

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2019

La Casita Volunteer Fire Department converts a military vehicle to meet the needs of the community

LA CASITA, Texas — La Casita VFD received a 2.5-ton excess military truck through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program (DoD FFP) and accepted an \$18,000 grant from the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program to help purchase a slip-on unit. Both programs are administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

Rough territory is no match for this converted military vehicle.

“Wildland firefighting in our area can mean broaching some pretty rough terrain,” said Assistant Chief Armando Acevedo. “This Stewart Stevenson is similar to one that I drove in Iraq and it is a very capable machine. The addition of a slip-on unit with a 400-gallon water tank helps to increase our capacity for fighting grass and wildland fires.”

The department members painted the truck and did all of the work to make it service ready.

“The truck is in service,” said Acevedo. “So far we have used it to respond to 10 calls for grass fires, a number of those fires were from trash burning. It only takes one ember to get a grass fire blazing so we encourage the community to use proper burning techniques.”

For more information on outdoor debris burning, please visit

<https://smokeybear.com/en/prevention-how-tos/backyard-debris-burning>

Acevedo expressed the department’s appreciation for the grant through Texas A&M Forest Service and also for the assistance from the county as well as community who participated in their fill the helmet fund raiser that helped pay for the changes needed to convert the truck into a firefighting machine.

“This truck is a welcome addition,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator Travis Pecht. “It will increase the department’s ability to get to fires in the hard to reach places across ranch lands of Starr County.”

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

