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Date: October 11, 2017

Unstable Ground

October 10, 2017

Submission to BCUC review of Site C dam project

The hills on the north side of the Peace River valley at Bear Flat consist of top soil and shale. In the 1970s the field below the old road to Hudson's Hope had been planted to grain, which in the fall had been cut with the binder and stooked so the grain would dry.

While the men were clearing the field, some days they saw a black bear coming and going from the field to the base of the hill below the highway. The bear was digging out his winter den and had carried some of the bundles to his den. When cold weather and snow came he took some of the bundles inside and then plugged the entrance hole with the rest.

In the spring, the landowner, his son (Irie Bentley, my late husband) and grandson went to check on the den to see if the bear had come out and moved on. Much to their surprise they saw that the entrance to the den was completely covered with shale and dirt with the odd piece of bundle poking out here and there. With a shovel and hands they moved enough shale to discover that the bear was completely buried and had died.

Caroline Bentley