

## MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

### WAIVER REQUEST

December 13, 2012

The Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) is responsible for the suppression of wildland fires on 19.2 million acres of forest land in the state. Currently the State of Mississippi through the Wireless Communication Commission (WCC) is constructing a statewide 700-800 MHz narrow banded radio system. As a state agency we are required to go on this system. The current system we use is high band VHF which is not narrow banded. We are requesting an extension be granted in order for us to operate our current system passed the January 1, 2013 deadline.

#### Reasons for requesting extension waiver

- The new statewide system is currently not complete over the entire state.
- Our wildland firefighters need communications for their safety as well as the public's safety.
- The MFC did not upgrade the present system to narrow banding because the new statewide was suppose to be ready by January 1, 2013
- The MFC will be migrating from VHF/UHF to 700-800 MHz system when the new statewide system is complete.
- The MFC has already purchased the new equipment in order to go on the new system when it is ready. Our current system is not narrow band capable.
- The new statewide system is nearly complete. All towers have been erected and they are currently testing equipment and verifying coverage area before accepting the system from the contractor.
- The WCC is estimating the system should be fully operational by the end of January 2013.

The Mississippi Forestry Commission is asking for a 3 month extension to continue using our current wide band system. This should be enough time for the new system to be operational and not have our firefighters without essential communications.