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## **County-City Watershed Board Announces 2007 Watershed Champion *Tallahassee-Leon County Water Atlas Unveiling Set for Wednesday***

The Tallahassee-Leon County Watershed Management Policy Board (WMPB) will recognize Tall Timbers Land Conservancy as the 2007 Watershed Champion at its October 29 meeting at 2 p.m. in the second floor conference room of the Renaissance Building located at 435 N. Macomb Street. The Watershed Champion award is dedicated to honoring local organizations and/or individuals who provide leadership in protecting area watersheds. At the same meeting, the board will unveil a new on-line system that allows citizens to learn more about area water bodies.

On April 16, 2005, the County and City adopted an interlocal agreement to develop a formal mechanism providing for enhanced watershed protection in the capital region. The WMPB was created to identify a unified standard for stormwater protection, and the Board has set short- and long-term goals that will lead to water quality improvements and the protection of regional lakes and basins. County Commissioner Cliff Thael and City Commissioner Debbie Lightsey were designated by their respective commissions to serve on the WMPB, due in large measure to their individual and collective experience on local watershed protection issues.

Tall Timbers was selected, from nominations received from the public, for its continuous efforts to protect the Ochlockonee River and Lake Iamonia watersheds. To date, Tall Timbers has permanently protected more than 22,000 acres of high-quality habitat in the Leon County portion of the Ochlockonee River. "Tall Timbers has been a leader of water protection in our community for 50 years and it will be our honor to recognize them for their hard efforts", said Commissioner Thael, who serves as the chairman of the WMPB.

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During the WMPB meeting, Tall Timbers will be presented with a plaque, and a video produced by WCOT will be presented highlighting the accomplishments of the organization. Tall Timbers will also be featured on the WMPB website, [www.protectyourwater.org](http://www.protectyourwater.org).

The WMPB will also unveil the Tallahassee-Leon County Water Atlas (Water Atlas) during the meeting. The Water Atlas serves as a single source of County and City water resource data using existing information and management technologies. The public will now be able to access various data provided by the County, City, Department of Environmental Protection, Northwest Florida Water Management District, and other entities regarding Tallahassee-Leon County water bodies by using the link from the policy board's website.

"One of our goals was to involve and inform our citizens so they could be active in efforts to protect our local water resources", said Commissioner Lightsey, who serves as vice-chairperson of the WMPB. "The Water Atlas gives all of us easy access to the latest, best data on our ponds, lakes and rivers and all the methods we employ to keep them healthy."

For more information on watershed protection programs or WMPB meetings, please visit the Watershed Management Policy Board's website at [www.protectyourwater.org](http://www.protectyourwater.org) or contact Shington Lamy, Leon County Special Projects Coordinator, at (850) 606-5300.