

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Southwest Bell County Volunteer Fire Department updates a 5-ton military conversion

KILLEEN, Texas — Southwest Bell County Volunteer Fire Department received a \$20,000 cost share grant to purchase a slip-on unit that will help update the department's five-ton military truck conversion. The grant was through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

The slip-on unit was built to the department's specifications, improving water availability.

"Our department covers 99-square miles and mutual aids with Ft. Hood, Lampasas, Killeen and Coryell County," said Southwest Bell County VFD Fire Chief Joe Bailey. "The majority of our area doesn't have access to water other than pumping water from a pond, pool or lake. Having the capability to carry 1,250 gallons of water will give us sufficient firefighting power for faster suppression and also allow for shuttling water if needed."

The ruggedness of the military vehicle along with the new slip-on unit will allow the department to continue to serve well, when responding to fires in the areas rocky and hilly terrain.

Southwest Bell County VFD has been serving their community since 1983 and has open enrollment for volunteers.

"If anyone is interested in dedicating time to giving back to their community, they can pick up an application at a 7 p.m., Thursday night meeting at the fire station, 258 Triple 7 Trail, Killeen or fill out an application from our website, swbcvfd.org.

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>.

