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MEDIA CONTACT:

Claire Lucier

404-446-1665

clucier@duffey.com

**waterSmartSM Honors 12 Cobb County Students
in Sixth Annual Allatoona Ally Artist Challenge**

- Talent of local students on display at Allatoona Ally Autograph Party on Feb. 10 -

MARIETTA, Ga. (Jan. 19, 2011) – The Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority (CCMWA) and Cobb County Water System applaud the winners of the Sixth Annual Allatoona Ally Artist Challenge. A ceremony will be held to honor this year’s winners on Thursday, Feb. 10 at the Cobb County Central Library at 3:30 p.m. The winners will be sworn in as Junior Water Deputies and Lake Allatoona Park Ranger Virginia Bjornson will speak to students and their families about water conservation.

The Artist Challenge called for Cobb County fourth- and fifth-grade students to draw Ally, the scaly-but-lovable ambassador for Lake Allatoona, conserving water in her home and community. Nearly 300 students from 16 Cobb County elementary schools participated. This year’s winners include:

Mayson Brandon, 5th grade, Frey Elementary
Cynthia Cheong, 5th grade, Addison Elementary
Jackson Duvaris, 4th grade, Due West Elementary
Michael Gibson, 4th grade, Harmony Leland Elementary
Nicolas Giraldo, 5th grade, Keheley Elementary
Mabel Heard, 4th grade, Birney Elementary

Lauren King, 5th grade, Frey Elementary
Alyssa Levitt, 5th grade, Mountain View Elementary
Reed Manderfield, 4th grade, Mt. Bethel Elementary
Julia Montgomery, 5th grade, Davis Elementary
Katelyn Trembley, 5th grade, Murdock Elementary
Maria Yanez, 5th grade, Labelle Elementary

“The drawings created by our local students exemplify artistic expression and a growing respect for the environment,” says Becky Mixon, program director of waterSmart. “As a community we should be proud that our students show such dedication to protecting our water supply.”

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Cynthia Cheong, the winner of this year's contest, reminded citizens to turn their faucets off when not in use. Her drawing received the highest score from judges and will be showcased on the front cover of the coloring book.

A panel of judges consisting of prominent community members carefully selected the top 12 illustrations to be printed in the coloring book. waterSmart's 2011 judges included:

- Chris Holcomb – Weekend Meteorologist for 11 Alive News
- Kim Isaza – Editor for the *Marietta Daily Journal*
- Bob Ott – Cobb County Commissioner
- Chris Purvis – Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger for Lake Allatoona
- Walter Reeves – Georgia Gardener, Host of “The Lawn and Garden Show” on 750 WSB-AM
- Angela Seckington – Promotions Manager at Radio Disney

Each winning artist will be featured in the coloring book and will receive a poster-sized edition to share with family and friends.

“The imagination and ingenuity that went into these drawings is obvious,” says Kathy Nguyen, senior project manager at Cobb County Water System. “It shows our community's youth really grasps the concept of conservation and what a depleting water supply could mean to the county.”

The coloring book will be distributed throughout the community at partnering doctors' offices, restaurants, retailers and electronically at www.watersmart.net.

About waterSmart

The waterSmartSM program was initiated by the CCMWA in 2000 to educate their service area residents of all ages about the importance of indoor and outdoor water conservation and to help encourage sustainable, year-round conservation, regardless of climate conditions. The CCMWA is in its eleventh year of providing the waterSmart program to the community. For more information on water conservation and waterSmart, visit www.waterSmart.net.

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