



Park Provides Rural Fire Assistance Glacier National Park, Montana National Fire Plan - Firefighting

Two rural volunteer fire departments bordering Glacier National Park were the recipients of Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) funding in 2004. RFA helps fire departments obtain wildland fire training and purchase wildland fire equipment, allowing Glacier's neighboring fire departments to assist the National Park Service in a wildland fire event by providing additional initial attack resources and equipment.

The Coram/West Glacier Volunteer Fire Department received \$12,000 and will provide matching funds at a minimum of 10% of the funding. The department will purchase a portable pump, a foam unit, foam, a fold-a-tank, and personal protective equipment appropriate for wildland fire use. This equipment will be placed on the department's type VI and type IV wildland engines. The Coram/West Glacier Volunteer Fire Department has one station near the West Entrance of Glacier National Park and another station in the nearby community of Coram, seven miles southwest of the Glacier National Park. Protection is provided for approximately 2,000 people.

The Babb Volunteer Fire Department has received \$10,000 in funding and will provide matching funds at a minimum of 10%. They will utilize the funds for training, a chainsaw, foam, nozzles, hose, and for personal protective equipment. Babb Volunteer Fire Department is located on the east side of Glacier National Park. Their response area adjoins Glacier National Park, St. Mary to the south and the Canadian border to the north. The Babb Volunteer Fire Department has a Memorandum of Understanding Agreements with Glacier National Park, U. S. Customs, the Blackfeet Indian Nation, Glacier County and the Bureau of Indian Affairs Forestry Unit. The population base varies greatly for the Babb Volunteer Fire Department, fewer than a thousand residents in the winter, and triples that in the summer season with tourist visitation to Glacier National Park and Waterton Lakes National Park in Canada.

The Coram/West Glacier Volunteer Fire Department and the Babb Volunteer Fire Department mutual aid response area covers a variety of settings, including wildland urban interface areas in small communities, dispersed rural homes, National Park Service, United States Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and State of Montana lands.

Having this equipment will allow the Coram/West Glacier Volunteer Fire Department and the Babb Volunteer Fire Department to participate in wildland fire initial and extended attack activities within Glacier National Park, other public lands as well as on private property. Being prepared and properly equipped to respond to wildland fire incidents is appropriate and necessary for both departments, given their locations and the variety of situations to which they respond.

Contact: Fred Vanhorn, Fire Management Officer
Phone: (406) 888-7822