

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 19, 2018

Bear Creek Volunteer Fire Department equips for the next natural disaster

CLEVELAND, Texas — Bear Creek Volunteer Fire Department converted a military excess truck into a dual purpose vehicle that will be used for wildland firefighting and high water rescues. The truck was acquired through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program (DOD FFP). They also accepted a \$20,000 grant to help purchase a new slip-on unit for the truck. The grant was from the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program. Both programs are administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“Our department needed a truck that could not only fight fires but help in evacuating victims of flooding,” said Bear Creek VFD Fire Chief Bryant Matthews. “This truck will be a great benefit if another high water situation like Hurricane Harvey occurs.”

According to Matthews, 80 percent of the department’s service area is forest. This truck’s automatic transmission will aid in easier off-road firefighting and the slip-on unit with foam capability will allow the firefighters a quicker knockdown.

Firefighting foam is used for 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 fulfilled their obligation to convert the truck into a service ready vehicle. Six committed volunteers worked approximately 50 hours painting the truck and applied the department decals before adding the slip-on unit.

Texas A&M Forest Service is committed to protecting lives and property through various fire department assistance programs. The Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program launched in Texas in 2005, is one such program and has released over 600 retired military trucks to volunteer fire departments across the state. The agency transports the vehicle from a military installation, performs necessary repairs and delivers it to the volunteer fire department at no cost to them. The Texas A&M Forest Service excess military equipment program is sponsored by the USDA Forest Service which also oversees the national program. For more information on programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, please visit <http://texasfd.com>.

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

