) may sell tendered Units in the over-the-counter market, if any. However, the amount you will receive is the same as you would have received on redemption of the Units.

Expenses and Charges

The estimated annual expenses of the Trust are listed under "Fee Table." If actual expenses of the Trust exceed the estimate, the Trust will bear the excess. The Trustee will pay operating expenses of the Trust from the Income Account of the Trust if funds are available, and then from the Capital Account. The Income and Capital Accounts are non-interest-bearing to Unit holders, so the Trustee may earn interest on these funds, thus benefiting from their use. In addition, investors will also indirectly pay a portion of the expenses of the underlying Closed-End Funds.

First Trust Advisors L.P., an affiliate of ours, acts as both Portfolio Supervisor and Evaluator to the Trust, and will be compensated for providing portfolio supervisory services and evaluation services as well as bookkeeping and other administrative services to the Trust. In providing portfolio supervisory services, the Portfolio Supervisor may purchase research services from a number of sources, which may include underwriters or dealers of the Trust. As Sponsor, we will receive brokerage fees when the Trust use us (or an affiliate of ours) as agent in buying or selling Securities. As authorized by the Indenture, the Trustee may employ a subsidiary or affiliate of the Trustee to act as broker to execute certain transactions for the Trust. The Trust will pay for such services at standard commission rates.

FTP Services LLC, an affiliate of ours, acts as FTFS Unit Servicing Agent to the Trust with respect to the Trust's FTFS Units. FTFS Units are Units which are purchased and sold through the Fund/SERV(R) trading system or on a manual basis through FTP Services LLC. In all other respects, FTFS Units are identical to other Units. FTP Services LLC will be compensated for providing shareholder services to the FTFS Units.

The fees payable to First Trust Advisors L.P., FTP Services LLC and the Trustee are based on the largest aggregate number of Units of the Trust outstanding at any time during the calendar year, except during the initial offering period, in which case these fees are calculated based on the largest number of Units outstanding during the period for which compensation is paid. These fees may be adjusted for inflation without

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Unit holders' approval, but in no case will the annual fee paid to us or our affiliates for providing a given service to all unit investment trusts for which we provide such services be more than the actual cost of providing such services in such year.

As Sponsor, we will receive a fee from the Trust for creating and developing the Trust, including determining the Trust's objectives, policies, composition and size, selecting service providers and information services and for providing other similar administrative and ministerial functions. The "creation and development fee" is a charge of

\$.050 per Unit outstanding at the end of the initial offering period. The Trustee will deduct this amount from the Trust's assets as of the close of the initial offering period. We do not use this fee to pay distribution expenses or as compensation for sales efforts. This fee will not be deducted from your proceeds if you sell or redeem your Units before the end of the initial offering period.

In addition to the Trust's operating expenses and those fees described above, the Trust may also incur the following charges:

- All legal expenses of the Trustee according to its responsibilities under the Indenture;
- The expenses and costs incurred by the Trustee to protect the Trust and your rights and interests;
- Fees for any extraordinary services the Trustee performed under the Indenture;
- Payment for any loss, liability or expense the Trustee incurred without negligence, bad faith or willful misconduct on its part, in connection with its acceptance or administration of the Trust;
- Payment for any loss, liability or expenses we incurred without negligence, bad faith or willful misconduct in acting as Sponsor of the Trust;
- Foreign custodial and transaction fees (which may include compensation paid to the Trustee or its subsidiaries or affiliates), if any; and/or
- All taxes and other government charges imposed upon the Securities or any part of the Trust.

The above expenses and the Trustee's annual fee are secured by a lien on the Trust. In addition, if there is not enough cash in the Income or Capital Account, the Trustee has the power to sell Securities to make cash available to pay these charges which may result in capital gains or losses to you. See "Tax Status."

Tax Status

Federal Tax Matters.

This section summarizes some of the main U.S. federal income tax consequences of owning Units of the Trust. This section is current as of the date of this prospectus. Tax laws and interpretations change frequently, and these summaries do not describe all of the tax consequences to all taxpayers. For example, except as specifically provided below, these summaries generally do not describe your situation if you are a corporation, a non-U.S. person, a broker/dealer, or other investor with special circumstances. In addition, this section may not describe your state, local or foreign tax consequences.

This federal income tax summary is based in part on the advice of counsel to the Sponsor. The Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") could disagree with any conclusions set forth in this section. In addition, our counsel was not asked to review, and has not reached a conclusion with respect to the federal income tax treatment of the assets to be deposited in the Trust. This may not be sufficient for you to use for the purpose of avoiding penalties under federal tax law.

As with any investment, you should seek advice based on your individual circumstances from your own tax advisor.

Trust Status.

The Trust intends to qualify as a "regulated investment company," commonly known as a "RIC," under the federal tax laws. If the Trust qualifies as a RIC and distributes its income as required by the tax law, the Trust generally will not pay federal income taxes.

For federal income tax purposes, you are treated as the owner of Trust Units and not of the assets held by the Trust. Taxability issues are taken into account at the trust level. Your federal income tax treatment of income from the Trust is based on the distributions paid by the Trust.

Income From the Trust.

Trust distributions are generally taxable. After the end of each year, you will receive a tax statement that separates the Trust's distributions into ordinary dividends, capital gains dividends and returns of capital. Income reported is generally net of expenses (but see Deductibility of Trust Expenses, below). Ordinary income

distributions are generally taxed at your ordinary tax rate, however, as further discussed below, certain ordinary income distributions received from the Trust may be taxed at the capital gains tax rates. Generally,

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you will treat all capital gains dividends as long-term capital gains regardless of how long you have owned your Units. To determine your actual tax liability for your capital gains dividends, you must calculate your total net capital gain or loss for the tax year after considering all of your other taxable transactions, as described below. In addition, the Trust may make distributions that represent a return of capital for tax purposes and thus will generally not be taxable to you. The tax status of your distributions from the Trust is not affected by whether you reinvest your distributions in additional Units or receive them in cash. The income from the Trust that you must take into account for federal income tax purposes is not reduced by amounts used to pay a deferred sales charge, if any. The tax laws may require you to treat distributions made to you in January as if you had received them on December 31 of the previous year.

Under the "Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010," income from the Trust may also be subject to a new 3.8% "Medicare tax" imposed for taxable years beginning after 2012. This tax will generally apply to your net investment income if your adjusted gross income exceeds certain threshold amounts, which are \$250,000 in the case of married couples filing joint returns and \$200,000 in the case of single individuals.

Distributions with Respect to Certain Stock Dividends.

Ordinary income dividends received by an individual Unit holder from a regulated investment company such as the Trust are generally taxed at the same rates that apply to net capital gain (as discussed below), provided certain holding period requirements are satisfied and provided the dividends are attributable to qualifying dividends received by the Trust itself. Dividends that do not meet these requirements will generally be taxed at ordinary income rates. The Trust will provide notice to its Unit holders of the amount of any distribution which may be taken into account as a dividend which is eligible for the capital gains tax rates.

Dividends Received Deduction.

A corporation that owns Units generally will not be entitled to the dividends received deduction with respect to many dividends received from the Trust because the dividends received deduction is generally not available for distributions from regulated investment companies. However, certain ordinary income dividends on Units that are attributable to qualifying dividends received by the Trust from certain corporations may be reported by the Trust as being eligible for the dividends received deduction.

Sale or Redemption of Units.

If you sell or redeem your Units, you will generally recognize a taxable gain or loss. To determine the amount of this gain or loss, you must subtract your tax basis in your Units from the amount you receive in the transaction. Your tax basis in your Units is generally equal to the cost of your Units, generally including sales charges. In some cases, however, you may have to adjust your tax basis after you purchase your Units.

For Units purchased on or after January 1, 2011 (or, 2012, if the Units are acquired in a reinvestment plan in 2011), the information statement you receive in regard to the sale or redemption of your Units may contain information about your basis in the Units and whether any gain or loss recognized by you should be considered long term or short term capital gain. The information reported to you is based upon rules that do not take into consideration all facts that may be known to you or your advisors. You should consult with your tax advisors about any adjustments that may need to be made to the information reported to you.

Capital Gains and Losses.

If you are an individual, the maximum marginal federal tax rate for net capital gain is generally 20% (0% for certain taxpayers in the 10% or 15% tax brackets).

Net capital gain equals net long-term capital gain minus net short-term

capital loss for the taxable year. Capital gain or loss is long-term if the holding period for the asset is more than one year and is short-term if the holding period for the asset is one year or less. You must exclude the date you purchase your Units to determine your holding period. However, if you receive a capital gain dividend from the Trust and sell your Units at a loss after holding it for six months or less, the loss will be recharacterized as long term capital loss to the extent of the capital gain dividend received. The tax rates for capital gains realized from assets held for one year or less are generally the same as for ordinary income. The Internal Revenue Code treats certain capital gains as ordinary income in special situations.

Capital gain received from assets held for more than one year that is considered "unrecaptured section 1250 gain" (which may be the case, for example, with some capital gains attributable to the REITs included in the Trust) is taxed at a maximum stated tax rate of 25%. In the case of capital gains dividends, the determination of which portion of the capital gains dividend, if any, is subject to the 25% tax rate, will be made based on rules prescribed by the United States Treasury.

In-Kind Distributions.

Under certain circumstances as described in this prospectus, you may request an In-Kind Distribution of Trust assets when you redeem your

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Units at any time prior to 10 business days before the Trust's Mandatory Termination Date. By electing to receive an In-Kind Distribution, you will receive Trust assets plus, possibly, cash. THIS DISTRIBUTION IS SUBJECT TO TAXATION, AND YOU WILL GENERALLY RECOGNIZE GAIN OR LOSS, GENERALLY BASED ON THE VALUE AT THAT TIME OF THE SECURITIES AND THE AMOUNT OF CASH RECEIVED. The IRS could, however, assert that a loss could not be currently deducted.

Deductibility of Trust Expenses.

Expenses incurred and deducted by the Trust will generally not be treated as income taxable to you. In some cases, however, you may be required to treat your portion of these Trust expenses as income. In these cases you may be able to take a deduction for these expenses. However, certain miscellaneous itemized deductions, such as investment expenses, may be deducted by individuals only to the extent that all of these deductions exceed 2% of the individual's adjusted gross income. Also certain individuals may also be subject to a phase-out of the deductibility of itemized deductions based upon their income.

Investments in Certain Foreign Corporations.

If the Trust holds an equity interest in any "passive foreign investment companies" ("PFICs"), which are generally certain foreign corporations that receive at least 75% of their annual gross income from passive sources (such as interest, dividends, certain rents and royalties or capital gains) or that hold at least 50% of their assets in investments producing such passive income, the Trust could be subject to U.S. federal income tax and additional interest charges on gains and certain distributions with respect to those equity interests, even if all the income or gain is timely distributed to its Unit holders. Similarly, if the Trust invests in a fund (a "Portfolio Fund") that invests in PFICs, the Portfolio Fund may be subject to such taxes. The Trust will not be able to pass through to its Unit holders any credit or deduction for such taxes whenever the taxes are imposed at the Trust level or on a Portfolio Fund. The Trust (or the Portfolio Fund) may be able to make an election that could ameliorate these adverse tax consequences. In this case, the Trust (or the Portfolio Fund) would recognize as ordinary income any increase in the value of such PFIC shares, and as ordinary loss any decrease in such value to the extent it did not exceed prior increases included in income. Under this election, the Trust (or the Portfolio Fund) might be required to recognize in a year income in excess of its distributions from PFICs and its proceeds from dispositions of PFIC stock during that year, and such income would nevertheless be subject to the distribution requirement and would be taken into account for purposes of the 4% excise tax. Dividends paid by PFICs will not be treated as qualified dividend income.

Foreign Investors.

If you are a foreign investor (i.e., an investor other than a U.S. citizen or resident or a U.S. corporation, partnership, estate or trust), you should be aware that, generally, subject to applicable tax

treaties, distributions from the Trust will be characterized as dividends for federal income tax purposes (other than dividends which the Trust properly reports as capital gain dividends) and will be subject to U.S. income taxes, including withholding taxes, subject to certain exceptions described below. However, except as described below, distributions received by a foreign investor from the Trust that are properly reported by such Trust as capital gain dividends may not be subject to U.S. federal income taxes, including withholding taxes, provided that the Trust makes certain elections and certain other conditions are met. In addition, for taxable years beginning before 2014, certain distributions attributable to short-term capital gain or portfolio interest may qualify for exemptions from withholding provided that the Trust makes certain elections.

Distributions after December 31, 2013 may be subject to a U.S. withholding tax of 30% in the case of distributions to or dispositions by (i) certain non-U.S. financial institutions that have not entered into an agreement with the U.S. Treasury to collect and disclose certain information and are not resident in a jurisdiction that has entered into such an agreement with the U.S. Treasury and (ii) certain other non-U.S. entities that do not provide certain certifications and information about the entity's U.S. owners. Dispositions of Units by such persons may be subject to such withholding after December 31, 2016.

Foreign Tax Credit.

If at least 50% of the value of the total assets of the Trust (at the close of the taxable year) is represented by foreign securities or at least 50% of the value of the total assets of the Trust (at the close of each quarter of the taxable year) is represented by interests in other RICs, the tax statement that you receive may include an item showing foreign taxes the Trust paid to other countries. In this case, dividends taxed to you will include your share of the taxes the Trust paid to other countries. You may be able to deduct or receive a tax credit for your share of these taxes.

You should consult your tax advisor regarding potential foreign, state or local taxation with respect to your Units.

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Retirement Plans

You may purchase Units of the Trust for:

- Individual Retirement Accounts;
- Keogh Plans;
- Pension funds; and
- Other tax-deferred retirement plans.

Generally, the federal income tax on capital gains and income received in each of the above plans is deferred until you receive distributions. These distributions are generally treated as ordinary income but may, in some cases, be eligible for special averaging or tax-deferred rollover treatment. Before participating in a plan like this, you should review the tax laws regarding these plans and consult your attorney or tax advisor. Brokerage firms and other financial institutions offer these plans with varying fees and charges.

Rights of Unit Holders

Unit Ownership.

Ownership of Units will not be evidenced by certificates. If you purchase or hold Units through a broker/dealer or bank, your ownership of Units will be recorded in book-entry form at the Depository Trust Company ("DTC") and credited on its records to your broker/dealer's or bank's DTC account. If you purchase or hold FTFS Units, your ownership of FTFS Units will be recorded in book-entry form on the register of Unit holdings maintained by the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent. If you purchase or hold Units through First Trust's online transaction system which enables certain financial representatives to process Unit trades through the First Trust Advisor Direct system ("Advisor Direct"), your ownership of Units ("Advisor Direct Units") will be recorded in book-entry form on the register of Unit holdings maintained by the Trustee. Transfer of Units will be accomplished by book entries made by DTC and its participants if the Units are registered to DTC or its nominee, Cede & Co., or otherwise will be accomplished by book entries made by the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent, with respect to FTFS Units, or by the

Trustee, with respect to Advisor Direct Units. DTC will forward all notices and credit all payments received in respect of the Units held by the DTC participants. You will receive written confirmation of your purchases and sales of Units from the broker/dealer or bank through which you made the transaction or from the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent if you purchased and hold FTPS Units or from Advisor Direct or the Trustee with respect to Advisor Direct Units. You may transfer your Units by contacting the broker/dealer or bank through which you hold your Units, or the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, if you hold FTPS Units, or Advisor Direct or the Trustee, if you hold Advisor Direct Units.

Unit Holder Reports.

The Trustee will prepare a statement detailing the per Unit amounts (if any) distributed from the Income Account and Capital Account in connection with each distribution. In addition, at the end of each calendar year, the Trustee will prepare a statement which contains the following information:

- A summary of transactions in the Trust for the year;
- A list of any Securities sold during the year and the Securities held at the end of that year by the Trust;
- The Redemption Price per Unit, computed on the 31st day of December of such year (or the last business day before); and
- Amounts of income and capital distributed during the year.

It is the responsibility of the entity through which you hold your Units to distribute these statements to you. In addition, you may also request from the Trustee copies of the evaluations of the Securities as prepared by the Evaluator to enable you to comply with applicable federal and state tax reporting requirements.

Income and Capital Distributions

You will begin receiving distributions on your Units only after you become a Record Owner. The Trustee will credit dividends received on the Trust's Securities to the Income Account of the Trust. All other receipts, such as return of capital or capital gain dividends, are credited to the Capital Account of the Trust.

The Trustee will make distributions on or near the Income Distribution Dates to Unit holders of record on the preceding Income Distribution Record Date. See "Summary of Essential Information." No income distribution will be paid if accrued expenses of the Trust exceed amounts in the Income Account on the Income Distribution Dates. Distribution amounts will vary with changes in the Trust's fees and expenses, in dividends received and with the sale of Securities. The Trustee will distribute amounts in the Capital Account, net of amounts designated to meet redemptions, pay the deferred sales charge and creation and development fee or pay expenses on the twenty-fifth day of each month to Unit holders of record on the tenth day of each month provided the amount equals at least \$1.00 per 100 Units. In any case,

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the Trustee will distribute any funds in the Capital Account in December of each year and as part of the final liquidation distribution. If the Trustee does not have your TIN, it is required to withhold a certain percentage of your distribution and deliver such amount to the IRS. You may recover this amount by giving your TIN to the Trustee, or when you file a tax return. However, you should check your statements to make sure the Trustee has your TIN to avoid this "back-up withholding."

We anticipate that there will be enough money in the Capital Account of the Trust to pay the deferred sales charge. If not, the Trustee may sell Securities to meet the shortfall.

Within a reasonable time after the Trust is terminated, you will receive the pro rata share of the money from the sale of the Securities. All Unit holders will receive a pro rata share of any other assets remaining in the Trust, after deducting any unpaid expenses.

The Trustee may establish reserves (the "Reserve Account") within the Trust to cover anticipated state and local taxes or any governmental charges to be paid out of the Trust.

Distribution Reinvestment Option. You may elect to have each distribution of income and/or capital reinvested into additional Units

of the Trust by notifying your broker/dealer or bank (or the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent with respect to FTPS Units or Advisor Direct with respect to Advisor Direct Units, as applicable) within the time period required by such entities so that they can notify the Trustee of your election at least 10 days before any Record Date. Each later distribution of income and/or capital on your Units will be reinvested by the Trustee into additional Units of such Trust. There is no sales charge on Units acquired through the Distribution Reinvestment Option, as discussed under "Public Offering." This option may not be available in all states. Each reinvestment plan is subject to availability or limitation by the Sponsor and each broker/dealer or selling firm. The Sponsor or broker/dealers may suspend or terminate the offering of a reinvestment plan at any time. Please contact your financial professional for additional information. PLEASE NOTE THAT EVEN IF YOU REINVEST DISTRIBUTIONS, THEY ARE STILL CONSIDERED DISTRIBUTIONS FOR INCOME TAX PURPOSES.

Redeeming Your Units

You may redeem all or a portion of your Units at any time by sending a request for redemption to your broker/dealer or bank through which you hold your Units or to the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, if you hold FTPS Units, or Advisor Direct, if you hold Advisor Direct Units. No redemption fee will be charged, but you are responsible for any governmental charges that apply. Certain broker/dealers may charge a transaction fee for processing redemption requests. Three business days after the day you tender your Units (the "Date of Tender") you will receive cash in an amount for each Unit equal to the Redemption Price per Unit calculated at the Evaluation Time on the Date of Tender.

The Date of Tender is considered to be the date on which your redemption request is received by the Trustee from the broker/dealer or bank through which you hold your Units, or, if you hold FTPS Units, the date the redemption request is received by the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, or, if you hold Advisor Direct Units, the date the redemption request is received either by Advisor Direct or the Trustee, as applicable (if such day is a day the NYSE is open for trading). However, if the redemption request is received after 4:00 p.m. Eastern time (or after any earlier closing time on a day on which the NYSE is scheduled in advance to close at such earlier time), the Date of Tender is the next day the NYSE is open for trading.

Any amounts paid on redemption representing income will be withdrawn from the Income Account if funds are available for that purpose, or from the Capital Account. All other amounts paid on redemption will be taken from the Capital Account. The IRS will require the Trustee to withhold a portion of your redemption proceeds if the Trustee does not have your TIN as generally discussed under "Income and Capital Distributions."

If you tender for redemption at least 2,500 Units of the Trust, or such larger amount as required by your broker/dealer or bank, rather than receiving cash, you may elect to receive an In-Kind Distribution in an amount equal to the Redemption Price per Unit by making this request to your broker/dealer or bank at the time of tender. However, to be eligible to participate in the In-Kind Distribution option at redemption, Unit holders must hold their Units through the end of the initial offering period. The In-Kind Distribution option is generally not available to FTPS Unit holders or Unit holders who purchased through Advisor Direct. No In-Kind Distribution requests submitted during the 10 business days prior to the Trust's Mandatory Termination Date will be honored. Where possible, the Trustee will make an In-Kind Distribution by distributing each of the Securities in book-entry form to your bank's or broker/dealer's account at DTC. The Trustee will subtract any customary transfer and registration charges from your In-Kind

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Distribution. As a tendering Unit holder, you will receive your pro rata number of whole shares of Securities that make up the portfolio, and cash from the Capital Account equal to the fractional shares to which you are entitled.

If you elect to receive an In-Kind Distribution of Securities, you should be aware that it will be considered a taxable event at the time you receive the Securities. See "Tax Status" for additional information.

The Trustee may sell Securities to make funds available for redemption. If Securities are sold, the size and diversification of the Trust will be reduced. These sales may result in lower prices than if the Securities were sold at a different time.

Your right to redeem Units (and therefore, your right to receive payment) may be delayed:

- If the NYSE is closed (other than customary weekend and holiday closings);
- If the SEC determines that trading on the NYSE is restricted or that an emergency exists making sale or evaluation of the Securities not reasonably practical; or
- For any other period permitted by SEC order.

The Trustee is not liable to any person for any loss or damage which may result from such a suspension or postponement.

The Redemption Price.

The Redemption Price per Unit is determined by the Trustee by:

adding

1. cash in the Income and Capital Accounts of the Trust not designated to purchase Securities;
2. the aggregate underlying value of the Securities held in the Trust; and
3. dividends receivable on the Securities trading ex-dividend as of the date of computation; and

deducting

1. any applicable taxes or governmental charges that need to be paid out of the Trust;
2. any amounts owed to the Trustee for its advances;
3. estimated accrued expenses of the Trust, if any;
4. cash held for distribution to Unit holders of record of the Trust as of the business day before the evaluation being made;
5. liquidation costs for foreign Securities, if any; and
6. other liabilities incurred by the Trust; and

dividing

1. the result by the number of outstanding Units of such Trust.

Any remaining deferred sales charge on the Units when you redeem them will be deducted from your redemption proceeds. In addition, until the earlier of six months after the Initial Date of Deposit or the end of the initial offering period, the Redemption Price per Unit will include estimated organization costs as set forth under "Fee Table."

Removing Securities from the Trust

The portfolio of the Trust is not managed. However, we may, but are not required to, direct the Trustee to dispose of a Security in certain limited circumstances, including situations in which:

- The issuer of the Security defaults in the payment of a declared dividend;
- Any action or proceeding prevents the payment of dividends;
- There is any legal question or impediment affecting the Security;
- The issuer of the Security has breached a covenant which would affect the payment of dividends, the issuer's credit standing, or otherwise damage the sound investment character of the Security;
- The issuer has defaulted on the payment of any other of its outstanding obligations;
- There has been a public tender offer made for a Security or a merger or acquisition is announced affecting a Security, and that in our opinion the sale or tender of the Security is in the best interest of Unit holders;
- The sale of Securities is necessary or advisable (i) in order to maintain the qualification of the Trust as a "regulated investment company" or (ii) to provide funds to make any distribution for a taxable year in order to avoid imposition of any income or excise taxes on undistributed income in the Trust;

- The price of the Security has declined to such an extent, or such other credit factors exist, that in our opinion keeping the Security would be harmful to the Trust;
- As a result of the ownership of the Security, the Trust or its Unit holders would be a direct or indirect shareholder of a passive foreign investment company; or
- The sale of the Security is necessary for the Trust to comply with such federal and/or state securities laws, regulations and/or regulatory actions and interpretations which may be in effect from time to time.

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Except for instances in which the Trust acquires Replacement Securities, as described in "The FT Series," the Trust will generally not acquire any securities or other property other than the Securities. The Trustee, on behalf of the Trust and at the direction of the Sponsor, will vote for or against any offer for new or exchanged securities or property in exchange for a Security, such as those acquired in a merger or other transaction. If such exchanged securities or property are acquired by the Trust, at our instruction, they will either be sold or held in the Trust. In making the determination as to whether to sell or hold the exchanged securities or property we may get advice from the Portfolio Supervisor. Any proceeds received from the sale of Securities, exchanged securities or property will be credited to the Capital Account of the Trust for distribution to Unit holders or to meet redemption requests. The Trustee may retain and pay us or an affiliate of ours to act as agent for the Trust to facilitate selling Securities, exchanged securities or property from the Trust. If we or our affiliate act in this capacity, we will be held subject to the restrictions under the 1940 Act. As authorized by the Indenture, the Trustee may also employ a subsidiary or affiliate of the Trustee to act as broker in selling such Securities or property. The Trust will pay for these brokerage services at standard commission rates.

The Trustee may sell Securities designated by us, or, absent our direction, at its own discretion, in order to meet redemption requests or pay expenses. In designating Securities to be sold, we will try to maintain the proportionate relationship among the Securities. If this is not possible, the composition and diversification of the Trust may be changed.

Amending or Terminating the Indenture

Amendments. The Indenture may be amended by us and the Trustee without your consent:

- To cure ambiguities;
- To correct or supplement any defective or inconsistent provision;
- To make any amendment required by any governmental agency; or
- To make other changes determined not to be adverse to your best interests (as determined by us and the Trustee).

Termination. As provided by the Indenture, the Trust will terminate on the Mandatory Termination Date as stated in the "Summary of Essential Information." The Trust may be terminated earlier:

- Upon the consent of 100% of the Unit holders of the Trust;
- If the value of the Securities owned by the Trust as shown by any evaluation is less than the lower of \$2,000,000 or 20% of the total value of Securities deposited in the Trust during the initial offering period ("Discretionary Liquidation Amount"); or
- In the event that Units of the Trust not yet sold aggregating more than 60% of the Units of the Trust are tendered for redemption by underwriters, including the Sponsor.

If the Trust is terminated due to this last reason, we will refund your entire sales charge; however, termination of the Trust before the Mandatory Termination Date for any other stated reason will result in all remaining unpaid deferred sales charges on your Units being deducted from your termination proceeds. For various reasons, the Trust may be reduced below the Discretionary Liquidation Amount and could therefore be terminated before the Mandatory Termination Date.

Unless terminated earlier, the Trustee will begin to sell Securities in connection with the termination of the Trust during the period beginning

nine business days prior to, and no later than, the Mandatory Termination Date. We will determine the manner and timing of the sale of Securities. Because the Trustee must sell the Securities within a relatively short period of time, the sale of Securities as part of the termination process may result in a lower sales price than might otherwise be realized if such sale were not required at this time.

You will receive a cash distribution from the sale of the remaining Securities, along with your interest in the Income and Capital Accounts, within a reasonable time after the Trust is terminated. The Trustee will deduct from the Trust any accrued costs, expenses, advances or indemnities provided for by the Indenture, including estimated compensation of the Trustee and costs of liquidation and any amounts required as a reserve to pay any taxes or other governmental charges.

Information on the Sponsor, Trustee, FTPS Unit Servicing Agent and Evaluator

The Sponsor.

We, First Trust Portfolios L.P., specialize in the underwriting, trading and wholesale distribution of unit investment trusts under the "First Trust" brand name and other securities. An Illinois limited partnership formed in 1991, we took over the First Trust product line and act as Sponsor for successive series of:

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- The First Trust Combined Series
- FT Series (formerly known as The First Trust Special Situations Trust)
- The First Trust Insured Corporate Trust
- The First Trust of Insured Municipal Bonds
- The First Trust GNMA

The First Trust product line commenced with the first insured unit investment trust in 1974. To date we have deposited more than \$175 billion in First Trust unit investment trusts. Our employees include a team of professionals with many years of experience in the unit investment trust industry.

We are a member of FINRA and the Securities Investor Protection Corporation. Our principal offices are at 120 East Liberty Drive, Wheaton, Illinois 60187; telephone number (800) 621-1675. As of December 31, 2011, the total consolidated partners' capital of First Trust Portfolios L.P. and subsidiaries was \$30,265,155 (audited).

This information refers only to us and not to the Trust or to any series of the Trust or to any other dealer. We are including this information only to inform you of our financial responsibility and our ability to carry out our contractual obligations. We will provide more detailed financial information on request.

Code of Ethics. The Sponsor and the Trust have adopted a code of ethics requiring the Sponsor's employees who have access to information on Trust transactions to report personal securities transactions. The purpose of the code is to avoid potential conflicts of interest and to prevent fraud, deception or misconduct with respect to the Trust.

The Trustee.

The Trustee is The Bank of New York Mellon, a trust company organized under the laws of New York. The Bank of New York Mellon has its unit investment trust division offices at 101 Barclay Street, New York, New York 10286, telephone (800) 813-3074. If you have questions regarding your account or your Trust, please contact the Trustee at its unit investment trust division offices or your financial adviser. The Sponsor does not have access to individual account information. The Bank of New York Mellon is subject to supervision and examination by the Superintendent of the New York State Department of Financial Services and the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and its deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation to the extent permitted by law.

The Trustee has not participated in selecting the Securities; it only provides administrative services.

The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent.

The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent is FTP Services LLC, an Illinois limited

liability company formed in 2005 and an affiliate of the Sponsor. FTP Services LLC acts as record keeper, shareholder servicing agent and distribution agent for Units which are purchased and sold through the Fund/SERV(R) trading system or on a manual basis through FTP Services LLC. FTP Services LLC provides FTFS Units with administrative and distribution related services as described in this prospectus. The FTFS Unit Servicing Agent's address is 120 East Liberty Drive, Wheaton, Illinois 60187. If you have questions regarding the FTFS Units, you may call the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent at (866) 514-7768. The FTFS Unit Servicing Agent has not participated in selecting the Securities; it only provides administrative services to the FTFS Units. Fund/SERV(R) is a service of National Securities Clearing Corporation, a subsidiary of The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation.

Limitations of Liabilities of Sponsor, FTFS Unit Servicing Agent and Trustee.

Neither we, the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent nor the Trustee will be liable for taking any action or for not taking any action in good faith according to the Indenture. We will also not be accountable for errors in judgment. We will only be liable for our own willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence (ordinary negligence in the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent and Trustee's case) or reckless disregard of our obligations and duties. The Trustee is not liable for any loss or depreciation when the Securities are sold. If we fail to act under the Indenture, the Trustee may do so, and the Trustee will not be liable for any action it takes in good faith under the Indenture.

The Trustee will not be liable for any taxes or other governmental charges or interest on the Securities which the Trustee may be required to pay under any present or future law of the United States or of any other taxing authority with jurisdiction. Also, the Indenture states other provisions regarding the liability of the Trustee.

If we do not perform any of our duties under the Indenture or are not able to act or become bankrupt, or if our affairs are taken over by public authorities, then the Trustee may:

- Appoint a successor sponsor, paying them a reasonable rate not more than that stated by the SEC;
- Terminate the Indenture and liquidate the Trust; or
- Continue to act as Trustee without terminating the Indenture.

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The Evaluator.

The Evaluator is First Trust Advisors L.P., an Illinois limited partnership formed in 1991 and an affiliate of the Sponsor. The Evaluator's address is 120 East Liberty Drive, Wheaton, Illinois 60187.

The Trustee, Sponsor, FTFS Unit Servicing Agent and Unit holders may rely on the accuracy of any evaluation prepared by the Evaluator. The Evaluator will make determinations in good faith based upon the best available information, but will not be liable to the Trustee, Sponsor, FTFS Unit Servicing Agent or Unit holders for errors in judgment.

Other Information

Legal Opinions.

Our counsel is Chapman and Cutler LLP, 111 W. Monroe St., Chicago, Illinois 60603. They have passed upon the legality of the Units offered hereby and certain matters relating to federal tax law. Carter Ledyard & Milburn LLP acts as the Trustee's counsel.

Experts.

The Trust's statement of net assets, including the schedule of investments, as of the opening of business on the Initial Date of Deposit included in this prospectus, has been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their report appearing herein, and is included in reliance upon the report of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

Supplemental Information.

If you write or call the Sponsor, you will receive free of charge supplemental information about this Series, which has been filed with the SEC and to which we have referred throughout. This information

states more specific details concerning the nature, structure and risks of this product.

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First Trust (R)

Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17
FT 3971

Sponsor:

First Trust Portfolios L.P.
Member SIPC o Member FINRA
120 East Liberty Drive
Wheaton, Illinois 60187
1-800-621-1675

FTPS Unit Servicing Agent:

Trustee:

FTP Services LLC
120 East Liberty Drive
Wheaton, Illinois 60187
1-866-514-7768

The Bank of New York Mellon
101 Barclay Street
New York, New York 10286
1-800-813-3074
24-Hour Pricing Line:
1-800-446-0132

Please refer to the "Summary of Essential Information" for the Product Code.

When Units of the Trust are no longer available, this prospectus may be used as a preliminary prospectus for a future series, in which case you should note the following:

THE INFORMATION IN THE PROSPECTUS IS NOT COMPLETE AND MAY BE CHANGED. WE MAY NOT SELL, OR ACCEPT OFFERS TO BUY, SECURITIES OF A FUTURE SERIES UNTIL THAT SERIES HAS BECOME EFFECTIVE WITH THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION. NO SECURITIES CAN BE SOLD IN ANY STATE WHERE A SALE WOULD BE ILLEGAL.

This prospectus contains information relating to the above-mentioned unit investment trust, but does not contain all of the information about this investment company as filed with the SEC in Washington, D.C. under the:

- Securities Act of 1933 (file no. 333-185405) and
- Investment Company Act of 1940 (file no. 811-05903)

Information about the Trust, including its Code of Ethics, can be reviewed and copied at the SEC's Public Reference Room in Washington D.C. Information regarding the operation of the SEC's Public Reference Room may be obtained by calling the SEC at 1-202-942-8090.

Information about the Trust is available on the EDGAR Database on the SEC's Internet site at <http://www.sec.gov>.

To obtain copies at prescribed rates -

Write: Public Reference Section of the SEC
100 F Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20549
e-mail address: publicinfo@sec.gov

January 9, 2013

PLEASE RETAIN THIS PROSPECTUS FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

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First Trust (R)

The FT Series

Information Supplement

This Information Supplement provides additional information concerning the structure, operations and risks of the unit investment trust contained in FT 3971 not found in the prospectus for the Trust. This Information Supplement is not a prospectus and does not include all of the information you should consider before investing in the Trust. This Information Supplement should be read in conjunction with the prospectus for the Trust in which you are considering investing.

This Information Supplement is dated January 9, 2013. Capitalized terms have been defined in the prospectus.

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Risk Factors

Dividends. Shareholders of common stocks have rights to receive payments from the issuers of those common stocks that are generally subordinate to those of creditors of, or holders of debt obligations or preferred stocks of, such issuers. Shareholders of common stocks of the type held by the Trust have a right to receive dividends only when and if, and in the amounts, declared by the issuer's board of directors and have a right to participate in amounts available for distribution by the issuer only after all other claims on the issuer have been paid or provided for. Common stocks do not represent an obligation of the issuer and, therefore, do not offer any assurance of income or provide the same degree of protection of capital as do debt securities. The issuance of additional debt securities or preferred stock will create prior claims for payment of principal, interest and dividends which could adversely affect the ability and inclination of the issuer to declare or pay dividends on its common stock or the rights of holders of common stock with respect to assets of the issuer upon liquidation or bankruptcy. Cumulative preferred stock dividends must be paid before common stock dividends, and any cumulative preferred stock dividend omitted is added to future dividends payable to the holders of cumulative preferred stock. Preferred stockholders are also generally entitled to rights on liquidation which are senior to those of common stockholders.

Closed-End Funds. Closed-end mutual funds' portfolios are managed and their shares are generally listed on a securities exchange. The net asset value of closed-end fund shares will fluctuate with changes in the value of the underlying securities which the closed-end fund owns. In addition, for various reasons closed-end fund shares frequently trade at a discount from their net asset value in the secondary market. The amount of such discount from net asset value is subject to change from time to time in response to various factors. Closed-end funds' articles of incorporation may contain certain anti-takeover provisions that may have the effect of inhibiting a fund's possible conversion to open-end status and limiting the ability of other persons to acquire control of a fund. In certain circumstances, these provisions might also inhibit the

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ability of stockholders (including the Trust) to sell their shares at a premium over prevailing market prices. This characteristic is a risk separate and distinct from the risk that a fund's net asset value will decrease. In particular, this characteristic would increase the loss or

reduce the return on the sale of those closed-end fund shares which were purchased by a Trust at a premium. In the unlikely event that a closed-end fund converts to open-end status at a time when its shares are trading at a premium there would be an immediate loss in value to the Trust since shares of open-end funds trade at net asset value. Certain closed-end funds may have in place or may put in place in the future plans pursuant to which the fund may repurchase its own shares in the marketplace. Typically, these plans are put in place in an attempt by a fund's board of directors to reduce a discount on its share price. To the extent such a plan was implemented and shares owned by a Trust are repurchased by a fund, the Trust's position in that fund would be reduced and the cash would be distributed.

The Trust is prohibited from subscribing to a rights offering for shares of any of the closed-end funds in which they invest. In the event of a rights offering for additional shares of a fund, Unit holders should expect that their Trust will, at the completion of the offer, own a smaller proportional interest in such fund that would otherwise be the case. It is not possible to determine the extent of this dilution in share ownership without knowing what proportion of the shares in a rights offering will be subscribed. This may be particularly serious when the subscription price per share for the offer is less than the fund's net asset value per share. Assuming that all rights are exercised and there is no change in the net asset value per share, the aggregate net asset value of each shareholder's shares of common stock should decrease as a result of the offer. If a fund's subscription price per share is below that fund's net asset value per share at the expiration of the offer, shareholders would experience an immediate dilution of the aggregate net asset value of their shares of common stock as a result of the offer, which could be substantial.

Closed-end funds may utilize leveraging in their portfolios. Leveraging can be expected to cause increased price volatility for those fund's shares, and as a result, increased volatility for the price of the Units of a Trust. There can be no assurance that a leveraging strategy will be successful during any period in which it is employed.

Common Stocks. An investment in Units should be made with an understanding of the risks which an investment in common stocks entails, including the risk that the financial condition of the issuers of the Common Stocks or the general condition of the relevant stock market may worsen, and the value of the Common Stocks and therefore the value of the Units may decline. Common stocks are especially susceptible to general stock market movements and to volatile increases and decreases of value, as market confidence in and perceptions of the issuers change. These perceptions are based on unpredictable factors, including expectations regarding government, economic, monetary and fiscal policies, inflation and interest rates, economic expansion or contraction, and global or regional political, economic or banking crises. Both U.S. and foreign markets have experienced substantial volatility and significant declines recently as a result of certain or all of these factors.

Convertible Securities. Certain of the Closed-End Funds held by the Trust invest in convertible securities which include convertible subordinated debentures and corporate bonds ("Convertible Bonds") and cumulative convertible preferred stocks ("Convertible Preferred Stocks"). Convertible securities contain a conversion privilege which, under specified circumstances, offers the holder the right to exchange such security for common stock of the issuing corporation. Convertible Bonds obligate the issuing company to pay a stated annual rate of interest (or a stated dividend in the case of Convertible Preferred Stocks) and to return the principal amount after a specified period of time. The income offered by convertible securities is generally higher than the dividends received from the underlying common stock, but lower than similar quality non-convertible debt securities. Convertible securities are usually priced at a premium to their conversion value, i.e., the value of the common stock received if the holder were to exchange the convertible security.

The holder of the convertible security may choose at any time to exchange the convertible security for a specified number of shares of the common stock of the corporation, or occasionally a subsidiary company, at a specified price, as defined by the corporation when the security is issued. Accordingly, the value of the convertible obligation may generally be expected to increase (decrease) as the price of the associated common stock increases (decreases). Also, the market value of convertible securities tends to be influenced by the level of interest rates and tends to decline as interest rates increase and, conversely, to increase as interest rates decline. Convertible securities rank senior to common stocks in an issuer's capital structure, but are junior to non-convertible debt securities. As convertible securities are considered junior to any non-convertible debt securities issued by the

corporation, convertible securities are typically rated by established credit ratings agencies at one level below the rating on such corporation's non-convertible debt.

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Convertible securities are hybrid securities, combining the investment characteristics of both bonds and common stock. Like a bond (or preferred stock), a convertible security pays interest at a fixed rate (dividend), but may be converted into common stock at a specified price or conversion rate.

When the conversion price of the convertible security is significantly above the price of the issuer's common stock, a convertible security takes on the risk characteristics of a bond. At such times, the price of a convertible security will vary inversely with changes in the level of interest rates. In other words, when interest rates rise, prices of convertible securities will generally fall; conversely, when interest rates fall, prices of convertible securities will generally rise. This interest rate risk is in part offset by the income paid by the convertible securities.

In contrast, when the conversion price of a convertible security and the common stock price are close to one another, a convertible security will behave like a common stock. In such cases, the prices of convertible securities may exhibit the short-term price volatility characteristic of common stocks.

For these reasons Unit holders must be willing to accept the market risks of both bonds and common stocks. However, because convertible securities have characteristics of both common stocks and bonds, they tend to be less sensitive to interest rate changes than bonds of comparable maturity and quality, and less sensitive to stock market changes than fully invested common stock portfolios. Because of these factors and the hybrid nature of convertible securities, Unit holders should recognize that convertible securities are likely to perform quite differently than broadly-based measures of the stock and bond markets.

The market for convertible securities includes a larger proportion of small- to medium-size companies than the broad stock market (as measured by such indices as the Standard & Poor's 500 Composite Stock Price Index). Companies which issue convertible securities are often lower in credit quality, typically rated below "Investment Grade." Moreover, the credit rating of a company's convertible issuance is generally lower than the rating of the company's conventional debt issues since the convertible security is normally a "junior" security. Securities with such ratings are considered speculative, and thus pose a greater risk of default than investment grade securities.

High-risk securities may be thinly traded, which can adversely affect the prices at which such securities can be sold and can result in high transaction costs. Judgment plays a greater role in valuing high risk securities than securities for which more extensive quotations and last sale information are available. Adverse publicity and changing investor perceptions may affect the ability of outside price services to value securities.

During an economic downturn or a prolonged period of rising interest rates, the ability of issuers of debt to serve their payment obligations, meet projected goals, or obtain additional financing may be impaired.

An investment in Units of the Trust should be made with an understanding of the risks which an investment in convertible securities entails, including the risk that the financial condition of the issuers of the convertible securities or the general condition of the stock market or bond market may worsen and the value of the convertible securities and therefore the value of the Units may decline. Convertible securities may be susceptible to general stock market movements and to increases and decreases of value as market confidence in and perceptions of the issuers change. These perceptions are based on unpredictable factors including expectations regarding government, economic, monetary and fiscal policies, inflation and interest rates, economic expansion or contraction, and global or regional political, economic or banking crises. Convertible Preferred Stocks are also subject to Congressional reductions in the dividends-received deduction which would adversely affect the after-tax return to the corporate investors who can take advantage of the deduction. Such reductions also might adversely affect the value of preferred stocks in general. Holders of preferred stocks have rights to receive payments from the issuers of those preferred stocks that are generally subordinate to those of creditors of, or holders of debt obligations or, in some cases, senior preferred stocks of, such issuers. Convertible Preferred Stocks do not represent an

obligation of the issuer and, therefore, do not offer any assurance of income (since dividends on a preferred stock must be declared by the issuer's Board of Directors) or provide the same degree of protection of capital as do debt securities. Cumulative preferred stock dividends must be paid before common stock dividends and any cumulative preferred stock dividend omitted is added to future dividends payable to the holders of cumulative preferred stock. The issuance of additional debt securities or senior preferred stock will create prior claims for payment of principal and interest and senior dividends which could adversely affect the ability and inclination of the issuer to declare or pay dividends on its preferred stock or the rights of holders of preferred stock with respect to assets of the issuer upon liquidation or bankruptcy. The value of preferred stocks is subject to market fluctuations for as long as the preferred stocks remain outstanding, and thus the value of the Convertible Preferred Stocks in the Funds may be expected to fluctuate over the life of the Trust to values higher or lower than those prevailing on the Date of Deposit. Holders of Convertible Preferred Stocks incur more risk than holders of debt obligations because preferred stockholders, as owners of the entity, have generally inferior rights to receive payments from the issuer in comparison with the rights of creditors of or holders of debt obligations issued by the issuer.

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An investment in Units of the Trust should be made with an understanding of the risks which an investment in Convertible Bonds entails. Convertible Bonds are typically subordinated debentures and, therefore, the claims of senior creditors must be settled in full before any payment will be made to holders of Convertible Bonds in the event of insolvency or bankruptcy. Senior creditors typically include all other long-term debt issuers and bank loans. Convertible Bonds do, however, have a priority over common and preferred stock. Investors in Convertible Bonds pay for the conversion privilege by accepting a significantly lower yield-to-maturity than that concurrently offered by non-convertible bonds of equivalent quality.

Whether or not the convertible securities are listed on a national securities exchange, the principal trading market for the convertible securities may be in the over-the-counter market. As a result, the existence of a liquid trading market for the convertible securities may depend on whether dealers will make a market in the convertible securities. There can be no assurance that a market will be made for any of the convertible securities, that any market for the convertible securities will be maintained or of the liquidity of the convertible securities in any markets made.

Issues of Convertible Bonds and Convertible Preferred Stocks generally provide that the convertible security may be liquidated, either by a partial scheduled redemption pursuant to a sinking fund or by a refunding redemption pursuant to which, at the option of the issuer, all or part of the issue can be retired from any available funds, at prices which may or may not include a premium over the involuntary liquidation preference, which generally is the same as the par or stated value of the convertible security. In general, optional redemption provisions are more likely to be exercised when the convertible security is valued at a premium over par or stated value than when they are valued at a discount from par or stated value. Generally, the value of the convertible security will be at a premium over par when market interest rates fall below the coupon rate.

Senior Loans. Certain of the Closed-End Funds in the Trust invest in Senior Loans issued by banks, other financial institutions, and other investors to corporations, partnerships, limited liability companies and other entities to finance leveraged buyouts, recapitalizations, mergers, acquisitions, stock repurchases, debt refinancings and, to a lesser extent, for general operating and other purposes. An investment by Closed-End Funds in Senior Loans involves risk that the borrowers under Senior Loans may default on their obligations to pay principal or interest when due. Although Senior Loans may be secured by specific collateral, there can be no assurance that liquidation of collateral would satisfy the borrower's obligation in the event of non-payment or that such collateral could be readily liquidated. Senior Loans are typically structured as floating rate instruments in which the interest rate payable on the obligation fluctuates with interest rate changes. As a result, the yield on Closed-End Funds investing in Senior Loans will generally decline in a falling interest rate environment and increase in a rising interest rate environment. Senior Loans are generally below investment grade quality and may be unrated at the time of investment; are generally not registered with the SEC or state securities commissions; and are generally not listed on any securities exchange. In addition, the amount of public information available on Senior Loans is generally less extensive than that available for other types of assets.

High-Yield Securities. An investment in Units of the Trust should be made with an understanding of the risks that an investment in high-yield, high-risk, fixed-rate, domestic and foreign obligations or "junk" securities may entail, including increased credit risks and the risk that the value of the Units will decline, and may decline precipitously, with increases in interest rates. In recent years there have been wide fluctuations in interest rates and thus in the value of fixed-rate, obligations generally. Securities such as those included in the Closed-End Funds in the Trust are, under most circumstances, subject to greater market fluctuations and risk of loss of income and principal than are investments in lower-yielding, higher-rated securities, and their value may decline precipitously because of increases in interest rates, not only because the increases in rates generally decrease values, but also because increased rates may indicate a slowdown in the economy and a decrease in the value of assets generally that may adversely affect the credit of issuers of high-yield, high-risk securities resulting in a higher incidence of defaults among high-yield, high-risk securities. A slowdown in the economy, or a development adversely affecting an issuer's creditworthiness, may result in the issuer being unable to maintain earnings or sell assets at the rate and at the prices, respectively, that are required to produce sufficient cash flow to meet its interest and principal requirements. For an issuer that has outstanding both senior commercial bank debt and subordinated high-yield, high-risk securities, an increase in interest rates will increase that issuer's interest expense insofar as the interest rate on the bank debt is fluctuating. However, many leveraged issuers enter into interest rate protection agreements to fix or cap the interest rate on a large portion of their bank debt. This reduces exposure to increasing rates, but reduces the benefit to the issuer of declining rates. The Sponsor cannot predict future economic policies or their consequences or, therefore, the course or extent of any similar market fluctuations in the future.

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High-yield securities or "junk" bonds, the generic names for securities rated below "BBB-" by Standard & Poor's, or below "Baa3" by Moody's, are frequently issued by corporations in the growth stage of their development, by established companies whose operations or industries are depressed or by highly leveraged companies purchased in leveraged buyout transactions. The market for high-yield securities is very specialized and investors in it have been predominantly financial institutions. High-yield securities are generally not listed on a national securities exchange. Trading of high-yield securities, therefore, takes place primarily in over-the-counter markets which consist of groups of dealer firms that are typically major securities firms. Because the high-yield security market is a dealer market, rather than an auction market, no single obtainable price for a given security prevails at any given time. Prices are determined by negotiation between traders. The existence of a liquid trading market for the securities may depend on whether dealers will make a market in the securities. There can be no assurance that a market will be made for any of the securities, that any market for the securities will be maintained or of the liquidity of the securities in any markets made. Not all dealers maintain markets in all high-yield securities. Therefore, since there are fewer traders in these securities than there are in "investment grade" securities, the bid-offer spread is usually greater for high-yield securities than it is for investment grade securities. The price at which the securities may be sold to meet redemptions and the value of a Trust will be adversely affected if trading markets for the securities are limited or absent. If the rate of redemptions is great, the value of a Trust may decline to a level that requires liquidation.

Lower-rated securities tend to offer higher yields than higher-rated securities with the same maturities because the creditworthiness of the issuers of lower-rated securities may not be as strong as that of other issuers. Moreover, if a security is recharacterized as equity by the Internal Revenue Service for federal income tax purposes, the issuer's interest deduction with respect to the security will be disallowed and this disallowance may adversely affect the issuer's credit rating. Because investors generally perceive that there are greater risks associated with the lower-rated securities in the Closed-End Funds in a Trust, the yields and prices of these securities tend to fluctuate more than higher-rated securities with changes in the perceived quality of the credit of their issuers. In addition, the market value of high-yield, high-risk, fixed-income securities may fluctuate more than the market value of higher-rated securities since high-yield, high-risk, fixed-income securities tend to reflect short-term credit development to a greater extent than higher-rated securities. Lower-rated securities generally involve greater risks of loss of income and principal than higher-rated securities. Issuers of lower-rated securities may possess fewer creditworthiness characteristics than issuers of higher-rated securities and, especially in the case of issuers whose obligations or

credit standing have recently been downgraded, may be subject to claims by debtholders, owners of property leased to the issuer or others which, if sustained, would make it more difficult for the issuers to meet their payment obligations. High-yield, high-risk securities are also affected by variables such as interest rates, inflation rates and real growth in the economy. Therefore, investors should consider carefully the relative risks associated with investment in securities which carry lower ratings.

The value of the Units reflects the value of the portfolio securities, including the value (if any) of securities in default. Should the issuer of any security default in the payment of principal or interest, the funds in a Trust may incur additional expenses seeking payment on the defaulted security. Because amounts (if any) recovered by the funds in payment under the defaulted security may not be reflected in the value of the fund shares until actually received by the funds, and depending upon when a Unit holder purchases or sells his or her Units, it is possible that a Unit holder would bear a portion of the cost of recovery without receiving any portion of the payment recovered.

High-yield, high-risk securities are generally subordinated obligations. The payment of principal (and premium, if any), interest and sinking fund requirements with respect to subordinated obligations of an issuer is subordinated in right of payment to the payment of senior obligations of the issuer. Senior obligations generally include most, if not all, significant debt obligations of an issuer, whether existing at the time of issuance of subordinated debt or created thereafter. Upon any distribution of the assets of an issuer with subordinated obligations upon dissolution, total or partial liquidation or reorganization of or similar proceeding relating to the issuer, the holders of senior indebtedness will be entitled to receive payment in full before holders of subordinated indebtedness will be entitled to receive any payment. Moreover, generally no payment with respect to subordinated indebtedness may be made while there exists a default with respect to any senior indebtedness. Thus, in the event of insolvency, holders of senior indebtedness of an issuer generally will recover more, ratably, than holders of subordinated indebtedness of that issuer.

Obligations that are rated lower than "BBB-" by Standard & Poor's, or "Baa3" by Moody's, respectively, should be considered speculative as such ratings indicate a quality of less than investment grade. Investors should carefully review the objective of a Trust and consider its ability to assume the risks involved before making an investment in a Trust.

Preferred Securities. An investment in Units of the Trust should be made with an understanding of the risks which an investment in preferred stocks entails, including the risk that the financial condition of the

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issuers of the Securities or the general condition of the preferred stock market may worsen, and the value of the preferred stocks and therefore the value of the Units may decline. Preferred stocks may be susceptible to general stock market movements and to volatile increases and decreases of value as market confidence in and perceptions of the issuers change. These perceptions are based on unpredictable factors, including expectations regarding government, economic, monetary and fiscal policies, inflation and interest rates, economic expansion or contraction, market liquidity, and global or regional political, economic or banking crises. Preferred stocks are also vulnerable to Congressional reductions in the dividends-received deduction which would adversely affect the after-tax return to the investors who can take advantage of the deduction. Such a reduction might adversely affect the value of preferred stocks in general. Holders of preferred stocks, as owners of the entity, have rights to receive payments from the issuers of those preferred stocks that are generally subordinate to those of creditors of, or holders of debt obligations or, in some cases, other senior preferred stocks of, such issuers. Preferred stocks do not represent an obligation of the issuer and, therefore, do not offer any assurance of income or provide the same degree of protection of capital as do debt securities. The issuance of additional debt securities or senior preferred stocks will create prior claims for payment of principal and interest and senior dividends which could adversely affect the ability and inclination of the issuer to declare or pay dividends on its preferred stock or the rights of holders of preferred stock with respect to assets of the issuer upon liquidation or bankruptcy. The value of preferred stocks is subject to market fluctuations for as long as the preferred stocks remain outstanding, and thus the value of the Securities may be expected to fluctuate over the life of the Trust to values higher or lower than those prevailing on the Initial Date of Deposit.

REITs. An investment in Units of the Trust should be made with an

understanding of risks inherent in an investment in REITs specifically and real estate generally (in addition to securities market risks). Generally, these include economic recession, the cyclical nature of real estate markets, competitive overbuilding, unusually adverse weather conditions, changing demographics, changes in governmental regulations (including tax laws and environmental, building, zoning and sales regulations), increases in real estate taxes or costs of material and labor, the inability to secure performance guarantees or insurance as required, the unavailability of investment capital and the inability to obtain construction financing or mortgage loans at rates acceptable to builders and purchasers of real estate. Additional risks include an inability to reduce expenditures associated with a property (such as mortgage payments and property taxes) when rental revenue declines, and possible loss upon foreclosure of mortgaged properties if mortgage payments are not paid when due.

REITs are financial vehicles that have as their objective the pooling of capital from a number of investors in order to participate directly in real estate ownership or financing. REITs are generally fully integrated operating companies that have interests in income-producing real estate. Equity REITs emphasize direct property investment, holding their invested assets primarily in the ownership of real estate or other equity interests. REITs obtain capital funds for investment in underlying real estate assets by selling debt or equity securities in the public or institutional capital markets or by bank borrowing. Thus, the returns on common equities of the REITs in which the Trust invests will be significantly affected by changes in costs of capital and, particularly in the case of highly "leveraged" REITs (i.e., those with large amounts of borrowings outstanding), by changes in the level of interest rates. The objective of an equity REIT is to purchase income-producing real estate properties in order to generate high levels of cash flow from rental income and a gradual asset appreciation, and they typically invest in properties such as office, retail, industrial, hotel and apartment buildings and healthcare facilities.

REITs are a creation of the tax law. REITs essentially operate as a corporation or business trust with the advantage of exemption from corporate income taxes provided the REIT satisfies the requirements of Sections 856 through 860 of the Internal Revenue Code. The major tests for tax-qualified status are that the REIT (i) be managed by one or more trustees or directors, (ii) issue shares of transferable interest to its owners, (iii) have at least 100 shareholders, (iv) have no more than 50% of the shares held by five or fewer individuals, (v) invest substantially all of its capital in real estate related assets and derive substantially all of its gross income from real estate related assets and (vi) distributed at least 95% of its taxable income to its shareholders each year. If any REIT in a Trust's portfolio should fail to qualify for such tax status, the related shareholders (including such Trust) could be adversely affected by the resulting tax consequences.

The underlying value of the Securities and a Trust's ability to make distributions to Unit holders may be adversely affected by changes in national economic conditions, changes in local market conditions due to changes in general or local economic conditions and neighborhood characteristics, increased competition from other properties, obsolescence of property, changes in the availability, cost and terms of mortgage funds, the impact of present or future environmental legislation and compliance with environmental laws, the ongoing need for capital improvements, particularly in older properties, changes in real estate tax rates and other operating expenses, regulatory and economic

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impediments to raising rents, adverse changes in governmental rules and fiscal policies, dependency on management skill, civil unrest, acts of God, including earthquakes and other natural disasters (which may result in uninsured losses), acts of war, adverse changes in zoning laws, and other factors which are beyond the control of the issuers of the REITs in a Trust. The value of the REITs may at times be particularly sensitive to devaluation in the event of rising interest rates.

REITs may concentrate investments in specific geographic areas or in specific property types, i.e., hotels, shopping malls, residential complexes and office buildings. The impact of economic conditions on REITs can also be expected to vary with geographic location and property type. Investors should be aware the REITs may not be diversified and are subject to the risks of financing projects. REITs are also subject to defaults by borrowers, self-liquidation, the market's perception of the REIT industry generally, and the possibility of failing to qualify for pass-through of income under the Internal Revenue Code, and to maintain exemption from the Investment Company Act of 1940. A default by a borrower or lessee may cause the REIT to experience delays in enforcing its right as mortgagee or lessor and to incur significant costs related

to protecting its investments. In addition, because real estate generally is subject to real property taxes, the REITs in the Trust may be adversely affected by increases or decreases in property tax rates and assessments or reassessments of the properties underlying the REITs by taxing authorities. Furthermore, because real estate is relatively illiquid, the ability of REITs to vary their portfolios in response to changes in economic and other conditions may be limited and may adversely affect the value of the Units. There can be no assurance that any REIT will be able to dispose of its underlying real estate assets when advantageous or necessary.

The issuer of REITs generally maintains comprehensive insurance on presently owned and subsequently acquired real property assets, including liability, fire and extended coverage. However, certain types of losses may be uninsurable or not be economically insurable as to which the underlying properties are at risk in their particular locales. There can be no assurance that insurance coverage will be sufficient to pay the full current market value or current replacement cost of any lost investment. Various factors might make it impracticable to use insurance proceeds to replace a facility after it has been damaged or destroyed. Under such circumstances, the insurance proceeds received by a REIT might not be adequate to restore its economic position with respect to such property.

Under various environmental laws, a current or previous owner or operator of real property may be liable for the costs of removal or remediation of hazardous or toxic substances on, under or in such property. Such laws often impose liability whether or not the owner or operator caused or knew of the presence of such hazardous or toxic substances and whether or not the storage of such substances was in violation of a tenant's lease. In addition, the presence of hazardous or toxic substances, or the failure to remediate such property properly, may adversely affect the owner's ability to borrow using such real property as collateral. No assurance can be given that one or more of the REITs in the Trust may not be presently liable or potentially liable for any such costs in connection with real estate assets they presently own or subsequently acquire while such REITs are held in the Trust.

Foreign Issuers. Since certain of the Securities in the Trust are, or contain, securities of foreign issuers, an investment in the Trust involves certain investment risks that are different in some respects from an investment in a trust which invests entirely in the securities of domestic issuers. These investment risks include future political or governmental restrictions which might adversely affect the payment or receipt of payment of dividends on the relevant Securities, the possibility that the financial condition of the issuers of the Securities may become impaired or that the general condition of the relevant stock market may worsen (both of which would contribute directly to a decrease in the value of the Securities and thus in the value of the Units), the limited liquidity and relatively small market capitalization of the relevant securities market, expropriation or confiscatory taxation, economic uncertainties and foreign currency devaluations and fluctuations. In addition, for foreign issuers that are not subject to the reporting requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, there may be less publicly available information than is available from a domestic issuer. Also, foreign issuers are not necessarily subject to uniform accounting, auditing and financial reporting standards, practices and requirements comparable to those applicable to domestic issuers. The securities of many foreign issuers are less liquid and their prices more volatile than securities of comparable domestic issuers. In addition, fixed brokerage commissions and other transaction costs on foreign securities exchanges are generally higher than in the United States and there is generally less government supervision and regulation of exchanges, brokers and issuers in foreign countries than there is in the United States. However, due to the nature of the issuers of the Securities selected for the Trust, the Sponsor believes that adequate information will be available to allow the Supervisor to provide portfolio surveillance for the Trust.

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Securities issued by non-U.S. issuers generally pay dividends in foreign currencies and are principally traded in foreign currencies. Therefore, there is a risk that the United States dollar value of these securities will vary with fluctuations in the U.S. dollar foreign exchange rates for the various Securities.

On the basis of the best information available to the Sponsor at the present time, none of the Securities in the Trust are subject to exchange control restrictions under existing law which would materially interfere with payment to the Trust of dividends due on, or proceeds from the sale of, the Securities. However, there can be no assurance that exchange control regulations might not be adopted in the future

which might adversely affect payment to the Trust. The adoption of exchange control regulations and other legal restrictions could have an adverse impact on the marketability of international securities in the Trust and on the ability of the Trust to satisfy their obligation to redeem Units tendered to the Trustee for redemption. In addition, restrictions on the settlement of transactions on either the purchase or sale side, or both, could cause delays or increase the costs associated with the purchase and sale of the foreign Securities and correspondingly could affect the price of the Units.

Investors should be aware that it may not be possible to buy all Securities at the same time because of the unavailability of any Security, and restrictions applicable to a Trust relating to the purchase of a Security by reason of the federal securities laws or otherwise.

Foreign securities generally have not been registered under the Securities Act of 1933 and may not be exempt from the registration requirements of such Act. Sales of non-exempt Securities by a Trust in the United States securities markets are subject to severe restrictions and may not be practicable. Accordingly, sales of these Securities by a Trust will generally be effected only in foreign securities markets. Although the Sponsor does not believe that the Trust will encounter obstacles in disposing of the Securities, investors should realize that the Securities may be traded in foreign countries where the securities markets are not as developed or efficient and may not be as liquid as those in the United States. The value of the Securities will be adversely affected if trading markets for the Securities are limited or absent.

Emerging Markets. An investment in Units of the Trust should be made with an understanding of the risks inherent with investing in certain smaller and emerging markets. Compared to more mature markets, some emerging markets may have a low level of regulation, enforcement of regulations and monitoring of investors' activities. Those activities may include practices such as trading on material non-public information. The securities markets of developing countries are not as large as the more established securities markets and have substantially less trading volume, resulting in a lack of liquidity and high price volatility. There may be a high concentration of market capitalization and trading volume in a small number of issuers representing a limited number of industries as well as a high concentration of investors and financial intermediaries. These factors may adversely affect the timing and pricing of the acquisition or disposal of securities.

In certain emerging markets, registrars are not subject to effective government supervision nor are they always independent from issuers. The possibility of fraud, negligence, undue influence being exerted by the issuer or refusal to recognize ownership exists, which, along with other factors, could result in the registration of a shareholding being completely lost. Investors should therefore be aware that a Trust could suffer loss arising from these registration problems. In addition, the legal remedies in emerging markets are often more limited than the remedies available in the United States.

Practices pertaining to the settlement of securities transactions in emerging markets involve higher risks than those in developed markets, in large part because of the need to use brokers and counterparties who are less well capitalized, and custody and registration of assets in some countries may be unreliable. As a result, brokerage commissions and other fees are generally higher in emerging markets and the procedures and rules governing foreign transactions and custody may involve delays in payment, delivery or recovery of money or investments. Delays in settlement could result in investment opportunities being missed if a Trust is unable to acquire or dispose of a security. Certain foreign investments may also be less liquid and more volatile than U.S. investments, which may mean at times that such investments are unable to be sold at desirable prices.

Political and economic structures in emerging markets often change rapidly, which may cause instability. In adverse social and political circumstances, governments have been involved in policies of expropriation, confiscatory taxation, nationalization, intervention in the securities market and trade settlement, and imposition of foreign investment restrictions and exchange controls, and these could be repeated in the future. In addition to withholding taxes on investment income, some governments in emerging markets may impose different capital gains taxes on foreign investors. Foreign investments may also be subject to the risks of seizure by a foreign government and the

currency. Additionally, some governments exercise substantial influence over the private economic sector and the political and social uncertainties that exist for many developing countries are considerable.

Another risk common to most developing countries is that the economy is heavily export oriented and, accordingly, is dependent upon international trade. The existence of overburdened infrastructures and obsolete financial systems also presents risks in certain countries, as do environmental problems. Certain economies also depend to a large degree upon exports of primary commodities and, therefore, are vulnerable to changes in commodity prices which, in turn, may be affected by a variety of factors.

Small-Cap Companies. While historically small-cap company stocks have outperformed the stocks of large companies, the former have customarily involved more investment risk as well. Small-cap companies may have limited product lines, markets or financial resources; may lack management depth or experience; and may be more vulnerable to adverse general market or economic developments than large companies. Some of these companies may distribute, sell or produce products which have recently been brought to market and may be dependent on key personnel.

The prices of small company securities are often more volatile than prices associated with large company issues, and can display abrupt or erratic movements at times, due to limited trading volumes and less publicly available information. Also, because small-cap companies normally have fewer shares outstanding and these shares trade less frequently than large companies, it may be more difficult for the trusts which contain these securities to buy and sell significant amounts of such shares without an unfavorable impact on prevailing market prices.

Litigation

Tobacco Industry. Certain of the issuers of Securities in the Trust may be involved in the manufacture, distribution and sale of tobacco products. Pending litigation proceedings against such issuers in the United States and abroad cover a wide range of matters including product liability and consumer protection. Damages claimed in such litigation alleging personal injury (both individual and class actions), and in health cost recovery cases brought by governments, labor unions and similar entities seeking reimbursement for healthcare expenditures, aggregate many billions of dollars.

In November 1998, five of the largest tobacco companies in the United States entered into the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement ("MSA") with 46 states to settle state lawsuits to recover costs associated with treating smoking-related illnesses. According to the MSA, the tobacco industry is projected to pay the settling states in excess of \$200 billion over 25 years. Four states settled their tobacco cases separately from the MSA.

In March 2001, five states initiated court proceedings to stop R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company ("R.J. Reynolds") from violating provisions of the MSA. The lawsuits, filed in state courts of Arizona, California, New York, Ohio and Washington, seek enforcement of restrictions on marketing, advertising and promotional activities that R.J. Reynolds agreed to under the terms of the MSA. In June 2002, a California court ruled that R.J. Reynolds unlawfully placed cigarette ads in magazines with a large percentage of readers aged 12-17, in violation of the MSA. As a result, R.J. Reynolds was ordered to pay \$20 million in sanctions plus attorneys' fees and costs. An Arizona court also found R.J. Reynolds had violated the MSA. In July 2004, R.J. Reynolds and Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation ("B&W") combined R.J. Reynolds and the U.S. assets, liabilities and operations of B&W to form Reynolds American Inc.

On December 15, 2005, the Illinois Supreme Court reversed a \$10.1 billion verdict against Altria Group's Philip Morris USA division ("Philip Morris") in what is known as the Price case, ordering a lower court to dismiss the case in which the company was accused of defrauding customers into thinking "light" cigarettes were safer than regular ones. The Court held that the Federal Trade Commission specifically authorized the use of "light" and "low tar" to describe the cigarettes, and, therefore, Philip Morris is not liable under the Illinois Consumer Fraud Act, even if the terms may be deemed false, deceptive or misleading. The case was decided on the basis of a state statute and not federal preemption. The initial \$10.1 billion judgment in the Price case was handed down against Philip Morris by a trial court judge in March 2003. The Illinois Supreme Court took the unusual step of bypassing the appellate court in hearing the case on appeal directly from the trial court. The size of the original award put the company at risk for filing bankruptcy protection. In addition, because Philip Morris accounts for more than half of the annual tobacco-settlement payments to the states under the 1998 MSA, such

payments could have been in jeopardy. On May 5, 2006 the Illinois Supreme Court denied the plaintiff's motion for a rehearing, and on November 27, 2006 the Supreme Court of the United States denied certiorari.

In a suit brought by the Department of Justice against Altria and other cigarette companies, a U.S. District Court ruled on August 17, 2006, that the defendants violated the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt

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Organizations Act ("RICO"). However, the court refused to grant the \$10 billion smoking cessation campaign and \$4 billion youth counter-marketing campaign remedies requested by the government. The court did rule that Philip Morris must remove "light" and "ultra light" from its packaging. Altria is appealing this verdict.

On July 6, 2006, the Florida Supreme Court decertified a class and overturned a trial court's \$145 billion punitive damages award against Philip Morris as excessive and improper as a matter of law.

On December 15, 2008 the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that consumers may sue Philip Morris under state unfair trade laws. The Court held that neither the Federal Trade Commission's actions nor the Labeling Act, which sets forth the required cigarette warning labels, preempted a lawsuit based on state law. The Court noted that the Labeling Act mandates labels aimed at providing adequate health warnings, and it bars states from requiring additional health warnings. But the Labeling Act does not prevent claims that cigarettes labeled as "light" or "low tar" are fraudulent, deceptive or misleading.

Additional pending and future litigation and/or legislation could adversely affect the value, operating revenues, financial position and sustainability of tobacco companies. The Sponsor is unable to predict the outcome of litigation pending against tobacco companies or how the current uncertainty concerning regulatory and legislative measures will ultimately be resolved. These and other possible developments may have a significant impact upon both the price of such Securities and the value of Units of Trusts containing such Securities.

Common Stocks Selected for Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17

DOMESTIC STOCKS

The Buckle, Inc., headquartered in Kearney, Nebraska, is a retailer of casual apparel for young men and women. The company markets mostly brand name apparel, including denims, sportswear, outerwear, shoes and accessories.

CenturyLink, Inc., headquartered in Monroe, Louisiana, is a regional diversified communications company engaged primarily in providing local exchange telephone services and wireless telephone communications services.

Cliffs Natural Resources Inc., headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, operates iron ore mines in the United States and eastern Canada. The company produces iron ore pellets, selling the majority of its product to integrated steel companies in the United States and Canada.

Diamond Offshore Drilling, Inc., headquartered in Houston, Texas, together with its subsidiaries, operates as an offshore oil and gas drilling contractor worldwide.

Federated Investors, Inc. (Class B), headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and its subsidiaries sponsor, market and provide investment advisory, distribution and administrative services primarily to mutual funds. The company also provides services to corporations, employee benefit plans and others.

HollyFrontier Corporation, headquartered in Dallas, Texas, is an independent petroleum refiner that produces high-value light products such as gasoline, diesel fuel and jet fuel.

Lexmark International, Inc., headquartered in Lexington, Kentucky, develops, manufactures and supplies printing solutions and products, including laser and inkjet printers and associated supplies for the office and home markets.

Lockheed Martin Corporation, headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, engages in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology products and services ranging from aircraft, spacecraft and launch vehicles to missiles, electronics,

information systems and energy management.

Lorillard, Inc., headquartered in Greensboro, North Carolina, is engaged in the manufacture and marketing of cigarettes. The company sells to distributors and retailers in the United States.

Mercury General Corporation, headquartered in Los Angeles, California, through its subsidiaries, writes private passenger automobile insurance and commercial automobile insurance.

Pepco Holdings, Inc., headquartered in Washington, D.C., is a public utility company managing several utility operations. The largest component of the company's business is power delivery, which is conducted through its subsidiaries, Pepco, Delmarva Power & Light Company and Atlantic City Electric Company.

Pitney Bowes Inc., headquartered in Stamford, Connecticut, is a provider of global, integrated mail and document management solutions for organizations of all sizes.

PPL Corporation, headquartered in Allentown, Pennsylvania, is an energy and utility holding company that, through its subsidiaries, generates electricity in power plants in the northeastern and western United States; markets wholesale or retail energy in 42 states and Canada; delivers electricity to customers in the United States, United Kingdom and Latin America; and provides energy services for businesses in the mid-Atlantic and northeastern United States.

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Regal Entertainment Group (Class A), headquartered in Centennial, Colorado, is a motion picture exhibitor operating a theatre circuit in the United States.

Southern Copper Corporation, headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, engages in mining of open pit mines; milling and flotation of copper ore to produce copper concentrates; smelting of copper concentrates to produce blister copper; and refining blister copper to produce copper cathodes. The company operates the Toquepala and Cuajone open pit mines in the Andes, Peru; and the Cananea mine and La Caridad mine in northern Mexico.

UIL Holdings Corporation, headquartered in New Haven, Connecticut, a holding company, is engaged in the production, purchase, transmission, and distribution of electricity for residential, commercial, and industrial customers in southwestern Connecticut.

Valassis Communications, Inc., headquartered in Livonia, Michigan, is a print media company in the field of sales promotion, generating most of its revenues by printing and publishing cents-off coupons and other consumer purchase incentives primarily for package goods manufacturers.

Vectren Corporation, headquartered in Evansville, Indiana, is a public utility holding company whose subsidiaries provide natural gas distribution and generate, transmit, distribute and sell electric energy to counties in southwestern Indiana.

Werner Enterprises, Inc., headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska, is a transportation company engaged in hauling truckload shipments of general commodities in both interstate and intrastate commerce.

Wynn Resorts, Limited, headquartered in Las Vegas, Nevada, through its subsidiaries, engages in the design, development, financing and construction of destination casino resorts and operates one casino resort located in Las Vegas and another located in Macau, China.

INTERNATIONAL STOCKS

Administradora de Fondos de Pensiones Provida SA (ADR), headquartered in Santiago, Chile, offers private pension fund administration and related services in the Republic of Chile.

AstraZeneca Plc (ADR), headquartered in London, England, is a holding company. Through its subsidiaries, the company researches, develops and makes ethical (prescription) pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals; and provides disease-specific healthcare services. Pharmaceutical products are focused on three areas: oncology, primary care and specialist/hospital care.

Daimler AG, headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, designs, manufactures, assembles and sells passenger cars and commercial trucks under the brand names "Mercedes-Benz" and "Daimler." The company also provides related

financial services for its automotive and commercial operations.

Delhaize Group (ADR), headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, together with its subsidiaries, engages in the operation of food supermarkets in the United States, Belgium, southeastern Europe, and Asia.

Ecopetrol S.A. (ADR), headquartered in Bogota, Colombia, engages primarily in the exploration, production, refining, transportation and commercialization of crude oil and gas in Colombia.

Giant Interactive Group, Inc. (ADR), headquartered in Shanghai, China, develops and operates online games in China.

Just Energy Group Inc., headquartered in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, engages in the sale of natural gas and electricity in Canada and the United States.

KT Corporation (ADR), headquartered in Songnam, South Korea, is a prominent South Korean integrated wired & wireless telecommunication service provider.

LUKOIL (ADR), headquartered in Moscow, Russia, is Russia's premier integrated oil company, producing, refining and selling oil and oil products. The company accounts for approximately 19% of Russia's crude oil production.

LyondellBasell Industries NV, headquartered in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, together with its subsidiaries, primarily manufactures and sells chemicals and polymers worldwide.

Seagate Technology, headquartered in Dublin, Ireland, is engaged in the design, manufacture and marketing of rigid disc drives, used as the primary medium for storing electronic information in systems ranging from desktop computers and consumer electronics to data centers.

SK Telecom Co., Ltd. (ADR), headquartered in Seoul, South Korea, provides wireless telecommunications services, including cellular and paging services, in Korea.

SouFun Holdings Ltd. (ADR), headquartered in Beijing, China, operates a real estate Internet portal in the People's Republic of China.

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STMicroelectronics N.V., headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, designs, develops, makes and markets a broad range of semiconductor integrated circuits and discrete devices used in a variety of microelectronic applications, including telecommunications and computer systems, consumer products, automotive products and industrial automation and control systems.

Telecom Argentina S.A. (ADR), headquartered in Buenos Aires, Argentina, through its subsidiaries, provides fixed-line public telecommunications services, international long-distance service, data transmission, Internet services and directory publishing services in Argentina.

Telefonica Brasil, S.A. (ADR), headquartered in Sao Paulo, Brazil, provides fixed-line telecommunications services in the state of Sao Paulo under a concession agreement granted by the federal government of Brazil.

Total S.A. (ADR), headquartered in Courbevoie, France, is an international integrated oil and gas and specialty chemical company with operations in more than 130 countries. The company engages in all areas of the petroleum industry, from exploration and production to refining and shipping.

Tronox Ltd. (Class A), headquartered in Stamford, Connecticut, is a global chemical company involved in the titanium products industry.

Vale S.A. (ADR), headquartered in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, is a large producer and exporter of iron ore and pellets, as well as a producer of manganese and ferro-alloys, which are very important raw materials for steelmaking. The company also produces copper, bauxite, kaolin, potash, alumina and aluminum.

Yanzhou Coal Mining Company Ltd. (ADR), headquartered in Zoucheng City, Shandong Province, China, engages in underground mining, preparation, and sale of coal in China and Australia.

REITs

Commonwealth REIT, headquartered in Newton, Massachusetts, is a real estate investment trust that owns and leases commercial office buildings and senior housing properties throughout the United States.

CYS Investments Inc., headquartered in New York, New York, is a real estate investment trust that is a specialty finance company with the objective of achieving consistent risk-adjusted investment income. The company invests on a leveraged basis for which the principal and interest payments are guaranteed exclusively in whole-pool residential mortgage pass-through securities.

EPR Properties, headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, is a self-managed real estate investment trust engaged in acquiring and developing entertainment properties including megaplex theatres and entertainment-themed retail centers.

Franklin Street Properties Corp., headquartered in Wakefield, Massachusetts, is a real estate investment trust that provides real estate and investment banking/investment services in the United States.

Government Properties Income Trust, headquartered in Newton, Massachusetts, operates as a real estate investment trust that primarily owns and leases office buildings leased mainly to government tenants.

Highwood Properties, Inc., headquartered in Raleigh, North Carolina, is a real estate investment trust which acquires, develops, manages and leases suburban office and industrial properties through its operating partnership and subsidiaries. The company operates in the southeastern and midwestern regions of the United States.

Hospitality Properties Trust, headquartered in Newton, Massachusetts, is a self-managed real estate investment trust formed to buy, own and lease hotels to unaffiliated hotel operators.

Invesco Mortgage Capital Inc., headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, operates as a mortgage real estate investment trust.

Lexington Realty Trust, headquartered in New York, New York, is a self-managed real estate investment trust that acquires, owns and manages a geographically diverse portfolio of net leased office, industrial and retail properties.

LTC Properties, Inc., headquartered in Malibu, California, is a self-managed real estate investment trust that primarily invests in long-term care and other healthcare-related properties through mortgage loans, property lease transactions and other investments.

Mack Cali Realty Corporation, headquartered in Edison, New Jersey, is a self-managed real estate investment trust that owns and operates a real estate portfolio comprised predominantly of Class A office and office/flex properties located primarily in the Northeast.

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Medical Properties Trust Inc., headquartered in Birmingham, Alabama, is a real estate investment trust that acquires and develops healthcare facilities and leases the facilities to healthcare operating companies.

MFA Financial, Inc., headquartered in New York, New York, is a self-managed real estate investment trust which is primarily engaged in the business of investing in high-grade adjustable-rate mortgage-backed securities.

National Health Investors, Inc., headquartered in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, is a real estate investment trust that invests in income-producing healthcare properties primarily in the long-term care industry.

Newcastle Investment Corp., headquartered in New York, New York, operates as a real estate investment and finance company that invests in and manages a portfolio consisting primarily of real estate securities.

OMEGA Healthcare Investors, Inc., headquartered in Timonium, Maryland, operates as a real estate investment trust that invests in income-producing healthcare facilities, principally long-term care facilities.

PennyMac Mortgage Investment Trust, headquartered in Moorpark, California, is a real estate investment trust that primarily invests in residential mortgage loans and mortgage-related assets.

Redwood Trust, Inc., headquartered in Mill Valley, California, is a self-managed real estate investment trust specializing in owning, financing and credit-enhancing high-quality jumbo residential mortgage loans

nationwide.

Senior Housing Properties Trust, headquartered in Newton, Massachusetts, is a real estate investment trust that invests in senior housing real estate, including apartment buildings for aged residents, independent living properties, assisted living facilities and nursing homes.

Starwood Property Trust Inc., headquartered in Greenwich, Connecticut, a real estate investment trust, primarily focuses on originating, investing in, financing, and managing commercial mortgage loans, commercial mortgage-backed securities, commercial real estate debt investments, and other commercial real estate-related debt investments.

We have obtained the foregoing company descriptions from third-party sources we deem reliable.

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CONTENTS OF REGISTRATION STATEMENT

A. Bonding Arrangements of Depositor:

First Trust Portfolios L.P. is covered by a Brokers' Fidelity Bond, in the total amount of \$2,000,000, the insurer being National Union Fire Insurance Company of Pittsburgh.

B. This Registration Statement on Form S-6 comprises the following papers and documents:

The facing sheet

The Prospectus

The signatures

Exhibits

S-1

SIGNATURES

The Registrant, FT 3971, hereby identifies The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 4; The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 18; The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 69; The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 108; The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 119; The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 190; FT 286; The First Trust Combined Series 272; FT 412; FT 438; FT 556; FT 754; FT 1102; FT 1179; FT 1180; FT 1221; FT 1222; FT 1318; FT 1392; FT 1393; FT 1422; FT 1423; FT 1524; FT 1525; FT 1573; FT 1590; FT 1635; FT 1638; FT 1639; FT 1693; FT 1711; FT 1712; FT 1770; FT 1809; FT 1829; FT 1859; FT 1863; FT 1888; FT 1894; FT 1911; FT 1937; FT 1977; FT 1991; FT 1994; FT 2038; FT 2051; FT 2057; FT 2079; FT 2092; FT 2106; FT 2107; FT 2126; FT 2159; FT 2165; FT 2170; FT 2181; FT 2220; FT 2253; FT 2261; FT 2311; FT 2326; FT 2356; FT 2364; FT 2386; FT 2408; FT 2427; FT 2462; FT 2482; FT 2488; FT 2489; FT 2517; FT 2530; FT 2548; FT 2603; FT 2611; FT 2617; FT 2618; FT 2659; FT 2668; FT 2681; FT 2709; FT 2746; FT 2747; FT 2752; FT 2753; FT 2772; FT 2824; FT 2866; FT 2871; FT 2879; FT 2884; FT 2893; FT 2935; FT 2939; FT 3007; FT 3008; FT 3016; FT 3017; FT 3022; FT 3024; FT 3025; FT 3032; FT 3109; FT 3128; FT 3161; FT 3166; FT 3167; FT 3183; FT 3196; FT 3260; FT 3266; FT 3302; FT 3306; FT 3310; FT 3311; FT 3320; FT 3335; FT 3336; FT 3367; FT 3370; FT 3397; FT 3398; FT 3400; FT 3412; FT 3419; FT 3428; FT 3430; FT 3438; FT 3449; FT 3451; FT 3452; FT 3453; FT 3472; FT 3480; FT 3514; FT 3520; FT 3521; FT 3527; FT 3529; FT 3530; FT 3548; FT 3568; FT 3569; FT 3570; FT 3572; FT 3588; FT 3590; FT 3607; FT 3615; FT 3616; FT 3617; FT 3645; FT 3646; FT 3647; FT 3650; FT 3672; FT 3689; FT 3690; FT 3691; FT 3701; FT 3706; FT 3729; FT 3740; FT 3743; FT 3745; FT 3746; FT 3768; FT 3780; FT 3783; FT 3784; FT 3845; FT 3889; FT 3897; FT 3906; FT 3907; FT 3925 and FT 3940 for purposes of the representations required by Rule 487 and represents the following:

(1) that the portfolio securities deposited in the series with respect to which this Registration Statement is being filed do not differ materially in type or quality from those deposited in such previous series;

(2) that, except to the extent necessary to identify the specific portfolio securities deposited in, and to provide essential financial information for, the series with respect to the securities of which this Registration Statement is being filed, this Registration Statement does not contain disclosures that differ in any material respect from those contained in the registration statements for such previous series as to which the effective date was determined by the Commission or the staff; and

(3) that it has complied with Rule 460 under the Securities Act of 1933.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the Registrant, FT 3971, has duly caused this Amendment to the Registration Statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Wheaton and State of Illinois on January 9, 2013.

FT 3971

By First Trust Portfolios L.P.
Depositor

By Elizabeth H. Bull
Senior Vice President

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Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this Amendment to the Registration Statement has been signed below by the following person in the capacity and on the date indicated:

Name	Title*	Date
James A. Bowen	Director of The Charger Corporation, the) General Partner of First Trust) Portfolios L.P.)))) Elizabeth H. Bull) Attorney-in-Fact**	January 9, 2013

* The title of the person named herein represents his capacity in and relationship to First Trust Portfolios L.P., the Depositor.

** An executed copy of the related power of attorney was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission in connection with the Amendment No. 2 to Form S-6 of FT 2669 (File No. 333-169625) and the same is hereby incorporated herein by this reference.

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CONSENT OF INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM

We consent to the use in this Amendment No. 2 to Registration Statement No. 333-185405 on Form S-6 of our report dated January 9, 2013, relating to the financial statement of FT 3971, comprising Tactical Income Portfolio, Series 17, appearing in the Prospectus, which is a part of such Registration Statement, and to the reference to us under the heading "Experts" in such Prospectus.

/s/ DELOITTE & TOUCHE LLP

Chicago, Illinois
January 9, 2013

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CONSENT OF COUNSEL

The consent of counsel to the use of its name in the Prospectus included in this Registration Statement will be contained in its opinion to be filed as Exhibit 3.1 of the Registration Statement.

CONSENT OF FIRST TRUST ADVISORS L.P.

The consent of First Trust Advisors L.P. to the use of its name in the Prospectus included in the Registration Statement will be filed as Exhibit 4.1 to the Registration Statement.

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EXHIBIT INDEX

1.1 Form of Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust for FT 785 and certain subsequent Series, effective December 9, 2003 among First Trust

Portfolios L.P., as Depositor, The Bank of New York Mellon, as Trustee, First Trust Advisors L.P., as Evaluator, and First Trust Advisors L.P., as Portfolio Supervisor (incorporated by reference to Amendment No. 1 to Form S-6 [File No. 333-110799] filed on behalf of FT 785).

- 1.1.1 Form of Trust Agreement for FT 3971 and certain subsequent Series, effective January 9, 2013 among First Trust Portfolios L.P., as Depositor, The Bank of New York Mellon, as Trustee, First Trust Advisors L.P., as Evaluator, First Trust Advisors L.P., as Portfolio Supervisor, and FTP Services LLC, as FTPS Unit Servicing Agent.
- 1.2 Copy of Certificate of Limited Partnership of First Trust Portfolios L.P. (incorporated by reference to Amendment No. 1 to Form S-6 [File No. 33-42683] filed on behalf of The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 18).
- 1.3 Copy of Amended and Restated Limited Partnership Agreement of First Trust Portfolios L.P. (incorporated by reference to Amendment No. 1 to Form S-6 [File No. 33-42683] filed on behalf of The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 18).
- 1.4 Copy of Articles of Incorporation of The Charger Corporation, the general partner of First Trust Portfolios L.P., Depositor (incorporated by reference to Amendment No. 1 to Form S-6 [File No. 33-42683] filed on behalf of The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 18).
- 1.5 Copy of By-Laws of The Charger Corporation, the general partner of First Trust Portfolios L.P., Depositor (incorporated by reference to Amendment No. 2 to Form S-6 [File No. 333-169625] filed on behalf of FT 2669).
- 1.6 Underwriter Agreement (incorporated by reference to Amendment No. 1 to Form S-6 [File No. 33-42755] filed on behalf of The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 19).
- 2.1 Copy of Certificate of Ownership (included in Exhibit 1.1 filed herewith on page 2 and incorporated herein by reference).

S-6

- 2.2 Copy of Code of Ethics (incorporated by reference to Amendment No. 1 to Form S-6 [File No. 333-156964] filed on behalf of FT 1987).
- 3.1 Opinion of counsel as to legality of securities being registered.
- 4.1 Consent of First Trust Advisors L.P.
- 6.1 List of Directors and Officers of Depositor and other related information (incorporated by reference to Amendment No. 1 to Form S-6 [File No. 33-42683] filed on behalf of The First Trust Special Situations Trust, Series 18).
- 7.1 Power of Attorney executed by the Director listed on page S-3 of this Registration Statement (incorporated by reference to Amendment No. 2 to Form S-6 [File No. 333-169625] filed on behalf of FT 2669).

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MEMORANDUM

FT 3971
File No. 333-185405

The Prospectus and the Indenture filed with Amendment No. 2 of the Registration Statement on Form S-6 have been revised to reflect information regarding the execution of the Indenture and the deposit of Securities on January 9, 2013 and to set forth certain statistical data based thereon. In addition, there are a number of other changes described below.

THE PROSPECTUS

Cover Page The date of the Trust has been added.

Page 3 The following information for the Trust appears:
The Aggregate Value of Securities initially deposited has been added.
The initial number of units of the Trust
Sales charge
The Public Offering Price per Unit as of the business day before the Initial Date of Deposit
The Mandatory Termination Date has been added.

Page 5 The Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm has been completed.

Page 6 The Statement of Net Assets has been completed.

Pages 7-10 The Schedule of Investments has been completed.

Back Cover The date of the Prospectus has been included.

THE TRUST AGREEMENT AND STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF TRUST

The Trust Agreement has been conformed to reflect the execution thereof.

CHAPMAN AND CUTLER LLP

January 9, 2013

TRUST AGREEMENT

Dated: January 9, 2013

The Trust Agreement among First Trust Portfolios L.P., as Depositor, The Bank of New York Mellon, as Trustee, First Trust Advisors L.P., as Evaluator and Portfolio Supervisor, and FTP Services LLC, as FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, sets forth certain provisions in full and incorporates other provisions by reference to the document entitled "Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust for FT 785 and certain subsequent Series, Effective December 9, 2003" (herein called the "Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust"), and such provisions as are incorporated by reference constitute a single instrument. All references herein to Articles and Sections are to Articles and Sections of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust.

WITNESSETH THAT:

In consideration of the premises and of the mutual agreements herein contained, the Depositor, the Trustee, the Evaluator, the Portfolio Supervisor and the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent agree as follows:

PART I

STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF TRUST

Subject to the provisions of Part II and Part III hereof, all the provisions contained in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust are herein incorporated by reference in their entirety and shall be deemed to be a part of this instrument as fully and to the same extent as though said provisions had been set forth in full in this instrument.

PART II

SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF TRUST

TACTICAL INCOME PORTFOLIO, SERIES 17

The following special terms and conditions are hereby agreed to:

A. The Securities initially deposited in the Trust pursuant to Section 2.01 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust are set forth in the Schedules hereto.

B. The aggregate number of Units outstanding for the Trust on the Initial Date of Deposit and the initial fractional undivided interest in and ownership of the Trust represented by each Unit thereof are set forth in the Prospectus in the section "Summary of Essential Information."

Documents representing this number of Units for the Trust are being delivered by the Trustee to the Depositor pursuant to Section 2.03 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust.

C. The Record Date shall be as set forth in the Prospectus under "Summary of Essential Information." The Trustee is authorized to make the payments specified in Part I of Section 3.05 on the last Business Day of each month.

D. The Distribution Date shall be the 25th day of the month in which the related Record Date occurs.

E. The Mandatory Termination Date for the Trust shall be as set forth in the Prospectus under "Summary of Essential Information."

F. First Trust Advisors L.P.'s compensation as referred to in Section 4.03 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust and FTP Services LLC's compensation as referred to in Section 3.16 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall collectively be an annual fee in the amount of \$.0080 per Unit.

G. The Trustee's Compensation Rate pursuant to Section 6.04 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be an annual fee in the amount of \$.0096 per Unit, calculated based on the largest number of Units outstanding during the calendar year except during the initial offering period as determined in Section 4.01 of this Indenture, in which case the fee is calculated based on the largest number of units outstanding during the period for which the compensation is paid (such annual fee to be pro rated for any calendar year in which the Trustee provides services during less than the whole of such year). However, in no event, except as may otherwise be provided in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, shall the Trustee receive compensation in any one year from any Trust of less than \$2,000 for such annual compensation. The Bank of New York Mellon, or any of its affiliates, may perform services in any capacity for any exchange traded fund, investment company, investment trust or other entity whose shares are held as an asset of the Trust, and The Bank of New York Mellon, as Trustee, shall be entitled to receive the foregoing compensation, without reduction, notwithstanding that The Bank of New York Mellon or an affiliate is receiving compensation for services to such exchange traded fund, investment company, investment trust or other entity. Without limiting the scope of the expenses for which the Trustee is entitled to reimbursement in accordance with Section 6.04 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, the amounts receivable by the Trustee from the Trust shall include amounts charged by the Trustee or an affiliate in connection with custody of securities at any branch or affiliate of the Trustee located outside the United States.

H. The Initial Date of Deposit for the Trust is January 9, 2013.

I. There is no minimum amount of Securities to be sold by the Trustee pursuant to Section 5.02 of the Indenture for the redemption of Units.

J. The minimum number of Units a Unit holder must redeem in order to be eligible for an in-kind distribution of Securities pursuant to Section 5.02 shall be 2,500 Units of the Trust. No in-kind distribution requests submitted during the 10 business days prior to the Trust's Mandatory Termination Date will be honored.

K. No Unit holder will be eligible for an in-kind distribution of Securities pursuant to Section 8.02.

PART III

A. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, Section 1.01 (13) shall be amended to delete the second sentence of such section and replace it with the following:

"The Percentage Ratio with respect to each Security in a Trust is that percentage derived by dividing the number of shares of such Security included in the initial deposit made pursuant to Section 2.01(a) by the total number of shares of all Securities included in such deposit."

B. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, Section 2.01(e) shall be amended to read as follows:

"The Trustee is hereby irrevocably authorized to effect registration or transfer of the Securities in fully registered form to the name of the Trustee or to the name of its nominee or to hold the Securities in a clearing agency registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, in a book entry system operated by the Federal Reserve Board, with an Eligible Foreign Custodian or in an Eligible Securities Depository."

C. Section 2.01 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be amended to include the following section at the end of Section 2.01:

"(g) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, subject to the requirements set forth in this Section 2.01(g) and unless the Prospectus otherwise requires, the Depositor may, on any Business Day (the "Trade Date"), subscribe for additional Units as follows:

(i) Prior to the Evaluation Time on such Business Day, the Depositor shall provide notice (the "Subscription Notice") to the Trustee, by telephone or by written communication, of the Depositor's intention to subscribe for additional Units. The Subscription Notice shall identify the additional Securities to be acquired (which will be a precise replication of the then existing portfolio, as consistent with the provisions of Section 2.01(b)) and shall either (a) specify the quantity of additional Securities to be deposited by the Depositor on the settlement date for such subscription or (b) instruct the Trustee to purchase additional Securities with an aggregate value as specified in the Subscription Notice.

(ii) Promptly following the Evaluation Time on such Business Day, the Depositor shall verify with the Trustee the number of additional Units to be created.

(iii) Not later than the time on the settlement date for such subscription when the Trustee is to deliver or assign the additional Units created hereby, the Depositor shall deposit with the Trustee (a) any additional Securities specified in the Subscription Notice (or contracts to purchase such additional Securities together with cash or a Letter of Credit in the amount necessary to settle such contracts) or (b) cash or a Letter of Credit in an amount equal to the aggregate value of the additional Securities specified in the Subscription Notice to be purchased by the Trustee, and adding and subtracting the amounts specified in the first and second sentences of Section 5.01, computed as of the Evaluation Time on the Business Day preceding the Trade Date divided by the number of Units outstanding as of the Evaluation Time on the Business Day preceding the Trade Date, times the number of additional Units to be created.

(iv) On the settlement date for such subscription, the Trustee shall, in exchange for the Securities and cash, cash or Letter of Credit described above, deliver to, or assign in the name of or on the order

of, the Depositor the number of Units verified by the Depositor with the Trustee.

(v) In the event the Depositor fails to take such action required by paragraph (iii) above, the Trustee shall, on the settlement date for such subscription, settle the securities transactions specified in the Subscription Notice.

(vi) Neither the Trust nor Unit holders of the Trust will be responsible for any loss resulting from the failure of the Depositor to take such action required by paragraph (iii) above."

D. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, Section 6.01(e) shall be amended to read as follows:

"(e) (1) Subject to the provisions of subparagraph (2) of this paragraph, the Trustee may employ agents, sub-custodians, attorneys, accountants and auditors and shall not be answerable for the default or misconduct of any such agents, sub-custodians, attorneys, accountants or auditors if such agents, sub-custodians, attorneys, accountants or auditors shall have been selected with reasonable care. The Trustee shall be fully protected in respect of any action under this Indenture taken or suffered in good faith by the Trustee in accordance with the opinion of counsel, which may be counsel to the Depositor acceptable to the Trustee, provided, however that this disclaimer of liability shall not excuse the Trustee from the responsibilities specified in subparagraph (2) below. The fees and expenses charged by such agents, sub-custodians, attorneys, accountants or auditors shall constitute an expense of the Trust reimbursable from the Income and Capital Accounts of the Trust as set forth in section 7.04 hereof.

(2) To the extent permitted under the Investment Company Act of 1940 as evidenced by an opinion of counsel to the Depositor satisfactory to the Trustee or "no-action" letters or exemptive orders issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission or its staff, the Trustee may place and maintain in the care of an Eligible Foreign Custodian (which is employed by the Trustee as a sub-custodian as contemplated by subparagraph (1) of this paragraph (e) and which may be an affiliate or subsidiary of the Trustee or any other entity in which the Trustee may have an ownership interest) or an Eligible Securities Depository the Trust's investments (including foreign currencies) for which the primary market is outside the United States, and such cash and cash equivalents in amounts reasonably necessary to effect the Trust's transactions in such investments, provided that:

(A) The Trustee shall indemnify the Trust and hold the Trust harmless from and against any risk of loss of Trust assets held with an Eligible Foreign Custodian in accordance with the foreign custody contract.

(B) The Trustee shall exercise reasonable care, prudence and diligence such as a person having responsibility for the safekeeping of Trust assets would exercise, and shall be liable to the Trust for any loss occurring as a result of its failure to do so.

(C) The Trustee shall perform all duties assigned to the Foreign Custody Manager by Rule 17f-5 under the Investment Company Act of 1940 (17 CFR Section 270.17f-5), as now in effect or as such rule may be amended in the future ("Rule 17f-5"). The Trustee shall not delegate such duties.

(D) The Trustee shall (i) provide the Depositor with an analysis of the custody risks associated with maintaining assets with an Eligible Securities Depository; (ii) monitor the custody risks associated with maintaining assets with the Eligible Securities Depository on a continuing basis and promptly notify the Depositor of any material change in such risks; and (iii) exercise reasonable care, prudence and diligence in performing the foregoing duties. The Depositor shall instruct the Trustee to take such action as the Depositor deems appropriate in response to a notification by the Trustee provided pursuant to (ii) in the preceding sentence.

(E) The Trust's Prospectus shall contain such disclosure regarding foreign securities and foreign custody as is required for management investment companies by Forms N-1A and N-2. Such Prospectus shall also contain disclosure concerning the Depositor's responsibilities described in (D) above.

(F) The Trustee shall maintain and keep current written records regarding the basis for the choice or continued use of a particular Eligible Foreign Custodian pursuant to this subparagraph for a period of not less than six years from the end of the fiscal year in which the Trust was terminated, the first two years in an easily accessible place. Such records shall be available for inspection by Unit holders and the Securities and Exchange Commission at the Trustee's corporate trust office during its usual business hours."

E. Section 4.05 shall be amended to add the following paragraph as the third paragraph of Section 4.05 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust:

"The Portfolio Supervisor may employ one or more sub-Portfolio Supervisors to assist in performing the services set forth in this Section 4.05 and shall not be answerable for the default of any such sub-Portfolio Supervisors if such sub-Portfolio Supervisors shall have been selected with reasonable care, provided, however, that the Portfolio Supervisor will indemnify and hold the Trust harmless from and against any loss occurring as a result of a sub-Portfolio Supervisor's willful misfeasance, reckless disregard, bad faith, or gross negligence in performing supervisory duties. The fees and expenses charged by such sub-Portfolio Supervisors shall be paid by the Portfolio Supervisor out of proceeds received by the Portfolio Supervisor in accordance with Section 4.03 hereof."

F. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, the Trustee may deem and treat the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent as the sole Unit holder of FTPS Units for all purposes of the Indenture and shall not be affected by any notice to the contrary.

G. Section 1.01 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be amended to include the following:

"Section 1.01(31). "FTPS Unit" shall mean Units which are purchased through the Fund/SERV(R) trading system or on a manual basis through FTP Services LLC or for which FTP Services LLC is acting as FTPS Unit Servicing Agent.

Section 1.01(32). "FTPS Unit Servicing Agent" shall mean FTP Services LLC or any successor FTPS Unit servicing agent appointed as hereinafter provided."

H. Section 3.05.I. of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be amended to include the following at the end of such section:

"(d) deduct from the Income account or, to the extent funds are not available in such Account, from the Capital Account and pay to the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent the amount that it is entitled to receive pursuant to Section 3.16."

I. Article III of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be amended to include the following section:

"Section 3.16. FTPS Unit Servicing Agent. FTP Services LLC acts as record keeper, shareholder servicing agent and distribution agent for Units which are purchased and sold through the Fund/SERV(R) trading system or on a manual basis through FTP Services LLC. ("FTPS Units"). (a) The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall perform all of the duties with respect to recordkeeping of FTPS Units and FTPS Unit holders, distributions, redemption of FTPS Units and communications to and with FTPS Unit holders listed below.

(1) The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall keep proper books of record and account of all of the transactions in the FTPS Units of each Trust under this Indenture at its corporate office, including a record of the name and address of, and the FTPS Units issued by each Trust and held by, every FTPS Unit holder, and such books and records of each Trust shall be made available to the Trustee and the Depositor promptly upon request and open to inspection by any FTPS Unit holder of such Trust, with respect to such FTPS Unit holders transactions, at all reasonable times during usual business hours. Without limiting the foregoing, the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall make any records or documents described in Reg. 270.31(a)-1 under the Investment Company Act of 1940 available promptly to the Trustee and the Depositor upon request during usual business hours and will preserve such records and documents for the periods prescribed in Reg. 270.31(a)-2 thereunder.

(2) The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall distribute on or shortly after the Distribution Dates specified in the Trust Agreement to each FTPS Unit holder of record on its books on the Record Date for each such Distribution Date specified in the Trust Agreement such FTPS Unit holder's distribution as computed under the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust.

(3) In connection with such distributions set forth above, the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall furnish a Distribution Statement to FTPS Unit holders of record on its books. The content and frequency of such Distribution Statements shall in no respect be less detailed or frequent than that specified in Section 3.06 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust.

(4) The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall transmit to each FTPS Unit holder of record any notice or other communication received from the Trustee and shall be solely responsible for soliciting and transmitting to the Trustee any notice required from FTPS Unit holders.

(5) The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall be responsible for all tax reporting required from time to time by applicable law and regulations with respect to holders of FTPS Units, and reporting of cost basis in respect of the FTPS Units of such holders (including, without limitation, reporting required by Section 6045(g) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended).

(6) For purposes of permitting FTFS Unit holders to satisfy any reporting requirements of applicable federal or state tax law, the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent shall provide the Trustee with the name, address, number of FTFS Units held by, and such other information as requested by the Trustee, for every FTFS Unit holder so that the Trustee can transmit to any FTFS Unit holder of record on the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent's books any reports required to be distributed pursuant to Section 4.02 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust. The Trustee may rely on the accuracy and completeness of the information (including any records or documents made available) provided to it by the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent and may accept such information without inquiry. Each of the Depositor and the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent hereby agree, jointly and severally, to indemnify the Trustee and hold Trustee harmless from and against any and all costs, expenses, penalties, damages, liabilities or claims including attorneys' and accountants' fees sustained or incurred by or asserted against the Trustee by reason of or as a result of any of the information provided to the Trustee by the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent being inaccurate or incomplete. This indemnity shall be a continuing obligation of each of the Depositor and the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent, and their successors and assigns, notwithstanding the termination of this Trust Agreement.

(7) The FTFS Unit Servicing Agent shall distribute to redeeming FTFS Unit holders of record on its books redemption proceeds it receives pursuant to Section 5.02 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust from the Trustee as the sole record owner of FTFS Units on the Trustee's books.

(8) The FTFS Unit Servicing Agent shall distribute to FTFS Unit holders of record on its books a pro rata portion of termination proceeds it receives pursuant to Section 8.02 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust from the Trustee as the sole record owner of FTFS Units on the Trustee's books.

(9) In connection with such termination distributions set forth above, the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent shall furnish a Final Distribution Statement to FTFS Unit holders of record on its books. The content of such Final Distribution Statements shall in no respect be less detailed than that specified in Section 8.02 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust.

(10) As requested by the Depositor and/or the Trustee, the FTFS Unit Servicing Agent shall perform such other functions which, from time to time, are agreed upon by the parties hereto and which may give rise to additional fees.

(b) As compensation for providing the services set forth herein, of a character described in Section 26(a)(2)(C) of the Investment Company Act of 1940, and to the extent that such services are in addition to, and do not duplicate, the services to be performed by the Trustee, FTP Services LLC shall receive, in arrears, against a statement or statements therefore submitted to the Trustee monthly or annually an aggregate annual fee in the per Unit amount set forth in Part II of the Trust Agreement for the Trust, calculated based on the largest number of Units outstanding during the calendar year, except during the initial offering period as determined in Section 4.01 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, in which case the fee is calculated based on the largest number of Units outstanding during the period for which the compensation is paid (such annual fee to be pro rated for any calendar year in which FTP Services LLC provides services

described herein during less than the whole of such year). Such fee may exceed the actual cost of providing such services for the Trust, but at no time will the total amount received by FTP Services LLC for rendering the services described in this Section 3.16 and First Trust Advisors, L.P. for rendering the services described in Section 4.03 to unit investment trusts of which the Depositor is the sponsor in any calendar year exceed the aggregate cost to FTP Services LLC and First Trust Advisors L.P. of supplying such services in such year. Such compensation may, from time to time, be adjusted by the Depositor provided that the total adjustment upward does not, at the time of such adjustment, exceed the percentage of the total increase, after the date hereof, in consumer prices for services as measured by the United States Department of Labor Consumer Price Index entitled "All Services Less Rent of Shelter" or similar index, if such index should no longer be published. The consent or concurrence of any Unit holder hereunder shall not be required for any such adjustment or increase. Such compensation shall be paid by the Trustee, upon receipt of an invoice therefore from FTP Services LLC, which shall constitute the representation by FTP Services LLC that the bookkeeping and administrative services for which compensation is claimed are properly compensable hereunder and that the aggregate cost incurred by FTP Services LLC of providing FTPS Unit shareholder servicing hereunder was not less than the compensation claimed, upon which representation the Trustee may conclusively rely. Such compensation shall be charged against the Income and/or Capital Accounts, in accordance with Section 3.05 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust.

If the cash balance in the Income and Capital Accounts shall be insufficient to provide for amounts payable pursuant to this Section 3.16, the Trustee shall have the power to sell (i) Securities from the current list of Securities designated to be sold pursuant to Section 5.02 hereof, or (ii) if no such Securities have been so designated, such Securities as the Trustee may see fit to sell in its own discretion, and to apply the proceeds of any such sale in payment of the amounts payable pursuant to this Section 3.16.

All moneys payable to the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent pursuant to this Section 3.16 shall be secured by a lien on the Trust prior to the interest of Unit holders, but no such lien shall be prior to any lien in favor of the Trustee under the provisions of Section 6.04 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust.

(c) The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall be under no liability for any action taken in good faith on any appraisal, paper, order, list, demand, request, consent, affidavit, notice, opinion, direction, evaluation, endorsement, assignment, resolution, draft or other document, whether or not of the same kind, prima facie properly executed, or for the disposition of moneys, pursuant to this Indenture, except by reason of its own negligence, lack of good faith or willful misconduct, provided that the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall not in any event be liable or responsible for any evaluation made by the Evaluator.

(d) Except as the context otherwise requires, the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall be subject to the provisions of Section 4.05 herein in the same manner as it would if it were the Evaluator.

(e) The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall be indemnified ratably by the affected Trust and held harmless against any loss or liability accruing to it without negligence, bad faith or willful misconduct on its part, arising out of or in connection with the operations of

the Trust, including the costs and expenses (including counsel fees) of defending itself against any claim of liability in the premises, including without limitation any loss, liability or expense incurred in acting pursuant to written directions to the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent given by the Trustee or Depositor from time to time in accordance with the provisions of this Indenture or in undertaking actions from time to time which the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent deems necessary in its discretion to protect the Trust and the rights and interests of the FTPS Unit holders pursuant to the terms of this Indenture.

(f) The FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall conduct its operations in a manner that is compatible with the current operational procedures and requirements of the Trustee (including, without limiting the foregoing, the provision and receipt of data in such format and meeting such technical requirements as the Trustee may specify) and shall exercise its best efforts to accommodate any changes in the operational procedures and requirements which the Trustee may make upon prior notice to the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent. The Depositor acknowledges and agrees that the default of the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent in its obligations under this paragraph, or the performance by the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent of its obligations in a manner which shall adversely affect the Trustee's performance of its duties, shall be a sufficient grounds for the Trustee to remove the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent pursuant to Section 3.16(d) and Section 4.05.

(g) As used in this Section 3.16, "FTPS Unit holder," when referring to the records of the Trustee, shall mean the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent and, when referring to the records to be maintained by the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, shall mean each owner of a FTPS Unit identified on the records of the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent."

J. Section 4.01(a) and (b) of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be amended to include the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent among the parties who are furnished information concerning the Evaluation of each issue of Securities deposited in the Trust and the Trust Fund Evaluation.

K. The second sentence of the first paragraph of Section 4.03 shall be replaced with the following:

"Such fee may exceed the actual cost of providing such services for the Trust, but at no time will the total amount received by First Trust Advisors, L.P. for rendering the services described in this Section 4.03 and FTP Services LLC for rendering the services described in Section 3.16 to unit investment trusts of which the Depositor is the sponsor in any calendar year exceed the aggregate cost to FTP Services LLC and First Trust Advisors, L.P. of supplying such services in such year."

L. Section 4.04 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be replaced in its entirety by the following:

"Section 4.04. Liability of Evaluator. The Trustee, FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, Depositor and the Unit holders may rely on any Evaluation furnished by First Trust Advisors, L.P., acting in its capacity as Evaluator, and shall have no responsibility for the accuracy thereof. The determinations made by the Evaluator hereunder shall be made in good faith upon the basis of the best information available to it. The Evaluator shall be under no liability to the Trustee, FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, Depositor or the Unit holders for errors in judgment; provided, however, that this provision shall not protect the Evaluator against any liability to which it would otherwise be subject by reason

of willful misfeasance, bad faith or gross negligence in the performance of its duties or by reason of its reckless disregard of its obligations and duties hereunder."

M. The second sentence of the first paragraph of Section 5.01 shall be amended to delete subsection (ii) of such sentence and replace it in its entirety with the following:

"(ii) amounts representing estimated accrued expenses of such Trust including but not limited to unpaid fees and expenses of the Trustee, the Evaluator, the Portfolio Supervisor, the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, the Depositor and its counsel, in each case as reported by the Trustee to the Depositor on or prior to the date of Evaluation,"

N. Section 6.01(c) of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be replaced in its entirety with the following:

"(c) The Trustee shall not be responsible for or in respect of the recitals herein, the validity or sufficiency of this Indenture or for the due execution hereof by the Depositor, the Portfolio Supervisor, the Evaluator, or the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, or for the form, character, genuineness, sufficiency, value or validity of any of the Securities (except that the Trustee shall be responsible for the exercise of due care in determining the genuineness of Securities delivered to it pursuant to contracts for the purchase of such Securities) or for or in respect of the validity or sufficiency of the Units or of the Certificates (except for the due execution thereof by the Trustee) or for the due execution thereof by the Depositor, and the Trustee shall in no event assume or incur any liability, duty or obligation to any Unit holder, the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent or the Depositor other than as expressly provided for herein. The Trustee shall not be responsible for or in respect of the validity of any signature by or on behalf of the Depositor, the Portfolio Supervisor, the Evaluator or the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent;"

O. Section 8.02(b) of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be replaced in its entirety with the following:

"(b) deduct from the Income Account of such Trust or, to the extent that funds are not available in such Account, from the Capital Account of such Trust, and pay accrued and unpaid fees of the Evaluator, the Portfolio Supervisor, the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, the Depositor and counsel in connection with such Trust, if any;"

P. Section 8.05 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be amended to add the following paragraph immediately preceding the last paragraph of such section:

"Any notice, demand, direction or instruction to be given to the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent shall be in writing and shall be duly given if mailed or delivered to the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent at 120 E. Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, IL 60187, or at such other address as shall be specified by the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent to the other parties hereto in writing."

Q. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, the second paragraph in Section 8.02 shall be amended to read as follows:

"In the event of any termination of the Trust prior to the Mandatory Termination Date, the Trustee shall proceed to liquidate the

Securities then held and make the payments and distributions provided for hereinafter in this Section 8.02, except that in such event, the distribution to each Unit holder shall be made in cash and shall be such Unit holder's pro rata interest in the balance of the principal and income accounts after the deductions herein provided. In the event that the Trust shall terminate on or after the Mandatory Termination Date, the Trustee shall, at least thirty days prior to the Mandatory Termination Date, send a written notice to all Unit holders of record. If such Unit holder owns at least the minimum number of Units of Trust set forth in Part II of the Trust Agreement, such notice shall further indicate that such Unit holder may elect to receive an in-kind distribution of their pro rata share of the Securities, to the extent of whole shares. The Trustee will honor duly executed requests for in-kind distributions received (accompanied by the electing Unit holder's Certificate, if issued) by the close of business ten business days prior to the Mandatory Termination Date. Unit holders who do not effectively request an in-kind distribution shall receive their distribution upon termination in cash. Unit holders shall receive their distribution upon termination in cash."

R. Section 6.01 shall be amended to add the following as paragraph (n):

"(n) The Trustee may act, and may engage any corporation, partnership or other entity affiliated with The Bank of New York Mellon (an "Affiliated Entity") to act, as broker or dealer to execute transactions, including the purchase or sale of any securities currently distributed, underwritten or issued by any Affiliated Entity, and receive, or pay to the Affiliated Entity, as applicable, compensation for such services at standard commission rates, markups or concessions."

S. Section 3.02 shall be amended to read in its entirety as follows:

"Section 3.02 Income Account. The Trustee shall collect the dividends and other cash distributions on the Securities in each Trust which would be treated as dividend (other than capital gain dividends) or interest income under the Internal Revenue Code as such become payable (including all monies which would be so treated representing penalties for the failure to make timely payments on the Securities, or as liquidated damages for default or breach of any condition or term of the Securities or of the underlying instrument relating to any Securities and other income attributable to a Failed Contract Obligation for which no Replacement Security has been obtained pursuant to Section 3.12 hereof) and credit such income to a separate account for each Trust to be known as the "Income Account."

Any non-cash distributions received by a Trust shall be sold to the extent they would be treated as dividend or interest income under the Internal Revenue Code and the proceeds shall be credited to the Income Account. Except as provided in the preceding sentence, non-cash distributions received by a Trust (other than a non-taxable distribution of the shares of the distributing corporation which shall be retained by a Trust) shall be dealt with in the manner described in Section 3.11, herein, and shall be retained or disposed of by such Trust according to those provisions and the proceeds thereof shall be credited to the Capital (Principal) Account. Neither the Trustee nor the Depositor shall be liable or responsible in any way for depreciation or loss incurred by reason of any such sale.

All other distributions received by a Trust shall be credited to the Capital (Principal) Account."

T. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, the first paragraph of Section 3.05.(II)(a) shall be amended to provide as follows:

"On each Distribution Date, the Trustee shall distribute to each Unit holder of record at the close of business on the Record Date immediately preceding such Distribution Date an amount per Unit equal to such Unit holder's Income Distribution (as defined below), plus such Unit holder's pro rata share of the balance of the Capital Account (except for monies on deposit therein required to purchase Contract Obligations and, with respect to any Trust which is a widely held fixed investment trust as defined in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(b)(22), monies constituting proceeds of pro-rata sales of Trust assets to effect redemptions, which proceeds shall be retained for payment of redemptions) computed as of the close of business on such Record Date after deduction of any amounts provided in Subsection I, provided, however, that notwithstanding any contrary provisions of paragraph (II)(c) of this Section, the Trustee shall not be required to make a distribution from the Capital Account unless the balance available for distribution is equal to or greater than \$1.00 per 100 Units, except that, notwithstanding any provision of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust or this Trust Agreement to the contrary:

(i) With respect to any Trust which is a widely held fixed investment trust as defined on Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(b)(22), the Trustee shall on any Distribution Date distribute the cash available for distribution in the Income and Capital Accounts within the meaning of Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(b)(5) if the aggregate amount of such cash available for distribution is equal to or greater than .1% of the net asset value of the Trust on the related Record Date. This provision is intended to comply with Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(c)(2)(v)(C) and shall be interpreted consistent therewith and with any successor regulations.

(ii) With respect to any trust which intends to qualify as a regulated investment company, as set forth in the Prospectus for such trust, the Trustee may make such distributions from the Income or Capital Accounts as may be necessary, as determined by the Trust's independent registered public accounting firm, in order to avoid imposition of any income or excise taxes on undistributed income in the Trust. In addition, the Trustee will distribute any funds in the Capital Account in December of each year."

U. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, the ninth paragraph of Section 5.02 of the Standard Terms shall be amended to read in its entirety as follows:

"With respect to any Trust which is a widely held fixed investment trust as defined on Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(b)(22), for the purpose of funding the Principal Account for payment of the Redemption Value with respect to each tender of a Unit or Units for redemption, the Depositor may direct the trustee to sell and, in the absence of contrary direction from the Depositor, the Trustee may sell, the pro rata amount of each Security allocable to the tendered Units as soon as reasonably practicable following such tender. In determining such pro rata amount, the Trustee may apply the calendar month aggregation method provided

in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(c)(2)(iv)(G)(3)(i). If the proceeds of such pro rata sales are insufficient, the Trustee may (i) sell additional Securities as directed by the Sponsor or, in the absence of direction, sell Securities in amounts which are reasonably pro rata as determined by the Trustee or (ii) advance funds required to pay the Redemption Value, provided that the Trustee shall have no obligation to advance funds if the unreimbursed amount advanced to the Trust for this purpose then equals at least \$15,000. When directed by the Depositor or determined by the Trustee, but in all events as promptly as reasonably practicable whenever the unreimbursed amount advanced by the Trustee equals or exceeds \$15,000, the Trustee shall sell additional Securities in the manner provided in clause (i) of the preceding sentence and shall reimburse itself the amount of the advance, provided that the Trustee's right to reimbursement shall not be affected by any delay in sale or reimbursement. The Trustee's right to reimbursement shall be secured by a lien on the Trust prior to the interest of the Unit holders. The net proceeds of any sale of Securities representing income shall be credited to the Income Account and then disbursed therefrom for payment of expenses and payments to Unit holders as otherwise provided in this Indenture. The balance of such net proceeds shall be credited to the Principal Account. The Depositor and the Trustee shall use their reasonable efforts to conduct pro rata sales of Securities qualifying for exception from tax reporting as described in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(c)(2)(iv)(G) and, during the final calendar year of the trust, qualifying for the exception from tax reporting described in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(c)(2)(iv)(F). Notwithstanding the foregoing, neither the Trustee nor the Depositor shall be liable to any person in the event sales proceeds for any calendar year exceed the general de minimis test of Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(c)(2)(iv)(D)(1) (whether or not due to a failure to sell Securities pro rata) or otherwise require reporting under Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5."

V. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, Section 6.02 of the Standard Terms is amended to read in its entirety as follows:

"Section 6.02. Books, Records and Reports. (a) General. The Trustee shall keep proper books of record and account of all the transactions of each Trust under this Indenture at its corporate trust office, including a record of the name and address of, and the Units issued by each Trust and held by, every Unit holder, and such books and records of each Trust shall be open to inspection by any Unit holder of such Trust at all reasonable times during the usual business hours. The Trustee shall make such annual or other reports as may from time to time be required under any applicable state or federal statute or rule or regulations thereunder.

(b) Audit of trust accounts. Unless the Depositor determines that such an audit is not required, the accounts of the Trust shall be audited not less than annually by independent public accountants designated from time to time by the Depositor and the Trustee and the reports of such accountants shall be furnished upon request to Unit holders. So long as the Depositor is making a secondary market for Units, the Depositor shall bear the cost of such annual audits to the extent such cost exceeds \$.50 per 100 Units.

(c) Costs of updating of registration statement. If provided for in the Prospectus for a Trust, the Trustee shall pay, or reimburse

to the Depositor, the expenses related to the updating of the Trust's registration statement, to the extent of legal fees, typesetting fees, electronic filing expenses and regulatory filing fees. Such expenses shall be paid from the Income Account, or to the extent funds are not available in such Account, from the Capital Account, against an invoice or invoices therefor presented to the Trustee by the Depositor. By presenting such invoice or invoices, the Depositor shall be deemed to certify, upon which certification the Trustee is authorized conclusively to rely, that the amounts claimed therein are properly payable pursuant to this paragraph. The Depositor shall provide the Trustee, from time to time as requested, an estimate of the amount of such expenses, which the Trustee shall use for the purpose of estimating the accrual of Trust expenses. The amount paid by the Trust pursuant to this paragraph in each year shall be separately identified in the annual statement provided to Unit holders. The Depositor shall assure that the Prospectus for the Trust contains such disclosure as shall be necessary to permit payment by the Trust of the expenses contemplated by this paragraph under applicable laws and regulations. The provisions of this paragraph shall not limit the authority of the Trustee to pay, or reimburse to the Depositor or others, such other or additional expenses as may be determined to be payable from the Trust as provided in this Section 6.02.

(d) Tax reporting for grantor trusts. With respect to any Trust which is a widely held fixed investment trust as defined in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(b)(22), the Depositor and the Trustee agree that the Trust meets the requirements of Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(f)(1)(i), and the Trustee is authorized:

(i) to report in accordance with any of the safe harbor methods described in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(f);

(ii) to report sales proceeds, whenever permitted, as provided in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(f)(1)(iv)(B);

(iii) to report proceeds of sales and dispositions described in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(c)(2)(iv)(D)(4)(ii) as provided in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(c)(2)(iv)(D)(4)(i); and

(iv) to use the measuring date, as defined in Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(c)(2)(iv)(D)(1), in lieu of the start-up date, wherever permitted.

For purposes of Treas. Reg. Section 1.671-5(f)(1)(iv)(A)(2), the date of the last deposit under 2.01(b) prior to the expiration of the initial offering period, as certified to the Trustee by the Depositor, shall be considered the 'start-up date' of the Trust.

(e) Cost-basis reporting for Unit holders who purchase or hold their Units through the First Trust Advisor Direct system ("Advisor Direct"). The Depositor shall maintain information required for the reporting of the cost basis of Advisor Direct holders (as defined in section 2.03(b)) as may be required from time to time by applicable law (including, without limitation, Section 6045(g) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended) and regulations, and the Depositor shall be responsible for the reporting of such information to the Advisor Direct holders, or if reporting by the Depositor is not permitted by applicable law or regulation or if the Depositor and Trustee otherwise agree that the Trustee shall report such information, the Depositor shall provide the Trustee such information as will permit the Trustee to provide required cost-basis information to the Advisor Direct holders and shall

provide the information at such times and in such form as the Trustee may reasonably request. The Depositor will be solely responsible for the accuracy of such cost-basis information and the reporting thereof to Advisor Direct holders as provided above. The Trustee may rely conclusively upon the cost-basis information provided by the Depositor with respect to Advisor Direct holders, and shall be indemnified in accordance with Section 6.04 of the Indenture against any loss or liability, including any penalty or other charge imposed by any taxing authority in respect of such cost-basis information or reporting thereof made by the Depositor as provided in this paragraph."

W. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of the Trust, the eighth paragraph of Section 5.02 of the Standard Terms shall be amended to read in its entirety as follows:

"Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this Section 5.02, the Trustee (or the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent in the case of FTPS Units) is hereby irrevocably authorized in its discretion, in the event that the Depositor does not purchase any Units tendered to the Trustee (or the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent in the case of FTPS Units) for redemption, or in the event that a Unit is being tendered by the Depositor for redemption, in lieu of redeeming Units, to sell Units in the over-the-counter market through any broker-dealer of its choice for the account of the tendering Unit holder at prices which will return to the Unit holder an amount in cash, net after deducting brokerage commissions, transfer taxes and other charges, equal to or in excess of the Redemption Value which such Unit holder would otherwise be entitled to receive on redemption pursuant to this Section 5.02. The Trustee (or the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent in the case of FTPS Units) shall pay to the Unit holder the net proceeds of any such sale on the day on which such Unit holder would otherwise be entitled to receive payment of the Redemption Value hereunder."

X. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, Section 6.01(l) shall be replaced in its entirety with the following:

"The Trust may include (I) a letter or letters of credit meeting the requirements of Section 2.05 for the purchase of Securities or Contract Obligations issued by the Trustee in its individual capacity for the account of the Depositor or (II) Securities issued by the Trustee, its parent, or affiliates, and the Trustee may otherwise deal with the Depositor and the Trust with the same rights and powers as if it were not the Trustee hereunder; and"

Y. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, Section 3.07 shall be amended to add the following immediately after Section 3.07(i):

"(j) that as a result of the ownership of the Security, the Trust or its Unit holders would be a direct or indirect shareholder of a passive foreign investment company as defined in section 1297(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.

(k) that such sale is necessary for the Trust to comply with such federal and/or state securities laws, regulations and/or regulatory actions and interpretations which may be in effect from time to time."

Z. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, paragraph (e) of Section 6.05 shall be amended by adding the following sentence at the end thereof:

"The Trustee's and each successor Trustee's right to indemnification shall survive its resignation or removal."

AA. All references to The Bank of New York in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be replaced with "The Bank of New York Mellon."

BB. Any notice, demand, direction or instruction to be given to either the Depositor, Portfolio Supervisor or Evaluator shall be in writing and shall be duly given if mailed or delivered to such party at 120 East Liberty Drive, Suite 400, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, or at such other address as shall be specified by the Depositor, Portfolio Supervisor or Evaluator to the other parties hereto in writing.

CC. Article IV of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be amended to add the following:

"Section 4.06. Liability of Portfolio Supervisor. The Portfolio Supervisor shall be under no liability to the Unit holders for any action taken or for refraining from the taking of any action in good faith pursuant to this Indenture or for errors in judgment, but shall be liable only for its own willful misfeasance, bad faith or gross negligence in the performance of its duties or by reason of its reckless disregard of its obligations and duties hereunder."

DD. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, the last sentence of Section 3.01 shall be replaced with the following:

"As used herein, the Depositor's reimbursable expenses of organizing the Trust shall include the cost of the initial preparation and typesetting of the registration statement, prospectuses (including preliminary prospectuses), the indenture, and other documents relating to the Trust, SEC and state blue sky registration fees, the cost of the initial valuation of the portfolio and audit of the Trust, the costs of a portfolio consultant, if any, the initial fees and expenses of the Trustee, and legal and other out-of-pocket expenses related thereto, but not including the expenses incurred in the printing of preliminary prospectuses and prospectuses, expenses incurred in the preparation and printing of brochures and other advertising materials and any other selling expenses."

EE. Section 2.03(b) of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust is restated in full as follows:

"Notwithstanding any provisions of the Indenture to the contrary, Units shall be held solely in uncertificated form evidenced by appropriate notation in the registration books of the Trustee, and no Unit holder shall be entitled to the issuance of a Certificate evidencing the Units owned by such Unit holder. The only permitted registered holders of Units shall be (i) Depository Trust Company (or its nominee, Cede & Co.), (ii) the FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, or (iii) Unit holders who purchase or otherwise hold their Units through Advisor Direct ("Advisor Direct holders"); consequently, individuals who are not Advisor Direct holders or holders of FTPS Units must hold their Units

through an entity which is a participant in Depository Trust Company. Except as provided by the preceding provisions of this paragraph, the rights specified in this Indenture of holders of Units evidenced by a Certificate shall apply to holders of Units held in uncertificated form."

FF. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, Section 3.13 shall be amended by adding the following sentences at the end thereof:

"To the extent permitted by applicable law and regulatory authorization, unpaid portions of the deferred sales charge shall be secured by a lien on the Trust in favor of the Depositor, provided that such lien shall be subordinate to the lien of the Trustee granted by Section 6.04 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust. To the extent of such lien, the Trustee shall hold the assets of the Trust for the benefit of the Depositor, provided that the Trustee is authorized to make dispositions, distributions and payments for expenses in the ordinary course of the administration of the trust without regard to such lien."

GG. For Trusts which make annualized distributions of income, as set forth in the Prospectus for such Trusts, Section 2.01(b)(4), as renumbered hereby, shall be amended to add the following sentence at the end thereof:

"If the Cash amount pursuant to the foregoing calculation is negative, the Trustee shall distribute to the Depositor the amount of such deficit, and may advance funds to the Trust for such purpose, such advance to be repaid and secured in the manner provided in Section 3.05(II)(b) as amended herein."

HH. Section 3.07(h) of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be replaced in its entirety with the following:

"(h) in the case of a Trust which has elected to qualify as a "regulated investment company," that the sale of Securities is necessary or advisable: (i) in order to maintain the qualification of the Trust as such; or (ii) to provide funds to make any distribution from such a Trust for a taxable year in order to avoid imposition of any income or excise taxes on undistributed income in the Trust;"

II. For Trusts which intend to qualify as a regulated investment company, as set forth in the Prospectus for such Trusts, the first two sentences in the second paragraph of Section 3.11 of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be replaced in their entirety with the following:

"In the event that an offer by the issuer of any of the Securities or any other party shall be made to issue new securities, or to exchange securities, for Trust Securities, the Trustee will, at the direction of the Depositor, vote for or against any offer for new or exchanged securities or property in exchange for a Trust Security. Should any issuance, exchange or substitution be effected, any securities, cash and/or property received shall be deposited hereunder and shall be promptly sold, if securities or property, by the Trustee pursuant to the Depositor's direction, unless the Depositor advises the Trustee to keep such securities or property."

JJ. For Trusts which intend to qualify as a regulated investment company, as set forth in the Prospectus for such Trusts, Section 2.01(b)(4)

of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be deleted in its entirety and Section 2.01(b) (5) shall be renumbered to "Section 2.01(b) (4)."

KK. For Trusts which intend to qualify as a regulated investment company, as set forth in the Prospectus for such Trusts, Section 3.12(a) of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be replaced in its entirety with the following:

"(a) The New Securities shall be Securities as originally selected for Deposit in that Series of the Trust or securities which the Depositor determines to be similar in character as Securities originally selected for Deposit;"

LL. For Trusts which intend to qualify as a regulated investment company, as set forth in the Prospectus for such Trusts, Article III of the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust shall be amended to include the following section:

"Section 3.17. Regulated Investment Company Election. Each Trust elects to be treated and to qualify as a "regulated investment company" as defined in the Internal Revenue Code, and the Trustee is hereby directed to make such elections, including any appropriate election to be taxed as a corporation, as shall be necessary to effect such qualification."

MM. For Trusts which intend to qualify as a regulated investment company, as set forth in the Prospectus for such Trusts, Section 8.01(b) shall be amended to remove the following text from such section:

"as a grantor trust."

NN. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Standard Terms and Conditions of Trust, for Trusts which make annualized distributions of income, as set forth in the Prospectus for such Trust, Section 3.05 (II) (b) shall be replaced with the following:

"(b) For purposes of this Section 3.05, the Unit holder's Income Distribution shall be equal to such Unit holder's pro rata share of the balance of the Income Account calculated as of the prior Record Date, on the basis of one-twelfth of (i) the annual income of the Trust for the ensuing twelve months estimated by reference to the distributions made on the Securities during the preceding calendar quarter (as adjusted for any information with respect to future dividends received by the Trustee prior to such Record Date) less (ii) the fees and expenses then deductible pursuant to Section 3.05 (I) and (iii) the Trustee's estimate of other expenses properly chargeable to the Income Account pursuant to the Indenture which have accrued, as of such Record Date, or are otherwise properly attributable to the period to which such Income Distribution relates. The Trustee shall advance out of its own funds and deposit in and credit to the Income Account on each Distribution Date, to the extent that there is not sufficient cash in the Income Account, the additional amount, if any, anticipated by the Trustee to be necessary to make the Income Distribution as specified in the preceding sentence; the Trustee shall be entitled to be reimbursed from the Income Account without interest when funds are available therein from income on any of the Securities, including upon the sale of Securities to meet redemptions, for any and all amounts advanced by it pursuant to this paragraph. The Trustee shall be deemed to be the beneficial owner of the

income of the Trust to the extent such income is required to reimburse the Trustee for amounts advanced by it pursuant to this paragraph; amounts payable to the Trustee in respect of such advances shall be secured by a lien on the Trust prior to the interests of Unit holders. In the event any issuer of Securities fails to make an anticipated distribution, or there is a disposition of Securities or other event that reduces the net income which will be received from that estimated by the Trustee, the Trustee shall, on the Record Date next following the Trustee's determination that such event has occurred, reduce the amount of the next following distribution by such amount as will enable the Trustee to recover any advances to the Trust referable to the anticipated receipt of such unrealized income. As determined by the Trust's independent registered public accounting firm, the Trustee shall adjust the December distribution from the Income and Capital Accounts as may be necessary so that the Trust distributions during the calendar year equal an amount necessary to avoid paying any regulated investment company excise tax during such year. The Trustee is authorized to reduce the following January distribution by the amount of any such increase."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, First Trust Portfolios L.P., The Bank of New York Mellon, First Trust Advisors L.P. and FTP Services LLC have each caused this Trust Agreement to be executed and the respective corporate seal to be hereto affixed and attested (if applicable) by authorized officers; all as of the day, month and year first above written.

FIRST TRUST PORTFOLIOS L.P.,
Depositor

By Elizabeth H. Bull
Senior Vice President

THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON,
Trustee

s
By Joan A. Currie
Managing Director

[SEAL]

ATTEST:

Elizabeth A. Fernandes
Vice President

FIRST TRUST ADVISORS L.P.,
Evaluator

By Elizabeth H. Bull
Senior Vice President

FIRST TRUST ADVISORS L.P.
Portfolio Supervisor

By Elizabeth H. Bull
Senior Vice President

FTP Services LLC,
FTPS Unit Servicing Agent

By Elizabeth H. Bull
Senior Vice President

SCHEDULE A TO TRUST AGREEMENT

Securities Initially Deposited
FT 3971

(Note: Incorporated herein and made a part hereof for the Trust is the "Schedule of Investments" for the Trust as set forth in the Prospectus.)

Chapman and Cutler LLP

111 West Monroe Street
Chicago, Illinois 60603

January 9, 2013

First Trust Portfolios L.P.
120 East Liberty Drive
Suite 400
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

Re: FT 3971

Gentlemen:

We have served as counsel for First Trust Portfolios L.P., as Sponsor and Depositor of FT 3971 in connection with the preparation, execution and delivery of a Trust Agreement dated January 9, 2013 among First Trust Portfolios L.P., as Depositor, The Bank of New York Mellon, as Trustee, First Trust Advisors L.P., as Evaluator and Portfolio Supervisor, and FTP Services LLC as FTPS Unit Servicing Agent, pursuant to which the Depositor has delivered to and deposited the Securities listed in Schedule A to the Trust Agreement with the Trustee and pursuant to which the Trustee has issued to or on the order of the Depositor units of fractional undivided interest in and ownership of the Fund created under said Trust Agreement.

In connection therewith, we have examined such pertinent records and documents and matters of law as we have deemed necessary in order to enable us to express the opinions hereinafter set forth.

Based upon the foregoing, we are of the opinion that:

1. the execution and delivery of the Trust Agreement and the issuance of Units in the Fund have been duly authorized; and

2. the Units in the Fund when duly issued and delivered by the Trustee in accordance with the aforementioned Trust Agreement, will constitute valid and binding obligations of the Fund and the Depositor and such Units, when issued and delivered in accordance with the Trust Agreement against payment of the consideration set forth in the Trust prospectus, will be validly issued, fully paid and non-assessable.

We hereby consent to the filing of this opinion as an exhibit to the Registration Statement (File No. 333-185405) relating to the Units referred to above, to the use of our name and to the reference to our firm in said Registration Statement and in the related Prospectus.

Respectfully submitted,

CHAPMAN AND CUTLER LLP

EFF/lk

First Trust Advisors L.P.
120 East Liberty Drive
Suite 400
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

January 9, 2013

First Trust Portfolios L.P.
120 East Liberty Drive
Suite 400
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

Re: FT 3971

Gentlemen:

We have examined the Registration Statement File No. 333-185405 for the above captioned fund. We hereby consent to the use in the Registration Statement of the references to First Trust Advisors L.P. as evaluator.

You are hereby authorized to file a copy of this letter with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Sincerely,

First Trust Advisors L.P.

Elizabeth H. Bull
Senior Vice President