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Forreston VFD receives \$20,000 grant and completes military truck conversion

June 12, 2017 — FORRESTON, Texas — Forreston Volunteer Fire Department enhanced its fire service capabilities with the help of a \$20,000 cost share grant through the Texas A&M Forest Service Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program. The funding went to purchase a slip-on unit that was added to a Stewart Stevenson excess military truck.

A slip-on unit is a complete self-contained firefighting system designed for wildland firefighting as well as structure and automobile fires. The unit that the department purchased has a 700-gallon poly water tank and a 10-gallon cascade foam system. The foam is used to help cool the fire as it 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.

“Before now, the largest tank that we had was a 400-gallon capacity,” said Forreston VFD Fire Chief Wes Curry. “This unit will allow us to stay out longer which will help with a quicker knock-down of a fire.”

Converting military vehicles into firefighting machines help departments attain rugged trucks with maximum off-road capability.

The Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program, overseen by the USDA Forest Service, provides excess military equipment to fire departments and emergency service providers. Launched in Texas in 2005, this program 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.

“This truck will be an asset to our department,” said Curry. “It is automatic and has 6-wheel-drive and is much taller than our smaller brush trucks. It will be able to get out into our rural areas that have very rugged terrain and its snorkel capability will allow it to get through the muddy areas or high standing water with ease.”

The department has been serving their 59-square-mile protection area since 1963 and have always looked for ways to increase their capacity. With safety being a priority, the volunteers will receive training on maneuvering the larger truck and familiarize themselves with the placement and use of the new equipment.

Texas A&M Forest Service is committed to protecting lives and property through its various fire department assistance programs. For more information on programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, please visit <http://texasfd.com>.

