

Ross H. Mellinger



Ross H. Mellinger started his career as a junior foreman with the Civilian Conservation Corps at Union, West Virginia. Through hard work, determination and study, he advanced to the position of soil conservationist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service in Wetzel and Wirt Counties.

In 1956, he was promoted to the position of forester in Parkersburg. He finished his 34-year career by serving as the conservation forester for West Virginia, Maryland and Delaware from 1964-until his retirement. Mr. Mellinger became a West Virginia registered professional forester on October 9, 1964, and served on the registration board from 1969 to 1976.

Throughout his career, Mr. Mellinger helped farmers to understand and utilize their woodlots through one-on-one contacts, the development and dissemination of information and training other natural resource professionals. His success was partially due to his exceptional ability to communicate with others. He was able to explain in simple terms how the woodlot fits into the farmer's conservation plan and what economic returns could be expected from proper woodland management.

Mr. Mellinger is a prolific writer and over his career contributed to many state and national forestry publications. He assisted the writing and editing of "These Are Your Woods," published by the West Virginia Conservation Commission. This publication served as a textbook on farm forestry for landowners for many years. Mr. Mellinger was recognized by Robert M. Salter, Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, in 1952, for his contributions to this publication.

Mr. Mellinger was a charter member of the West Virginia Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society which held its first meeting in October 1946. His foresight and leadership in this professional organization resulted in the improved understanding of forestry and related issues by other professionals in natural resource management fields.

Mr. Mellinger's professional accomplishments and friendly and cooperative personality have resulted in many Soil Conservation Service awards, including certificates of Merit, Photo Series Award, Outstanding Performance Award and Superior Service Award.

The citation for the Superior Service Award read "for unexcelled dynamic leadership in woodland conservation techniques, which greatly improved services to landowners in West Virginia, Maryland and Delaware, stimulated the economy and improved the quality of the environment."

In 1966, Mr. Mellinger received the Governor's Conservation Achievement Award sponsored by the Sears and Roebuck Foundation and West Virginia Wildlife Federation.