

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grant helps Bowman Community Volunteer Fire Department prepare for wildland fires

WICHITA FALLS, Texas — Bowman Community Volunteer Fire Department now has access to an extra 3,300 gallons of water to help fight wildland fires thanks to a grant through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program.

“Our protection area is becoming more of a wildland-urban interface, so this truck is very important in helping to protect property not only in our immediate area but also when we provide mutual aid to the 12 surrounding counties,” said Fire Chief John Strenski.

The truck was converted by a local company and the conversion included a steel poly lined water tank, 25-gallon foam cell, front bumper remote controlled water sprayers and a dump valve.

“The dump valve is a first for our department,” said Strenski. “It will allow us to efficiently have a water supply available when firefighting.”

A dump valve assists in moving water to non-hydrated areas, especially in rural areas. Having the capability to dump a large amount of water into a portable tank and then draft and shuttle more water to the scene gives the firefighters access to water without lag time which helps in extinguishing the fire faster.

The M916, 6x6 excess military truck was acquired through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program (FFP DoD). This program was launched in Texas in 2005 and has released over 600 retired military trucks to Volunteer Fire Departments across the state. Texas A&M Forest Service 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.

Both the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program and the FFP DoD Program are administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“Our department is grateful to Texas A&M Forest Service for providing the grant for the slip-on unit and truck,” said Strenski. “We would not be able to add such an apparatus to our fleet without the grant programs.”

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

