Nuveen Credit Strategies Income Fund Form N-CSR September 30, 2016

UNITED STATES

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM N-CSR

CERTIFIED SHAREHOLDER REPORT OF REGISTERED

MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT COMPANIES

Investment Company Act file number 811-21333

Nuveen Credit Strategies Income Fund

(Exact name of registrant as specified in charter)

Nuveen Investments

333 West Wacker Drive

Chicago, IL 60606

(Address of principal executive offices) (Zip code)

Kevin J. McCarthy

Nuveen Investments

333 West Wacker Drive

Chicago, IL 60606

(Name and address of agent for service)

Registrant s telephone number, including area code: (312) 917-7700

Date of fiscal year end: July 31

Date of reporting period: <u>July 31, 2016</u>

Form N-CSR is to be used by management investment companies to file reports with the Commission not later than 10 days after the transmission to stockholders of any report that is required to be transmitted to stockholders under Rule 30e-1 under the Investment Company Act of 1940 (17 CFR 270.30e-1). The Commission may use the information provided on Form N-CSR in its regulatory, disclosure review, inspection, and policymaking roles.

A registrant is required to disclose the information specified by Form N-CSR, and the Commission will make this information public. A registrant is not required to respond to the collection of information contained in Form N-CSR unless the Form displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. Please direct comments concerning the accuracy of the information collection burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20549-0609. The OMB has reviewed this collection of information under the clearance requirements of 44 U.S.C. ss. 3507.

ITEM 1. REPORTS TO STOCKHOLDERS.

Closed-End Funds

Nuveen

Closed-End Funds

Annual Report July 31, 2016

NSL

Nuveen Senior Income Fund

IFR

Nuveen Floating Rate Income Fund

JRO

Nuveen Floating Rate Income Opportunity Fund

JSD

Nuveen Short Duration Credit Opportunities Fund

JQC

Nuveen Credit Strategies Income Fund

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Chairman s Letter

to Shareholders

Dear Shareholders,

The U.S. economy is now seven years into the recovery, but its pace remains stubbornly subpar compared to past recoveries. Economic data continues to be a mixed bag, as it has been throughout this expansion period. While the unemployment rate fell below its pre-recession level and wages have grown, a surprisingly weak jobs growth report in May cast doubt over the future strength of the labor market. Subsequent employment reports have been stronger, however, easing fears that a significant downtrend was emerging. The housing market has improved markedly but its contribution to the recovery has been lackluster. Deflationary pressures, including weaker commodity prices, have kept inflation much lower for longer than many expected.

The U.S. s modest expansion and positive employment trends led the U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) to begin its path toward policy normalization by raising its benchmark interest rate at its December 2015 meeting. However, since then, the Fed has remained on hold for reasons ranging from domestic to international, which helped continue to prop up asset prices despite bouts of short-term volatility.

Outside the U.S., optimism has been harder to come by. Investors continue to question whether China s economy is finally stabilizing or still slowing. The U.K. s June 29 Brexit vote to leave the European Union introduced a new set of economic and political uncertainties to the already fragile conditions across Europe. Moreover, there are growing concerns that global central banks unprecedented efforts to revive growth may be showing signs of fatigue. Interest rates are currently negative in Europe and Japan and near or at zero in the U.S., U.K. and elsewhere. Yet, growth has remained subdued.

With global economic growth still looking fairly fragile, and few near-term catalysts for improvement, we anticipate that turbulence remains on the horizon for the time being. In this environment, Nuveen remains committed to both managing downside risks and seeking upside potential. If you re concerned about how resilient your investment portfolio might be, we encourage you to talk to your financial advisor.

On behalf of the other members of the Nuveen Fund Board, we look forward to continuing to earn your trust in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,

William J. Schneider

Chairman of the Board

September 23, 2016

Portfolio Managers

Comments

Nuveen Senior Income Fund (NSL)

Nuveen Floating Rate Income Fund (JFR)

Nuveen Floating Rate Income Opportunity Fund (JRO)

Nuveen Short Duration Credit Opportunities Fund (JSD)

Nuveen Credit Strategies Income Fund (JQC)

The Funds investment portfolios are managed by Symphony Asset Management, LLC (Symphony), an affiliate of Nuveen Investments, Inc. Gunther Stein, who serves as the firm s Chief Investment Officer and Chief Executive Officer, and Scott Caraher manage NSL, JFR and JRO. Gunther and Sutanto Widjaja manage JQC, while JSD is managed by Gunther, Scott and Jenny Rhee.

Effective September 30, 2015, NSL, JFR, JRO, JSD and JQC can invest up to 5% in iBOXX Loan Total Return Swaps.

On October 18, 2015, the Board of Trustees of JSD approved a policy change regarding the Fund s use of leverage. The new policy permits the Fund to use leverage to the extent permissible under the 1940 Act, which currently permits leverage in an amount up to 50% of the Fund s managed assets. The Board of Trustees also authorized the Fund to incur additional leverage that would increase the Fund s effective leverage ratio.

Here the team discusses the U.S. economic and financial market conditions, their management strategies and the performance of the Funds for the twelve-month reporting period ended July 31, 2016.

What factors affected the U.S. economy and financial markets during the twelve-month reporting period ended July 31, 2016?

Over the twelve-month reporting period, U.S. economic data continued to point to subdued growth, rising employment and tame inflation. Economic activity has continued to hover around a 2% annualized growth rate since the end of the Great Recession in 2009, as measured by real gross domestic product (GDP), which is the value of the goods and services produced by the nation s economy less the value of the goods and services used up in production, adjusted for price changes. For the second quarter of 2016, real GDP increased at an annual rate of 1.1%, as reported by the second estimate of the Bureau of Economic Analysis, up from 0.8% in the first quarter of 2016.

The labor and housing markets improved over the reporting period, although the momentum appeared to slow toward the end of the reporting period. As reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate fell to 4.9% in July 2016 from 5.3% in July 2015, and job gains averaged slightly above 200,000 per month for the past twelve months.

Certain statements in this report are forward-looking statements. Discussions of specific investments are for illustration only and are not intended as recommendations of individual investments. The forward-looking statements and other views expressed herein are those of the portfolio managers as of the date of this report. Actual future results or occurrences may differ significantly from those anticipated in any forward-looking statements and the views expressed herein are subject to change at any time, due to numerous market and other factors. The Funds disclaim any obligation to update publicly or revise any forward-looking statements or views expressed herein.

For financial reporting purposes, the ratings disclosed are the highest rating given by one of the following national rating agencies: Standard & Poor s (S&P), Moody s Investors Service, Inc. (Moody s) or Fitch, Inc. (Fitch). This treatment of split-rated securities may differ from that used for other purposes, such as for Fund investment policies. Credit ratings are subject to change. AAA, AA, A and BBB are investment grade ratings, while BB, B, CCC, CC, C and D are below investment grade ratings. Certain bonds backed by U.S. Government or agency securities are regarded as having an implied rating equal to the rating of such securities. Holdings designated N/R are not rated by these national rating agencies.

Refer to the Glossary of Terms Used in this Report for further definition of the terms used within this section.

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Portfolio Managers Comments (continued)

The S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller U.S. National Home Price Index, which covers all nine U.S. census divisions, recorded a 5.1% annual gain in June 2016 (most recent data available at the time this report was prepared) (effective July 26, 2016, the S&P/Case-Shiller U.S. National Home Price Index was renamed the S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller U.S. National Home Price Index). The 10-City and 20-City Composites reported year-over-year increases of 4.3% and 5.1%, respectively.

Consumers, whose purchases comprise the largest component of the U.S. economy, benefited from employment growth and firming wages over the twelve-month reporting period. Although consumer spending gains were rather muted in the latter half of 2015, a spending surge in the second quarter of 2016 helped offset weaker business investment. A backdrop of low inflation also contributed to consumers—willingness to buy. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 0.8% over the twelve-month reporting period ended July 2016 on a seasonally adjusted basis, as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The core CPI (which excludes food and energy) increased 2.2% during the same period, slightly above the Fed—s unofficial longer term inflation objective of 2.0%.

Business investment remained weak over the reporting period. Corporate earnings growth slowed during 2015, reflecting an array of factors ranging from weakening demand amid sluggish U.S. and global growth to the impact of falling commodity prices and a strong U.S. dollar. Although energy prices rebounded off their lows and the dollar pared some of its gains in the first half of 2016, caution prevailed. Financial market turbulence in early 2016 and political uncertainties surrounding the U.K. s Brexit vote to leave the European Union (EU) and the upcoming U.S. presidential election dampened capital spending.

With the current expansion considered to be on solid footing, the U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) prepared to raise one of its main interest rates, which had been held near zero since December 2008 to help stimulate the economy. After delaying the rate change for most of 2015 because of a weak global economic growth outlook, the Fed announced in December 2015 that it would raise the fed funds target rate by 0.25%. The news was widely expected and therefore had a relatively muted impact on the financial markets.

Although the Fed continued to emphasize future rate increases would be gradual, investors worried about the pace. This, along with uncertainties about the global macroeconomic backdrop, another downdraft in oil prices and a spike in stock market volatility triggered significant losses across assets that carry more risk and fueled demand for safe haven assets such as Treasury bonds and gold from January through mid-February, however, fear began to subside in March. The Fed held the rate steady at both the January and March policy meetings, as well as lowered its expectations to two rate increases in 2016 from four. Also boosting investor confidence were reassuring statements from the European Central Bank, some positive economic data in the U.S. and abroad, a retreat in the U.S. dollar and an oil price rally. At its April meeting, the Fed indicated its readiness to raise its benchmark rate at the next policy meeting in June. However, a very disappointing jobs growth report in May and the significant uncertainty surrounding the U.K. s Brexit vote led the Fed to again hold rates steady at its June and July meetings.

The U.K. s vote on June 23, 2016 to leave the EU caught investors off guard. In response, U.K. sterling fell precipitously, global equities were turbulent and safe-haven assets such as gold, the U.S. dollar and U.S. Treasuries saw notable inflows. However, the markets stabilized fairly quickly, buoyed by reassurances from global central banks and a perception that the temporary price rout presented an attractive buying opportunity. Although many political and economic uncertainties for the U.K. and the EU remain, market volatility was relatively subdued throughout July, as concerns of a Brexit-induced financial crisis abated.

During the reporting period, particularly throughout the fourth quarter of 2015 and briefly during the end of the reporting period when Brexit was announced, the technical sell-off in levered credit markets continued as corporate debt was re-priced across the quality spectrum with lower rated, more illiquid issues being the most adversely impacted. Growing concerns of a more pronounced economic slowdown in China and continued commodity related sector volatility resulted in deteriorating investor sentiment. This triggered a flight of capital from credit markets, particularly among retail investors, despite generally sound macroeconomic and corporate fundamentals (ex-commodity related sectors).

This created a self-reinforcing technical feedback loop where initial selling put downward pressure on credit prices, prompting further selling as many investors attempted to exit the market before the technical downdraft intensified. Investor fears were further stoked by news of the closure of several high profile high yield mutual funds.

During the second half of the reporting period, markets reversed markedly and finished on a positive note. Risk assets were buoyed by increased demand and risk appetite largely due to dovish Fed rhetoric and the ECB expanding their monetary policy. Fears around Chinese growth subsiding along with damping concerns of a domestic recession also helped support the rally. With regard to credit markets specifically, the ensuing influx of capital into the high yield asset class as well as uptick in collateralized loan obligation (CLO) issuance later in the reporting period helped drive prices.

Loan markets posted slightly positive returns for the entire reporting period. During the first half of the reporting period, the loan market traded off largely due to technical factors and in concert with general risk aversion across the broad capital markets. While overall loan mutual fund flows continued to be negative, institutional loan demand driven by CLO issuance more than offset retail outflows. This institutional demand provided support to the loan market, allowing it in large part to avoid the downward cycle experienced in lower quality risk assets. A late period uptick in new CLO issuance along with a modest reversal in mutual fund outflows allowed for continued support in the asset class recovering much of the technical weakness experienced late in 2015.

Moving down the capital structure, high yield markets posted positive returns during the reporting period, as they rebounded from fourth quarter 2015 lows. The technical storm impacted nearly every sector of the high yield market during the fourth quarter. Most notably, energy and other commodity related sectors continued their precipitous decline. In addition, many larger, more liquid issues spanning media to information technology and across consumer sectors experienced price weakness due to their ability to be more readily sold as investors exited the high yield market. These factors were offset by an influx of capital into the high yield market during the first quarter of 2016. As a result, by the second half of the reporting period market-wide concerns had begun to dissipate with net negative flows out of the high yield bond fund category being reversed and high yield bond prices recovered.

What strategies were used to manage the Funds during the twelve-month reporting period ended July 31, 2016?

NSL, JFR and JRO have similar investment objectives and strategies. Each Fund is designed to seek a high level of current income by primarily investing in a portfolio of adjustable rate, senior secured corporate loans. The Funds also may invest in unsecured senior loans, other debt securities, equity securities and warrants acquired in connection with an investment in senior loans. A significant portion of each Fund s assets may be invested in instruments that, at the time of investment, are rated below investment grade or are unrated but judged by Symphony to be of comparable quality to below investment grade.

JSD seeks to provide current income and the potential for capital appreciation. The Fund invests primarily in a blended portfolio of below investment grade adjustable rate corporate debt instruments, including senior secured loans, second lien loans and other adjustable rate corporate debt instruments. The Fund may also make limited tactical investments in other types of debt instruments and may enter into tactical short positions consisting of primarily high yield debt. Under normal market conditions the Fund maintains a portfolio with an average duration that does not exceed two years.

JQC invests at least 70% of its assets in senior secured and second lien loans, and up to 30% of its assets opportunistically over the credit cycle in other types of securities across a company s capital structure. These other securities primarily include income-oriented securities such as high yield corporate and convertible bonds as well as

common stocks. The Fund maintained exposure to senior loans during the reporting period, while tactically allocating between high yield corporate bonds, equity securities and convertible bonds. Exposure consisted of mainly U.S. issuers, and was focused on companies that, in general, had high levels of tangible assets, predictable revenue streams, significant market share within their respective industries and positive free cash flow.

Portfolio Managers Comments (continued)

How did the Funds perform during this twelve-month reporting period ended July 31, 2016?

The tables in the Performance Overview and Holding Summaries section of this report provide total return performance for each Fund for the one-year, five-year, ten-year and/or since inception periods ended July 31, 2016. Each Fund s total returns at net asset value (NAV) are compared with the performance of a corresponding market index. For the twelve-month reporting period ended July 31, 2016, NSL, JFR, JRO, JSD and JQC underperformed the Credit Suisse Leveraged Loan Index.

As mentioned in the market commentary, during the reporting period, particularly throughout the fourth quarter of 2015 and briefly during the end of the reporting period when Brexit was announced, the technical sell-off in levered credit markets continued as corporate debt was re-priced across the quality spectrum with lower rated, more illiquid issues being the most adversely impacted. While markets reversed markedly and finished on a positive note, the Funds were not able to fully recover from the impact of the sell-off during the first half of the reporting period. As a result, the Funds underperformed their benchmarks.

Across all five Funds, our top and bottom performing individual security positions and industry groups were relatively similar. As a result, for NSL, JFR, JRO, JSD and JQC, the information technology, consumer staples and health care sectors contributed positively to absolute performance. However, these could not offset the Funds exposures to energy and telecommunication services sectors, which contributed to the Funds underperformance.

Several individual positions detracted from performance. Our energy holdings detracted as well, including Energy and Exploration Partners and Fieldwood Energy LLC. Energy related securities performed poorly as oil prices declined given negative revisions of global oil demand, weaker macroeconomic news and a surging U.S. dollar. While we continued to maintain underweight benchmark exposures to the industry, these positions still detracted from overall performance. Telecommunication services holding Intelsat Limited also detracted from performance. This lower quality credit sold off due to weak earnings and a sell-off in the high yield markets during the first half of the reporting period. Lastly, Clear Channel Communications, Inc., a leading global media and entertainment company, detracted from performance.

Several positions contributed to performance including the Fund s position in the loans of Albertson s LLC. Symphony believes the food and drug industry has historically been more defensive during periods of volatility and believes these loans offer an attractive coupon relative to the rest of the industry and broad market. Both the sector and the company have performed well and we anticipate the loans will continue to be core positions in the Fund s portfolio in the near term. The loans held in Communication Sales & Leasing, Inc. also contributed to performance. The loans of the telecommunications firm performed well as the company announced their first planned acquisition and noted a robust merger and acquisition (M&A) pipeline, which was well received by the market. In addition, Avago Technologies Limited loans positively impacted performance. The leading analog semiconductor manufacturer benefited from its acquisition of rival Broadcom Corp. The deal may be the largest of its kind in the semiconductor chip industry. Subsequent to the close of this reporting period, the combined company has been renamed Broadcom Limited.

In addition, the use of regulatory leverage was a factor affecting the performance of these Funds. Leverage is discussed in more detail later in the Fund Leverage section of this report.

For JSD and JQC we invested in credit default swaps. JSD invested in single name credit default swaps, while JQC invested in high yield index credit default swaps. These contracts contributed to a positive effect on performance for JQC and a negative effect on performance for JSD during the twelve month reporting period.

All of these Funds have owned, or currently own, loans with the LIBOR floor feature. The coupon on most senior loans consists of both LIBOR (usually 90-day U.S. LIBOR) plus a spread. For example, a senior loan might have a coupon structure of LIBOR plus 400 basis points (bp) in which the coupon consists of 90-day LIBOR, plus 400bp. Given today s relatively low LIBOR rate, however, many issuers have put in place LIBOR floors to enhance the yield (and satisfy demand from investors) for newly issued loans. LIBOR floors, as the name suggests, put a floor on the reference

LIBOR rate. LIBOR floors typically range from 150bp to 50bp. A loan with a LIBOR floor might have a structure of LIBOR + 400bp with a 100bp LIBOR floor. In this example, the effective coupon is 5% (100bp + 400bp as long as LIBOR is less than or equal to 100bp). As a result, as LIBOR rises from current levels, the yield on a senior loan with a LIBOR floor will not rise in lockstep until after the reference LIBOR rate exceeds the LIBOR floor. Although many loans have LIBOR floors (the asset class is one of the few that will float when interest rates begin to rise), we believe the senior loan asset class provides fixed income oriented investors with a potential safeguard from a secular rise in interest rates.

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Fund

Leverage

IMPACT OF THE FUNDS LEVERAGE STRATEGIES ON PERFORMANCE

One important factor impacting the returns of the Funds relative to their benchmarks was the Funds use of leverage through the use of bank borrowings, Variable Rate Term Preferred (VRTP) Shares for NSL, JFR and JRO, Term Preferred Shares (Term Preferred) for JSD and reverse repurchase agreements for JQC. The Funds use leverage because our research has shown that, over time, leveraging provides opportunities for additional income and total return for common shareholders. However, use of leverage also can expose common shareholders to additional volatility. For example, as the prices of securities held by a Fund decline, the negative impact of these valuation changes on common share NAV and common shareholder total return is magnified by the use of leverage. Conversely, leverage may enhance common share returns during periods when the prices of securities held by a Fund generally are rising. The Funds—use of leverage had a positive impact on performance during this reporting period.

JSD also used interest rate swap contracts to partially fix the interest cost of leverage, which as mentioned previously, is through bank borrowings and Term Preferred. Collectively, these interest rate swap contracts detracted from overall Fund performance during the period.

As of July 31, 2016, the Funds percentages of leverage are shown in the accompanying table.

	NSL	JFR	JRO	JSD	JQC
Effective Leverage*	35.87%	35.76%	35.72%	35.93%	36.00%
Regulatory Leverage*	35.87%	35.76%	35.72%	35.93%	30.89%

^{*}Effective leverage is a Fund s effective economic leverage, and includes both regulatory leverage and the leverage effects of certain derivative and other investments in a Fund s portfolio that increase the Fund s investment exposure. Regulatory leverage consists of preferred shares issued or borrowings of a Fund. Both of these are part of a Fund s capital structure. Regulatory leverage is subject to asset coverage limits set forth in the Investment Company Act of 1940.

THE FUNDS LEVERAGE

Bank Borrowings

As noted above, the Funds employ leverage through the use of bank borrowings. The Funds bank borrowing activities are as shown in the accompanying table.

Current Reporting Period					Subsequent to the Close of the Reporting Period			
				Av	erage Balance			
Fund	August 1, 2015	Draws	Paydowns	July 31, 2016	Outstanding	Dr Praysdo Sver	ptember 28, 2016	
NSL	\$112,500,000	\$13,000,000	\$ (24,500,000)	\$ 101,000,000	\$ 99,435,792	\$ 9,000,000 \$	\$110,000,000	
JFR	\$270,300,000	\$31,000,000	\$ (60,500,000)	\$ 240,800,000	\$ 238,186,612	\$21,600,000 \$	\$ 262,400,000	
JRO	\$ 188,800,000	\$ 23,000,000	\$ (45,000,000)	\$ 166,800,000	\$ 164,933,880	\$15,000,000 \$	\$ 181,800,000	

JSD	\$ 85,200,000	\$ \$ (21,200,000) \$ 64,000,000	3 \$ 71,279,781	\$ \$	\$ 64,000,000
JQC	\$640,000,000	\$ \$ (79,000,000) \$ 561,000,000	\$587,907,104	\$ \$	\$ 561,000,000

Refer to Notes to Financial Statements, Note 9 Borrowing Arrangements for further details.

Reverse Repurchase Agreements

As noted above, in addition to bank borrowings, JQC also utilized reverse repurchase agreements. The Fund s transactions in reverse repurchase agreements are as shown in the accompanying table.

Current Reporting Period

Subsequent to the Close of the Reporting Period

Average Balanc

August 1, 20 15 ur	chases	Sales	July 31, 2016	Outstanding Pu	rchases	Salese	ptember 27, 2016
\$160,000,000	\$	\$(15,000,000)	\$145,000,000	\$153,196,721	\$	\$	\$145,000,000
Refer to Notes to	Financi	ial Statements, Note	e 9 Borrowing A	Arrangements, Rever	se Repure	chase Ag	greements for further
details.							

Variable Rate Term Preferred Shares

As noted above, in addition to bank borrowings, NSL, JFR and JRO also issued VRTP Shares. The Funds transactions in VRTP Shares are as shown in the accompanying table.

	Current Reporting Period								e Close of Period
				A	verage Balance				
Fund	August 1, 2015si	uance	Redemptions	July 31, 2016	Outstanding	IssuRanthen	npti õieş	otemb	er 27, 2016
NSL	\$ 58,000,000	\$	\$ (13,000,000)	\$ 45,000,000	\$ 53,560,109	\$	\$	\$	45,000,000
JFR	\$139,000,000	\$	\$ (31,000,000)	\$ 108,000,000	\$ 128,412,568	\$	\$	\$ 1	08,000,000
JRO	\$ 98,000,000	\$	\$ (23,000,000)	\$ 75,000,000	\$ 90,144,809	\$	\$	\$	75,000,000
Refer to Notes to Financial Statements, Note 4 Fund Shares, Preferred Shares for further details on VRTP Shares.									

Term Preferred Shares

As noted above, in addition to bank borrowings, JSD also issued Term Preferred. The Fund s transactions in Term Preferred are as shown in the accompanying table.

								bsequent to	o the Close of
Current Reporting Period								the Report	ing Period
August 1, July 31,Avo			vera	ge Balance			September 27,		
Fund	2015	Issuai Ræ de	mptions	2016	Ou	tstanding*	Issuan Re c	lemptions	2016
JSD	\$	\$35,000,000	\$	\$35,000,000	\$	35,000,000	\$	\$	\$ 35,000,000

^{*}For the period November 16, 2015 (first issuance of shares) through July 31, 2016.

Refer to Notes to Financial Statements, Note 4 Fund Shares, Preferred Shares for further details on Term Preferred.

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Information

COMMON SHARE DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION

The following information regarding the Funds distributions is current as of July 31, 2016. Each Fund s distribution levels may vary over time based on each Fund s investment activity and portfolio investment value changes.

During the current reporting period, each Fund s distributions to common shareholders were as shown in the accompanying table.

Per Common Share Amounts

Monthly Distribution (Ex-Dividend Date) NSL JFR JRO JSD JQC