

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Marlin Volunteer Fire Department's new fleet addition helped in gaining control of the Rice Road fire

MARLIN, Texas – Marlin Volunteer Fire Department was first to be called out to what became the 96-acre Rice Road fire. Their new excess military truck addition was instrumental in helping the department fight a six-hour long battle along with other area fire departments and Texas A&M Forest Service.

“The Stewart Stevenson did very well in helping to knock down the fire at a time when low humidity and windy conditions were against us,” said Marlin VFD Assistant Fire Chief Mike Bethke. “We were very pleased to have this rugged truck with its new slip-on unit that can carry a large volume of water.”

The excess military Stewart Stevenson was attained through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program and the 650-gallon slip-on unit was made possible with a grant through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program, both programs are administered by Texas A&M Forest Service. Fire Chief James Adams painted the truck a nonmilitary color and Assistant Fire Chief Bethke detailed it out with the departmental logo, fulfilling their obligation to paint the truck a nonmilitary color.

“This converted military truck will be a great asset to Marlin VFD, helping to increase their firefighting capabilities and giving them a new advantage when responding to wildland fires,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator Matthew Schlaefer.

Marlin Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1973 and has open enrollment for interested citizens who would like to join their team.

“We have opened a second fire station in Perry and are looking for dedicated volunteers not only as firefighters but also as auxiliary personnel that are very important in the operation of a volunteer fire department,” said Bethke. “Anyone wishing to apply may message the department on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Marlinvfd/>.”

Marlin VFD members expressed their appreciation to the community for their continued monetary support that helps the department meet its operational budget and to Texas A&M Forest Service for their support of volunteer fire departments through the grant programs.

Texas A&M Forest Service is an agency operating within the Texas A&M University System and 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 800 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 USDA Forest Service oversees the program nationwide and is the supplier of the excess military equipment to fire departments and emergency service providers.

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

