# ASTORIA REAL ASSETS ETF (PPI)

Q3 2026 Commentary
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## Quarterly Performance Overview

The Astoria Real Assets ETF (PPI) returned -5.78% during the three months ending September 2026, while its benchmark (70% MSCI All Country World Index, 20% Bloomberg Commodity Index, and 10% Bloomberg US TIPS 1-3 Year) Index returned 4.24%.

| Fund | 1 Mo | 3 Mo | 6 Mo | YTD | 1 Yr | 2 Yr* | 3 Yr* | SI* | Inception |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Price Return | -5.19% | -5.78% | -3.04% | 8.59% | 10.66% | 15.06% | 17.62% | 12.59% | 12/29/2021 |
| NAV Return | -5.17% | -5.75% | -2.44% | 8.73% | 10.74% | 15.02% | 17.47% | 12.58% | 12/29/2021 |
| Benchmark[1] | -0.72% | 4.24% | 13.24% | 16.11% | 20.19% | 17.33% | 19.10% | 10.53% | |

**Returns are average annualized total returns, except those for periods of less than one year, which are cumulative. (1) Benchmark: 70% MSCI All Country World Index, 20% Bloomberg Commodity Index, and 10% Bloomberg US TIPS (1-3 Y) Index. The performance data quoted represents past performance and is no guarantee of future results. Investment return and principal value of an investment will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance data quoted. For the most recent month-end performance, please call 833.AXS.ALTS. One cannot invest in an index.*

## Relevant Indicators

- The S&P 500 Index returned 2.30% during the three months ending September 2026 and the MSCI All Country World Index rose 1.60%.
- The Bloomberg Composite Crude Oil Index surged 40.82%, the S&P Energy Select Sector Index was up 16.27%, and the Bloomberg Commodity Index gained 16.19%.
- Longer duration assets such as the growth heavy NASDAQ-100 Index gained 0.58% while the S&P U.S. Government Bond 20+ Year Index fell 8.93%.
- The bond market declined as the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index returned -3.51%.
- The yield on the US 10-year Treasury increased from 4.44% on 6/30/2026, to 5.27% on 9/30/2026, and the Bloomberg US Corporate Investment Grade Index was down 3.94%.
- The VIX Index decreased by 0.67% over the period.
- The Personal Consumption Expenditure Index (commonly referred to as “PCE”) increased 3.4% year over year in August, below the 3.7% forecast and matching July’s 3.4% measure. Month over month, August PCE rose 0.3%, below the 0.4% expectation but above the prior month’s 0.1% increase.
- Core PCE (excluding food and energy) was up 3.0% year over year in August, below the 3.3% consensus and matching July’s 3.0% gain. The August number was up 0.3% month over month, in line with the 0.3% estimate and above the previous month’s 0.1% gain.

- The CPI (Consumer Price Index) gained 3.4% year over year in August, matching both the 3.4% consensus and July's 3.4% measure. It rose 0.4% month over month, in line with the forecast and above the prior month's rise of 0.1%.

- Core CPI (excluding food and energy) rose 2.4% year over year in August, in line with the 2.4% estimate and just below July's 2.5% print. Month over month, the August figure was up 0.3%, above the expected 0.2% and hotter than the previous month's 0.2% measure.

## Fed Actions

The Federal Reserve raised the federal funds rate by 25 bps (basis points) at the September FOMC meeting, lifting the target range to 3.75–4.00% in a unanimous 12–0 vote. It was the Fed's first hike in more than three years and a decisive shift from July, when the committee held rates but drew three dissents. Chair Kevin Warsh described the move as removing "a dose of accommodation," declining to offer forward guidance and instead explaining why the Fed acted now after pausing in July. He was blunt about the motivation, telling reporters that "the plain fact is that inflation is too high and has been for too long," and cited a strengthening economy, inflation trends that had not improved enough, and shifting geopolitical risks as the reasons for acting. The data backed the decision. August Nonfarm Payrolls rose 162,000, well above the roughly 60,000 expected, and the unemployment rate held at 4.1%. August Headline CPI rose 3.4% year-over-year on higher energy prices, though core CPI was cooler at 2.4%. The updated Summary of Economic Projections turned more hawkish, with officials penciling in one more hike this year, which lifted the median year-end funds rate to 4.1% from 3.8% in June and nudged the longer-run neutral rate up to 3.2%. They also raised their 2026 growth forecast to 2.3% from 2.2%, lowered the year-end unemployment estimate to 4.1% from 4.3%, and lifted their core inflation projection to 3.4% from 3.3%. However, after a softer-than-expected August PCE reading released at the end of September, the CME FedWatch Tool now puts the odds of an October hike near 35%, down from as much as 70% a week ago.

## Performance Analysis

The Fund produced a negative return for the period. Equities accounted for the lion's share of the ETF's decline, while our commodity exposures contributed positively to the Fund's performance.

### Equities

Below are the largest contributors and detractors to Fund performance from equities. Valero Energy Corporation gained 49.40% for the period overall and accounted for 0.66% of the ETF's performance.

| Holdings Percent Contribution | |
|---|---|
| Valero Energy Corporation | 0.66% |
| Shell Plc | 0.46% |
| Kansai Electric Power Company, Incorporated | 0.34% |
| Exxon Mobil Corporation | 0.34% |
| Suncor Energy Inc. | 0.29% |

The largest detractor was GE Vernova Inc., which was down 19.10% for the period overall and detracted 0.70% from the ETF's performance.

| Holdings Percent Contribution | |
|---|---|
| GE Vernova Inc. | -0.70% |
| Vertiv Holdings Co. Class A | -0.66% |
| Cummins Inc. | -0.56% |
| Sterling Infrastructure, Inc. | -0.48% |
| ENGIE S.A. | -0.44% |

### Commodities

For the period, the SPDR Gold MiniShares Trust rose 3.48% and contributed 0.19% to the ETF's performance.

## Portfolio Changes

On September 25, 2026, we executed our semi-annual rebalance in which our stock selection and screening process was reviewed. We sold completely out of stocks whose quantitative ranking scores declined and with the proceeds from the sales, we purchased companies whose quantitative ranking scores were superior.

Within equities, we reduced our exposure to rate sensitive sectors such as utilities and real estate following the move in the 10-year Treasury yield above 5%, and redeployed the proceeds into materials, energy, and industrials, which remains our largest sector weight. In commodities, we trimmed our physical gold position and diversified into copper, silver, platinum, and palladium.

## Current and Prospective Economic Outlook

The US economy has remained resilient despite tariffs, elevated inflation, and the ongoing conflict involving Iran, with economic growth and corporate earnings both holding firm. Much of that strength continues to be driven by the AI buildout, and S&P 500 earnings are expected to grow nearly 30% in the third quarter. However, market participation narrowed during the quarter, as small and mid-caps lagged and AI infrastructure names, including several of our electrification and power holdings within industrials, came under pressure as investors weighed the returns on record AI spending. Higher energy prices also kept headline inflation elevated, prompting the Fed to resume tightening and pushing Treasury yields to multi-decade highs.

That said, we believe long-term demand for real assets remains supported by themes such as electrification, grid investment, and the AI buildout, alongside ongoing geopolitical and supply-related pressures across energy and commodity markets. Against this backdrop, we believe diversification across market segments remains prudent, and real assets, including commodities and inflation-sensitive equities, may provide a useful offset to traditional stock and bond exposures in portfolios.

*Commentary provided by Astoria Investment Management, who serves as the Sub-Adviser for the Astoria Real Assets ETF and is not affiliated with AXS Investments. Holdings are subject to change and should not be considered investment advice.*

## DEFINITIONS INDICES

**Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index** is a broad-based flagship benchmark that measures the investment grade, US dollar-denominated, fixed-rate taxable bond market. The index includes Treasuries, government-related and corporate securities, MBS (agency fixed-rate pass-throughs), ABS and CMBS (agency and non-agency).

**Bloomberg Commodity Total Return Index** is composed of futures contracts and reflects the returns on a fully collateralized investment in the BCOM.

**Bloomberg Composite Crude Oil Index**, formerly known as Dow Jones-UBS Composite Crude Oil Subindex (DJUBSCR), the index is composed of futures contracts on WTI and Brent Crude Oil.

**Bloomberg U.S. TIPS 1-3 Year (USD)** Index measures the performance of the U.S. Treasury inflation-linked bond market.

**Bloomberg US Corporate Investment Grade Index** measures the performance of the long-dated, investment grade U.S. corporate bond market. Only bonds that have a maturity of more than ten years are included. Securities must be fixed rate, U.S. dollar denominated, taxable and rated investment grade as defined by the Index methodology.

**CPI (Consumer Price Index)** measures the average change in prices over time that consumers pay for a basket of goods and services.

**MSCI All Country World Index** is a stock index that tracks nearly 3,000 stocks in 48 developed and emerging market countries.

**NASDAQ-100 Index** is a basket of the 100 largest, most actively traded U.S companies listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange. The index includes companies from various industries except for the financial industry, like commercial and investment banks.

**Personal Consumption Expenditure Index (PCE)** is a measure of the prices that people pay for goods and services. The index is known for capturing inflation (or deflation) across a wide range of consumer expenses and reflecting changes in consumer behavior.

**S&P 500 Index** is an unmanaged, capitalization-weighted index designed to measure the performance of the broad US economy through changes in the aggregate market value of 500 stocks representing all major industries.

**S&P Energy Select Sector Index** comprises those companies included in the S&P 500 that are classified as members of the GICS® energy sector.

**S&P U.S. Government Bond 20+ Year Index** is designed to measure the performance of U.S. Treasury bonds maturing in 20 or more years.

**VIX Index** measures the market's expectation of future volatility and is based on options of the S&P 500 Index. It is used as a barometer for market uncertainty, providing market participants and observers with a measure of constant, 30-day expected volatility of the broad U.S. stock market.

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

**Basis points (bps)** refer to a common unit of measure for interest rates and other percentages in finance. One basis point is equal to 1/100th of 1%, or 0.01%, or 0.0001, and is used to denote the percentage change in a financial instrument.

**FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee)** refers to the branch of the Federal Reserve System that determines the direction of monetary policy in the United States by directing open market operations.

**TIPS (Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities)** is a Treasury bond that is indexed to an inflationary gauge to protect investors from the decline in the purchasing power of their money.

## IMPORTANT RISK DISCLOSURE

**ETFs involve risk including possible loss of principal. There is no assurance that the Fund will achieve its investment objective.**

There is no guarantee the sectors or asset classes the advisor identifies will benefit from inflation. Fund may invest a larger portion of its assets in one or more sectors than many other funds and thus will be more susceptible to negative events affecting those sectors.

**Equity Securities Risk:** Equity securities may be particularly sensitive to rising interest rates, as the cost of capital rises and borrowing costs increase. Equity securities may decline significantly in price over short or extended periods of time, and such declines may occur in the equity market as a whole, or in only a particular country, company, industry or sector of the market.

**Commodities Risk:** Commodity prices can have significant volatility, and exposure to commodities can cause the value of the Fund's shares to decline or fluctuate in a rapid and unpredictable manner. The values of commodities may be affected by changes in overall market movements, real or perceived inflationary trends, commodity index volatility, changes in interest rates or currency exchange rates, population growth and changing demographics, international economic, political and regulatory developments, and factors affecting a particular region, industry or commodity.

**Futures Contracts Risk:** The Fund expects that certain of the Underlying ETFs in which it invests will utilize futures contracts for its commodities investments. The risk of a position in a futures contract may be very large compared to the relatively low level of margin the underlying ETF is required to deposit. In many cases, a relatively small price movement in a futures contract may result in immediate and substantial loss or gain to the investor relative to the size of a required margin deposit. The prices of futures contracts may not correlate perfectly with movements in the securities or index underlying them.

**TIPS Risk:** Principal payments for Treasury Inflation-Protection Securities are adjusted according to changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). While this may provide a hedge against inflation, the returns may be relatively lower than those of other securities. Similar to other issuers, changes to the financial condition or credit rating of the U.S. government may cause the value of the Fund's exposure to U.S. Treasury obligations to decline.

Shares of ETFs are bought and sold at market price (not NAV) and are not individually redeemed from the ETF. Brokerage commissions will reduce returns. NAVs are calculated using prices as of 4:00 PM Eastern Time. The closing price is the midpoint between the bid and ask price as of the close of exchange. Closing price returns do not represent the returns you would receive if you traded shares at other times.

**Investors should carefully consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses of AXS Astoria Inflation Sensitive ETF. This and other important information about the Fund is contained in the Prospectus, which can be obtained by visiting www.axsinvestments.com. The Prospectus should be read carefully before investing.**

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