

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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South Franklin County VFD receives \$20,000 grant and converts excess military vehicle

June 6, 2017 — SCROGGINS, Texas — South Franklin County Volunteer Fire Department received a \$20,000 grant from the Texas A&M Forest Service Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program. The department used the funds to add a slip-on unit to a converted excess military vehicle making it a service ready fire apparatus. The Stewart Stevenson 2.5 ton cargo truck was attained through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program.

This program is overseen by the USDA Forest Service and provides excess military equipment to fire departments and emergency service providers. Launched in Texas in 2005, it has released over 500 retired military trucks to Volunteer Fire Departments across the state to help them better protect lives and property. Texas A&M Forest Service transports the vehicle from a military installation, performs necessary repairs and delivers it to the volunteer fire department at no cost to them.

The primary use of this steel soldier is wildland firefighting. The south Franklin County VFD equipped it with a slip-on unit that is a complete self-contained system and has a 500-gallon water tank and foam capability. The foam is used to help with fire suppression. It cools the fire and coats the fuel, preventing contact with oxygen. The firefighter spreads a blanket of foam on the area involved, smothering the fire and decreasing the possibility of it reigniting.

“The department will be using this vehicle mainly as a large brush truck but it could be used for high water rescue and traffic control,” said South Franklin County VFD Fire Chief Eddie Rhoades. “There are several creeks in our area that have the potential to flood and the height of the truck would make it possible to do medical calls in areas that would otherwise be inaccessible during those flooded times.”

According to Rhoades, having a dual function truck will be very beneficial to the community and surrounding area. It will help meet the fire service demands of the growing population of their community.

South Franklin County VFD has been serving their community and surrounding area since 1976 and has open enrollment for committed volunteers. Interested individuals may contact the fire department for an application, (903) 860-2500.

Texas A&M Forest Service is committed to protecting lives and property through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program, a cost-share program funded by Texas State Legislature and administered by Texas A&M Forest Service. This program provides funding to rural VFDs for the acquisition of firefighting vehicles, fire and rescue equipment, protective clothing, dry-hydrants, computer systems and firefighter training.

For more information on programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, please visit <http://texasfd.com>.

