

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Berlin, Mill-Creek, Zionsville Volunteer Fire Department transforms an excess military vehicle into a dual-purpose machine**

BRENHAM, Texas – Berlin, Mill-Creek, Zionsville Volunteer Fire Department converted a Stewart and Stevenson excess military vehicle into a firefighting machine thanks to a \$20,000 grant through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program, administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“This dual-purpose apparatus will not only increase our on-the-scene water capacity but because of its ground clearance it will allow us to respond to areas that were previously less accessible due to the terrain,” said Berlin, Mill-Creek, Zionsville VFD Fire Chief Michael McAnally.

The brush truck has a 500-gallon water tank, 10-gallon foam tank and is built to assist with high water rescues.

“In 2016 we had flooding in our area and our department responded to several highwater rescues as the creek got out of its banks,” said McAnally. “This truck was built with a ladder and an area to accommodate individuals needing to escape rising water. The truck will carry a three-man crew and six people if needed.”

The department volunteers painted the truck, added striping and lighting, and stocked it with wildland firefighting equipment, extra hose, rope throw bags and life jackets.

“We do a yearly fund raiser that was limited this year due to the COVID19 virus but we do appreciate our communities continued support and also the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program (DoD FFP) and Texas A&M Forest Service for making this fleet addition possible,” said McAnally.

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 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>.

