

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 8, 2019

Novice Volunteer Fire Department converts military cargo truck into a firefighting apparatus

PARIS, Texas — Novice Volunteer Fire Department is recipient of an excess military truck through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program. The department also accepted a \$20,000 grant through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program to purchase a slip-on unit and installed it onto the 5-ton military truck, both programs are administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“This truck is really an upsize for our department because it is replacing an older truck and has allowed us to increase our capacity for wildland firefighting,” said Henry Blackmon, firefighter/board member for Novice VFD. “It has 1,000-gallon water tank, 10-gallon foam tank, bumper sprayers, dump valve, hose reels, whip lines and a hose patch that will allow a larger hose lay. This specialized truck will also serve a dual purpose when needed for high water rescues.”

According to Blackmon a large number of their response calls are for wildland fires with the surrounding mutual aid departments that serve predominately rural areas.

“The truck had to be painted a nonmilitary color then have the slip-on unit, radio, lights and other electrical components installed,” said Blackmon. “The electrical wiring was completed by a department member who is a master electrician and funding from community-supported fundraisers helped to pay for the conversion.”

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 Texas A&M Forest Service excess military equipment program is sponsored by the USDA Forest Service which also oversees the national program.

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

