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Rick Smead is Managing Director, Advisory Services, for RBN Energy LLC, an analytics and consulting firm based in fundamentals in the natural gas, oil, and natural gas liquids industries. He specializes primarily in the natural gas sector, offering expert policy analysis and advice, litigation support, and strategic advice with respect to gas pipelines, potential supplies, and market initiatives. His background includes over nine years as a Director with Navigant Consulting, Inc., and over three decades in the natural gas industry. That experience included over 20 years in senior management of major interstate pipeline systems. His consulting practice has spanned the domestic natural gas industry, all aspects of the shale gas boom, LNG trade, and consumption opportunities. He was a pioneer in understanding the shale boom, managing and co-authoring the first major quantification of the U.S. shale potential in 2008, the pivotal North American Natural Gas Supply Assessment. Most recently, he has been deeply involved in the opportunities for the use of the nation's natural gas abundance, including power generation, LNG exports, and gas-to-liquids technology. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maryland and a law degree from George Washington University.