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Smithville Volunteer Fire Department prepares for wildfire season with the addition of new brush truck

SMITHVILLE, Texas — Smithville Volunteer Fire Department is no stranger to the devastation that a wildfire season can bring. With this in mind the department accepted a \$100,000 grant through the Texas A&M Forest Service Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program to help purchase a 2017 Ford F550 brush truck. The truck has a 500-gallon water tank and foam capability that will help increase the capacity of the Smithville VFD fleet.

“We are pleased to have this new, small brush truck with updated firefighting capability,” said Smithville VFD Fire Chief James Elam. “It will be a dual function type of truck that is used not only for firefighting but high water rescues.”

Smithville Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1895 and covers a rural area with steep inclines, rocky and rough terrain and is just minutes from the Colorado River which occasionally produces flooding.

The truck has a walk through for the safety of the firefighters and easy access to two whip lines. There is also a water cannon on the front of the apparatus and a lot of storage space for firefighting and rescue equipment.

“The volunteers will go through hands-on-training so they are familiar with the truck and are ready to roll when a call comes in,” said Elam.

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 Volunteer Fire Departments 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>.

