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Kimble Rural Fire Department equips steel soldier for a new fight

JUNCTION, Texas — Kimble Rural Fire Department used a \$20,000 grant from the Texas A&M Forest Service Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program to convert an excess military vehicle into a firefighting truck.

The vehicle, a Stewart Stevenson 2.5-ton cargo truck was attained through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program.

Kimble Rural installed a slip-on unit with a 1,000-gallon water tank and a bumper nozzle that can be controlled from inside the cab.

The DoD program is overseen by the USDA Forest Service and provides excess military equipment to fire departments and emergency service providers. Launched in Texas in 2005, it has released over 500 retired military trucks to Volunteer Fire Departments across the state to help them better protect lives and property. 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.

“Kimble Rural responds to a number of fires each year that are caused by various traffic related incidents along highway right-of-ways,” said Kimble Rural Fire Department Chief Cecil Conner. “The primary use of this firefighting apparatus will be response along the 54-mile stretch of Interstate 10, U.S. Route 377 and our 1,270-square-mile protection area, which is more square miles than the state of Rhode Island.”

The secondary use of the vehicle will be for rural structure and vehicle fires.

“The height and ruggedness of the truck make it useful in rough terrain and could possibly be used for standing high-water rescue,” said Conner “The truck is now equipped with rescue equipment making it service ready.”

The department was originally organized for fire protection of the local ranches but as the population grew it evolved into a community fire department. The 27 volunteer firefighters appreciate having the new equipment to better protect and serve a populace of 4,544.

Texas A&M Forest Service is committed to protecting lives and property through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program, a cost-share program funded by Texas State Legislature and administered by Texas A&M Forest Service. This program provides funding to rural Volunteer Fire Departments for the acquisition of firefighting vehicles, fire and rescue equipment, protective clothing, dry-hydrants, computer systems and firefighter training.

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

