

## Investors Exchange Product Information Circular 2022 – 0105

**Date:** February 24, 2022

**Re:** SPDR® Blackstone High Income ETF

This Information Circular is being issued to advise you that the following securities have been approved for trading pursuant to unlisted trading privileges (“UTP”) on the Investors Exchange (“IEX” or the “Exchange”) as UTP Derivative Securities pursuant to IEX Rule 16.160. Compliance and supervisory personnel should note that, among other things, this Information Circular discusses the need to deliver a prospectus to customers purchasing shares of the exchange-traded funds. Please forward this Information Circular to interested persons within your organization.

<u>Exchange-Traded Fund</u>	<u>Symbol</u>
SPDR® Blackstone High Income ETF	HYBL

Issuer/Trust: SSGA Active Trust

Issuer/Trust Website: <https://www.ssga.com/>

Primary Listing Exchange: Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.

The purpose of this information circular is to outline various rules and policies that will be applicable to trading in these new products pursuant to the Exchange’s unlisted trading privileges, as well as to provide certain characteristics and features of the products. For a more complete description of the Issuer, the securities and the underlying market instruments or indexes, visit the Issuer Website, consult the Prospectus available on the Issuer Website or examine the Issuer Registration Statement or review the most current information bulletin issued by the Primary Listing Exchange.

### Background Information on the Funds

SSGA Active Trust (the “Trust”) is a management investment company registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the “1940 Act”), consisting of several investment portfolios. This circular relates only to the Funds listed above (each, a “Fund” and together, the “Funds”). The shares of the Fund are referred to herein as “Shares”.

The SPDR Blackstone High Income ETF (the “Fund”) seeks to provide risk-adjusted total return and high current income.

Under normal circumstances, Blackstone Liquid Credit Strategies LLC (the “Sub-Adviser”) will invest the Fund's assets primarily in U.S. dollar denominated high yield debt securities. High yield debt securities include high yield corporate bonds, senior loans and debt tranches of U.S. collateralized loan obligations (“CLOs”). The Fund will invest in CLOs to gain indirect exposure to senior loans. High yield debt securities (commonly known as “junk”) are securities that are rated at the time of investment BB+ or lower by Standard & Poor’s Financial Services, LLC or Fitch Inc., Ba1 or lower by Moody’s Investors Service, Inc. or equivalent ratings by another nationally recognized statistical rating organization, or if unrated, determined by the Sub-Adviser to be of comparable quality. The Fund may invest in debt securities of any maturity. The Fund may invest up to 100% of its net assets in either high yield corporate bonds or senior loans. The Fund's investments in CLOs will not exceed 15% of its net assets (measured at the time of investment).

In pursuing its investment objective, the Fund seeks to outperform a composite benchmark comprising 50% high yield bonds and 50% high yield senior loans with less volatility than the general bond and loan markets over full market cycles. The high yield bond portion of the composite benchmark is represented by the ICE BofA US High Yield Constrained Index, and the senior loan portion is represented by the S&P/LSTA Leveraged Loan Index.

The Fund seeks to maximize performance while minimizing risk (“risk-adjusted returns”) by investing in high yield corporate bonds, senior loans, and debt tranches of U.S. CLOs using a top-down asset allocation approach coupled with bottom-up security selection. The top-down asset allocation approach evaluates macroeconomic, technical, fundamental, and relative value factors to determine allocation weights among the asset classes that the Sub-Adviser believes will result in the best long-term risk-adjusted returns compared to the composite benchmark. The bottom-up security selection process relies on fundamental credit research to dictate security selection within each asset class, seeking to capture credit risk premium by exploiting potential mispricing at the individual security level. When constructing the Fund's portfolio, the Sub-Adviser manages the Fund's asset class, industry, ratings, liquidity and issuer exposures in an effort to optimize the Fund's risk-adjusted returns. The Fund's investment strategy may result in a high portfolio turnover rate.

### *High Yield Corporate Bonds*

With respect to the high yield corporate bond portion of the Fund's portfolio, the Sub-Adviser applies a systematic approach to security selection and portfolio construction. This approach focuses on the credit risk of companies issuing the corporate bonds (i.e., the risk of loss due to the uncertainty in a debtor's ability to meet its financial obligations). Under normal circumstances, the Sub-Adviser utilizes a proprietary model (the “Model”) that incorporates data including but not limited to fundamental balance-sheet information, real-time information embedded in equity and options markets, and a database of historical defaults. The Model seeks to identify the most liquid, positively mispriced credit issues, while minimizing exposure to systematic credit risks (e.g., macroeconomic risks such as interest rate and currency fluctuations, market volatility, and industry or sector risk). The Sub-Adviser uses a variety of risk-management tools to produce risk measures for investments that are monitored in “real-time,” providing potential early-warning capabilities. Using information provided by the Model, the Sub-Adviser seeks to construct a high yield corporate bond portfolio that delivers excess returns compared to the ICE BofA US High Yield Constrained Index. The Sub-Adviser also seeks to actively diversify exposure in an attempt to mitigate risk specific to individual issuers or sectors in the Fund's high yield corporate bond portfolio, and seeks to generate returns through its integration of technology, infrastructure, ongoing research, and credit expertise.

### *Senior Loans and CLOs*

With respect to the senior loan portion of the Fund's portfolio, the Sub-Adviser seeks to construct a portfolio of senior loans and CLOs that provide exposure to senior loans utilizing a traditional bottom-up discretionary approach to credit selection that relies on fundamental credit analysis in an effort to minimize the loss of the Fund's capital. The Fund invests predominantly in senior loans that are made to businesses operating in North America, but may also invest in senior loans made to businesses operating outside of North America. The Fund may invest in senior loans directly, either from the borrower as part of a primary issuance or in the secondary market through assignments of portions of senior loans from third parties, or participations in senior loans, which are contractual relationships with an existing lender in a loan facility whereby the Fund purchases the right to receive principal and interest payments on a loan but the existing lender remains the record holder of the loan. Under normal market conditions, it is expected that the Fund's senior loan investments will maintain an average interest rate duration of less than 90 days. Loan interest rate duration is based on the actual remaining time until the applicable reference rate is reset for each individual loan. In addition, when making investments, the Sub-Adviser seeks to maintain appropriate liquidity and price transparency for the Fund.

The Sub-Adviser expects to invest in senior loans, either directly or indirectly through CLOs, possessing the following attributes, which it believes will help generate higher risk-adjusted total returns:

Leading, defensible market positions. The Sub-Adviser intends to invest in senior loans made to companies that it believes have developed strong positions within their respective markets and exhibit the potential to maintain sufficient cash flows and profitability to service their obligations in a range of economic environments. The Sub-Adviser will seek companies that it believes possess advantages in scale, scope, customer loyalty, product pricing, or product quality versus their competitors, thereby minimizing business risk and protecting profitability.

Investing in companies with positive cash flow. The Sub-Adviser intends to invest in senior loans made primarily to established companies which have demonstrated a record of profitability and cash flows over several economic cycles. The Sub-Adviser believes such companies are well-positioned to maintain consistent cash flow to service and repay their obligations and maintain growth in their businesses or market share. The Sub-Adviser does not intend to invest in primarily start-up companies, companies in turnaround situations or companies with speculative business plans.

*Proven management teams.* The Sub-Adviser intends to focus on investments in senior loans made to companies that have experienced management teams with established track records of success. The Sub-Adviser will typically require companies to have in place proper incentives to align management's goals with the Fund's goals.

*Private equity sponsorship.* The Sub-Adviser may seek to invest in senior loans made to issuers sponsored by what it believes to be high-quality private equity firms. The Sub-Adviser believes that a private equity sponsor's willingness to invest significant sums of equity capital into a company is an implicit endorsement of the quality of the investment. Further, private equity sponsors of companies with significant investments at risk have the ability and a strong incentive to contribute additional capital in difficult economic times should operational issues arise.

*Diversification, concentration and reliance on other lenders.* The Sub-Adviser will seek to invest broadly among companies and industries, thereby potentially reducing the risk of a downturn in any one company or industry having a disproportionate impact on the value of the Fund's portfolio. While the Fund looks to the underlying borrower of a bank loan, rather than the bank originating the loan, for purposes of determining the industry concentration of investments, it is possible that under a different interpretation the Fund may be deemed to concentrate its investments in the financial services industries. Loans, and the collateral securing them, are typically monitored by agents for the lenders, which may be the originating bank or banks. The Fund may be affected by the creditworthiness of the agent bank and other intermediate participants in a senior loan, in addition to the borrower, since rights that may exist under the loan against the borrower if the borrower defaults are typically asserted by or through the agent bank or intermediate participant. Agents are typically large commercial banks, although for senior loans that are not broadly syndicated they can also include thrift institutions, insurance companies or finance companies (or their affiliates). Such companies may be especially susceptible to the effects of changes in interest rates resulting from changes in U.S. or foreign fiscal or monetary policies, governmental regulations affecting capital raising activities or other economic or market fluctuations.

### *Other Investments*

In seeking to achieve risk-adjusted returns, the Fund may also invest in bonds and CLOs rated investment grade as measured at the time of investment. The Fund may also invest in US Treasuries and Notes, and Federal Agency issued securities for cash management purposes. The Fund may invest in derivatives including futures and forward contracts, and swaps (including total return swaps, and interest rate and credit default swaps) to manage yield, interest rate exposure (also known as duration), weighted average maturity, and exposure to credit quality. In addition, the Fund may use government bond futures for hedging purposes. The Fund may also invest in exchange traded funds ("ETFs") as a way to gain exposure to certain asset classes and/or securities that are consistent with the principal investment strategy of the Fund. The Fund may invest in certain ETFs that pay fees to the Adviser and its affiliates for management, marketing or other services.

### *Sale of Fund Investments*

If circumstances cause the Sub-Adviser to determine there is a likelihood the value of an existing investment will decline over time, the Fund may, if the Sub-Adviser believes that circumstances require, exit the investment. The circumstances giving rise to the Sub-Adviser's determination may, but will not necessarily, coincide with a downgrade of a senior loan, high yield corporate bond or other security's credit rating.

For more information regarding the Funds investment strategy, please read the prospectus for the Fund.

As described more fully in the Prospectus and Statement of Additional Information, the Fund will issue and redeem Shares on a continuous basis at their net asset value (“NAV”) only in large blocks of 50,000 Shares (each, a “Creation Unit”). Creation Units will be issued and redeemed principally in-kind for securities included in the underlying index. Except when aggregated in Creation Units, the Shares may not be redeemed with the Fund.

Shares are held in book-entry form, which means that no Share certificates are issued. The Depository Trust Company or its nominee is the record owner of all outstanding Shares of the Funds and is recognized as the owner of all Shares for all purposes.

The NAV per Share for each Fund is computed by dividing the value of the net assets of the Fund (i.e., the value of its total assets less total liabilities) by the total number of Shares outstanding. Expenses and fees are accrued daily and taken into account for purposes of determining NAV. The NAV of each Fund is determined each business day after the close of trading (ordinarily 4:00 p.m., Eastern Time or “ET”) of the New York Stock Exchange. Any assets or liabilities denominated in currencies other than the U.S. dollar are converted into U.S. dollars at the current market rates on the date of valuation as quoted by one or more sources.

The registration statement for the Fund describes the various fees and expenses for the Fund’s Shares. For a more complete description of the Fund visit the Issuer Website.

### **Purchases and Redemptions in Creation Unit Size**

IEX Members are hereby informed that procedures for purchases and redemptions of Shares in Creation Units are described in the Trust’s Prospectus and SAI and that Shares are not individually redeemable but are redeemable only in Creation Unit aggregations or multiples thereof.

### **Principal Risks**

As with any investment, you could lose all or part of your investment in the Funds, and the Funds’ performance could trail that of other investments. These Funds are subject to the principal risks noted below, any of which may adversely affect the Funds’ net asset value per share (“NAV”), trading price, yield, total return and ability to meet its investment objective. Interested persons are referred to the discussion in the prospectus for the Funds of the principal risks of an investment in the Funds. These include but are not limited to market risk, debt securities risk, senior loan risk, below investment-grade securities risk, credit risk, fluctuation of net asset value, share premiums and discount risk, affiliated ETF risk, Exchange-Traded Funds risk, cash transaction risk, collateralized loan obligation risk, counterparty risk, derivatives risk, income risk, LIBOR risk, liquidity risk, management risk, models and data risk, new fund risk, non-diversification risk, non-senior loans and other debt securities risk, non-U.S. securities risk, portfolio turnover risk, restricted securities risk, systematic strategies related to bond investments risk, U.S. Treasury obligations risk and valuation risk.

### **Exchange Rules Applicable to Trading in the Shares**

Trading in the Shares on IEX is subject to IEX trading rules.

### **Trading Hours**

The value of the Index underlying the Shares will be disseminated to data vendors every 15 seconds during the Regular Trading Session.

The Shares will trade on IEX between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Please note that trading in the Shares during the Exchange’s Pre-Market and Post-Market Sessions (“Extended Market Sessions”) may result in additional trading risks which include: (1) that the current underlying indicative value may not be updated during the Extended Market Sessions, (2) lower liquidity in the Extended Market Sessions may impact pricing, (3) higher volatility in the Extended Market Sessions may impact pricing,

(4) wider spreads may occur in the Extended Markets Sessions, and (5) because the indicative value is not calculated or widely disseminated during the Extended Market Sessions, an investor who is unable to calculate an implied value for the Shares in those sessions may be at a disadvantage to market professionals.

### **Delivery of a Prospectus**

Exchange Members should be mindful of applicable prospectus delivery requirements under the federal securities laws with respect to transactions in the Fund. Prospectuses may be obtained through the Fund's website. The Prospectus for the Fund does not contain all of the information set forth in the Funds Registration Statement (including the exhibits to the Registration Statement), parts of which have been omitted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the SEC. For further information about the Fund, please refer to its Registration Statement.

In the event that the Fund relies upon an order by the SEC exempting the Shares from certain prospectus delivery requirements under Section 24(d) of the 1940 Act and in the future make available a written product description, Exchange Rules require that Exchange Members provide to all purchasers of Shares a written description of the terms and characteristics of such securities, in a form prepared by the Issuer of the Fund, no later than the time a confirmation of the first transaction in the Shares is delivered to such purchaser. In addition, Exchange Members shall include such a written description with any sales material relating to the Shares that is provided to customers or the public. Any other written materials provided by an IEX member to customers or the public making specific reference to the Shares as an investment vehicle must include a statement in substantially the following form: "A circular describing the terms and characteristics of [the UTP Derivative Securities] has been prepared by the [open-ended management investment company name] and is available from your broker. It is recommended that you obtain and review such circular before purchasing [the UTP Derivative Securities]."

An Exchange member carrying an omnibus account for a non-member broker-dealer is required to inform such non-member that execution of an order to purchase Shares for such omnibus account will be deemed to constitute agreement by the non-member to make such written description available to its customers on the same terms as are directly applicable to such Exchange member under this rule. Upon request of a customer, Exchange Members also shall provide a copy of the Prospectus.

### **Suitability**

Trading in the securities on the Exchange will be subject to the provisions of IEX Rule 3.170 and other applicable suitability rules. Members recommending transactions in the securities to customers should make a determination that the recommendation is suitable for the customer.

### **Trading Halts**

The Exchange will halt trading in the Shares of a security in accordance with the Exchange's Rules. The grounds for a halt include a halt because the intraday indicative value of the security and/or the value of its underlying index are not being disseminated as required, a halt for other regulatory reasons or due to other conditions or circumstances deemed to be detrimental to the maintenance of a free and orderly market.

### **Exemptive, Interpretive and No-Action Relief Under Federal Securities Regulations**

The Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") has issued letters granting exemptive, interpretive and no-action relief from certain provisions of rules under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 for exchange- traded securities listed and traded on a registered national securities exchange that meet certain criteria.

AS WHAT FOLLOWS IS ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE RELIEF OUTLINED IN THE NO-ACTION LETTERS REFERENCED ABOVE, THE EXCHANGE ADVISES INTERESTED PARTIES TO CONSULT THE NO-ACTION LETTERS FOR MORE COMPLETE INFORMATION REGARDING THE MATTERS COVERED THEREIN AND THE APPLICABILITY OF THE

RELIEF GRANTED IN RESPECT OF TRADING IN SECURITIES. INTERESTED PARTIES SHOULD ALSO CONSULT THEIR PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS.

### **Regulation M Exemptions**

Generally, Rules 101 and 102 of Regulation M prohibit any “distribution participant” and its “affiliated purchasers” from bidding for, purchasing, or attempting to induce any person to bid for or purchase any security which is the subject of a distribution until after the applicable restricted period, except as specifically permitted in Regulation M. The provisions of the Rules apply to underwriters, prospective underwriters, brokers, dealers, and other persons who have agreed to participate or are participating in a distribution of securities.

The SEC has granted an exemption from Rule 101 under Regulation M to permit persons participating in a distribution of Shares of the above-mentioned Fund to engage in secondary market transactions in such Shares during their participation in such a distribution. In addition, the SEC has granted relief under Regulation M to permit persons who may be deemed to be participating in the distribution of Shares of the above-mentioned Fund (i) to purchase securities for the purpose of purchasing Creation Unit Aggregations of Fund Shares and (ii) to tender securities for redemption in Creation Unit Aggregations. Further, the SEC has clarified that the tender of Fund Shares to the Fund for redemption does not constitute a bid for or purchase of any of the Funds’ securities during the restricted period of Rule 101. The SEC has also granted an exemption pursuant to paragraph (e) of Rule 102 under Regulation M to allow the redemption of Fund Shares in Creation Unit Aggregations during the continuous offering of Shares.

### **Rule 10b-10 (Customer Confirmations for Creation or Redemption of Fund Shares)**

Broker-dealers who handle purchases or redemptions of Fund Shares in Creation Unit size for customers will be permitted to provide such customers with a statement of the number of Creation Unit Aggregations created or redeemed without providing a statement of the identity, number and price of Shares of the individual securities tendered to the Fund for purposes of purchasing Creation Unit Aggregations (“Deposit Securities”) or the identity, number and price of Shares to be delivered by the Trust for the Fund to the redeeming holder (“Redemption Securities”). The composition of the securities required to be tendered to the Fund for creation purposes and of the securities to be delivered on redemption will be disseminated each business day and will be applicable to requests for creations or redemption, as the case may be, on that day. This exemptive relief under Rule 10b-10 with respect to creations and redemption is subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Confirmations to customers engaging in creations or redemptions must state that all information required by Rule 10b-10 will be provided upon request;
- 2) Any such request by a customer for information required by Rule 10b-10 will be filed in a timely manner, in accordance with Rule 10b-10(c); and
- 3) Except for the identity, number, and price of Shares of the component securities of the Deposit Securities and Redemption Securities, as described above, confirmations to customers must disclose all other information required by Rule 10b-10(a).

### **Section 11(d)(1); Rules 11d1-1 and 11d1-2**

Section 11(d)(1) of the Act generally prohibits a person who is both a broker and a dealer from effecting any transaction in which the broker-dealer extends credit to a customer on any security which was part of a new issue in the distribution of which he participated as a member of a selling syndicate or group within thirty days prior to such transaction. The SEC has clarified that Section 11(d)(1) does not apply to broker-dealers that are not Authorized Participants (and, therefore, do not create Creation Unit Aggregations) that engage in both proprietary and customer transactions in Shares of a Fund in the secondary market, and for broker-dealer Authorized Participants that engage in creations of Creation Unit Aggregations. This relief is subject to specific conditions, including the condition that such broker-dealer (whether or not an Authorized Participant) does not, directly or indirectly, receive from the Fund complex any payment, compensation or other economic incentive to promote or sell the Shares of a Fund to persons outside the fund complex, other than non-cash compensation permitted under NASD



Rule 2830(l)(5)(A), (B) or (C). (See letter from Catherine McGuire, Chief Counsel, SEC Division of Market Regulation, to Securities Industry Association, Derivative Products Committee, dated November 21, 2005.) The SEC also has taken a no-action position under Section 11(d)(1) of the Act that broker-dealers may treat Shares of a Fund, for purposes of Rule 11d1-2, as "securities issued by a registered open-end investment company as defined in the Investment Company Act" and thereby extend credit or maintain or arrange for the extension or maintenance of credit on Shares that have been owned by the persons to whom credit is provided for more than 30 days, in reliance on the exemption contained in the rule.

### **Rule 14e-5**

An exemption from Rule 14e-5 has been granted to permit any person acting as a dealer-manager of a tender offer for a component security of the Fund (1) to redeem Fund Shares in Creation Unit Aggregations from the issuer that may include a security subject to such tender offer and (2) to purchase Fund Shares during such tender offer. In addition, a no-action position has been taken under Rule 14e-5 if a broker-dealer acting as a dealer-manager of a tender offer for a security of the Fund purchases or arranges to purchase such securities in the secondary market for the purpose of tendering such securities to purchase one or more Creation Unit Aggregations of Shares, if made in conformance with the following:

- 1) such bids or purchases are effected in the ordinary course of business, in connection with a basket of 20 or more securities in which any security that is the subject of a distribution, or any reference security, does not comprise more than 5% of the value of the basket purchase; or
- 2) purchases are effected as adjustments to such basket in the ordinary course of business as a result of a change in the composition of the underlying index; and
- 3) such bids or purchases are not effected for the purpose of facilitating such tender offer.

### **SEC Rule 15c1-5 and 15c1-6**

The SEC has taken a no-action position with respect to Rule 15c1-5 and Rule 15c1-6 as to the required disclosure of control by a broker or dealer with respect to creations and redemptions of Fund Shares and secondary market transactions therein. (See letter from Catherine McGuire, Chief Counsel, SEC Division of Market Regulation, to Securities Industry Association, Derivative Products Committee, dated November 21, 2005.)

This Information Circular is not a statutory prospectus. Members should consult the Prospectus for a security and the security's website for relevant information.

Please contact IEX Regulation at 646-343-2000 with any inquiries regarding this Information Circular.