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Rochester Volunteer Fire Department builds capacity with help from Texas A&M Forest Service

ROCHESTER, Texas - After being inactive for a number of years, volunteers sought help from the Texas A&M Forest service to get Rochester Volunteer Fire Department back on its feet.

The VFD acquired a new small brush truck paid for with a grant administered by TFS in the amount of \$118,000.

"We really needed this to be able to better protect our area," Rochester VFD Fire Chief Cole Turner said. "We had been operating with an old military truck that ran about 28 miles an hour."

Before obtaining the new truck, the VFD was operating with retired military trucks also given to them by TFS.

"TFS sent us a couple of retired trucks and we operated them and kept them running," Turner said. "Now that we have this new truck we were able to send those back for another fire department to use."

The truck comes equipped with a compressed air foam system to help volunteers more efficiently fight fires.

"This will be the first new truck Rochester VFD has had since 1968," TFS Regional Fire Coordinator Charles Tice said. "This grant allowed them to get needed equipment that will help build their department's capacity."

TFS passes approximately \$12.8 million along to volunteer fire departments across the state every year, helping them purchase equipment to better protect lives and property.

"Fundraisers and grants such as this one from TFS are just about the only way a rural VFD can operate in Texas," Turner said. "The only way departments like ours can have anything to protect the people in the community are through programs like these. Now we are able to respond very quickly when we are needed."

To learn more about this program visit texasfd.com.

