

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Eliasville VFD receives \$20,000 grant and increases capacity to serve community

June 14, 2017 — SOUTH BEND, Texas — Eliasville Volunteer Fire Department used a Texas A&M forest Service Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program grant to help purchase a slip-on unit for an excess BMY 5-ton cargo military truck.

The firefighters gave the military vehicle a new life as a firefighting machine. They painted it a non-military color added an extended front bumper, brush rails and a slip-on unit. The slip-on has a 1,048-gallon poly water tank and foam capability.

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 500 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.

“The addition of the slip-on unit with foam capability will help to increase our firefighting capacity because the foam has a cooling, wetting affect,” said Eliasville VFD Fire Chief Jason Henderson. “The combination of the foam and water increases the effectiveness of the water helping it to go further and making it wetter.”

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 truck is considered a heavy duty brush truck with the primary purpose of fighting wildland fires in the department’s 201-square-mile protection area, but it has multipurpose abilities. Since there are no fire hydrants in the Eliasville community it can also be used to draft and pump water and be utilized in high water rescue when medical needs arise.

“The Clear Fork River runs into the Brazos River in South Bend and usually ends up over flowing,” said Henderson. “This truck has the capability to go through high standing water and will be a benefit if there is a medical need that arises during times of flooding. Last year we had to rescue a lady who was expecting a baby and couldn’t get cross the flooded roads. This truck will be able to easily get the job done.”

Eliasville VFD appreciates having a large brush truck that can get through the rural, brushy terrain to help save life and property in their community and surrounding area.

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

