

H. Clay Smith



H. Clay Smith has made many contributions to forestry research and forest management in West Virginia and the Central Appalachians during his approximately 35 years in the forestry profession. The author of more than 100 research publications dealing with silviculture in the Central Appalachians, he is a recognized expert on silvicultural techniques for regenerating hardwoods in the Central Appalachians.

Mr. Smith began his career in 1962 as a research forester in Parsons, West Virginia, at the Timber and Watershed Laboratory and eventually served as project leader, 1974-1994, for the research project "Silvicultural Alternatives in Central Appalachian Hardwood Forests," and director's representative for the lab. Mr. Smith also headed up the USDA Forest Service Cooperative Research Program on American Chestnut and Chestnut Blight. The research conducted on this program paved the way for current research programs in genetic manipulation, which may provide a blight-resistant chestnut tree which can be used to restore chestnut to West Virginia's forests. Mr. Smith's silvicultural research has resulted in significant earnings for the forest industry and has improved forests throughout the state, strengthening the industry as a whole. Mr. Smith pioneered the use of two-age cutting as an alternative to clear-cutting, a practice which has been picked up by the major forest industries, such as Westvaco.

Mr. Smith has been an active educator through his hard work on the video series "Managing Your Woodlot," and his many talks, field tours and short course. He has presented talks to many groups. In addition, he is a regular participant and teacher in the 4-H Forestry Camp and has provided tours to university students, landowners, researchers and interested members of the public.

Mr. Smith has also made significant contributions to forestry in West Virginia through his input into Forest Harvesting Best Management Practices and as an officer with the Society of American Foresters (chapter chairperson, vice-chairperson and executive committee member), and as associate director of the National Sugar Maple Council.

Mr. Smith's contributions have not gone unnoticed by other organizations. He is the recipient of the Tucker County 4-H Award, 1988; Station Director's Award for the Northeastern Forest Experiment Station of the USDA Forest Service, 1991; Friend of the Forest Award given by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (one of only five awardees in 1993); and most recently, he was elected a Fellow in the Society of American Foresters.

H. Clay Smith is known for his hard work, sound science, honesty, integrity and sense of humor. He is a true leader in West Virginia forestry, dedicated to doing the job right and advancing the field and practice of forestry in West Virginia.