

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 28, 2018

Harrison County ESD #3 Fire Rescue expands capabilities with military vehicle

SCOTTSVILLE, Texas — Harrison County ESD #3 Fire Rescue converted a 2001 Stewart Stevenson 5-ton military truck into a service ready machine. The military vehicle will be used as a multipurpose, large brush truck, in wildland firefighting and high water rescues.

“This large brush truck will be used as a dual purpose vehicle,” said Harrison County ESD #3 Fire Rescue Fire Chief John Pritchard. “It will be a benefit as a large brush truck because of its tough, 6-wheel-drive and being capable of carrying 500 gallons of water with ease. For the past couple of years our service area has had flooding issues. When we were converting the truck we had the water tank situated on the back so firefighters or individuals who are being rescued have a safe place while being transferred to a more secure area.”

The excess military vehicle was awarded through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program (DOD FFP). The department also accepted a \$15,500 grant from the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program to purchase the slip-on unit with a 500-gallon tank. This program currently provides funding to rural volunteer fire departments for the acquisition of slip-on units for military vehicles, helping in their conversion into a firefighting apparatus. Both programs are administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

The slip-on unit is a self-contained apparatus used as an initial-attack unit to fight wildland fires. The unit containing the poly tank and pressure pump are easily mounted on the back of a pick-up or custom built bed.

The Harrison County ESD #3 Fire Rescue has been providing fire service to their community since 1982. The converted truck gives them greater capacity to continue to protect life and property.

“Our volunteers are very service oriented,” said Pritchard. “They serve their community without reservation.”

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 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>.

