



MEMBERS UPDATE

January, 2018

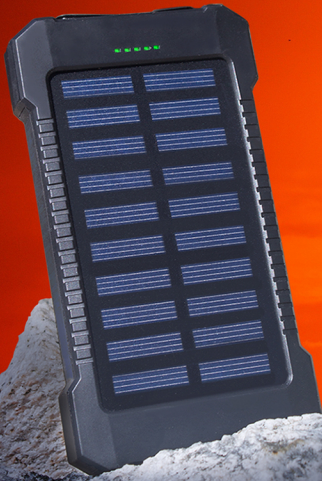


20 Winter Survival Must-Haves

**The Most Incredible Frontier
Survival Stories Ever Told**

The Laser Weapons Age is Upon Us

Turn Any Car into a SHTF Road Warrior

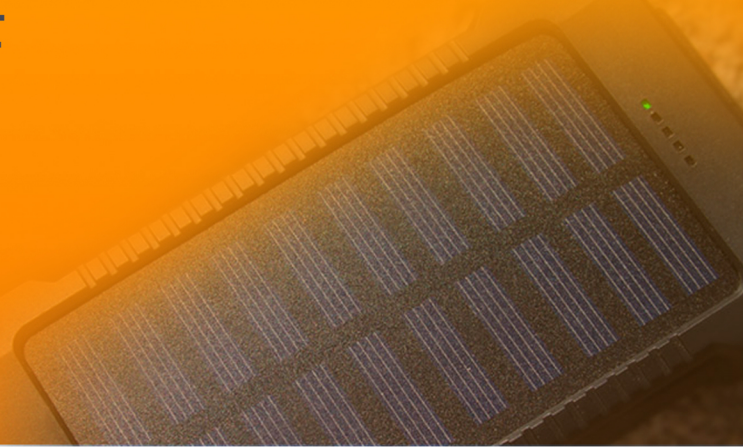


   
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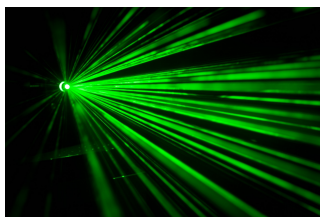
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20 Survival Must-Haves

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The Most Incredible Frontier Survival Stories Ever Told

Without our rugged frontier legacy, America just wouldn't be the nation it is today. These 10 remarkable stories showcase the unbelievably difficult circumstances our ancestors faced and overcame with gusto.

TURN ANY CAR INTO A SHTF ROAD WARRIOR



We Americans love our cars. Automobiles are the dominant form of transportation all across the country, by a landslide. And despite the costs and maintenance associated with ownership, the fact is that the autonomy and convenience offer by our cars has yet to be surpassed.

From a self-reliance perspective, cars are huge benefit, allowing you to travel great distances quickly and reliably. Yet, these vehicles are also a responsibility.

No one bats an eye when a boat is equipped with life jackets, a flare gun, two-way radios or even a life raft. But most vehicles these days don't even have a real spare tire. Automakers have worked very diligently to create the sense that cars are a convenience item and a status symbol. What's more, carrying around any kind of emergency supplies in your car is likely to get you made fun of.

We're not talking about gas masks here, or freeze-dried food. We're talking about drinking water, emergency flashers, and a first aid kit. Look, we get it: You never plan to drive through a snow storm, or cross a desert in your car.

The fact is, even if you live in an urban area, taking your safety for granted puts you and everyone in your car at risk. You can't allow yourself to depend on dropping into the nearest Target to stock up at a moment's notice. But having a SHTF-ready vehicle goes much deeper than supplies.

An often-overlooked factor in this discussion is vehicle selection, maintenance, and optional equipment. All cars are not created equal; that's no secret. But the fact is that the general public fails to take into account their SHTF plans when they go vehicle and tire shopping, or even when they fill up their gas tanks.

The discussion about your disaster preparedness plan should include your family's vehicles. And while you may not have the means to change what's parked in the driveway in the near term, it is essential that you consider what it might be like to depend on that vehicle in a SHTF scenario.

YOUR CAR, YOU'RE THE CAPTAIN



A survey by AAA found that Americans spend an average of 293 hours driving each year. That's time behind the wheel mind you, not time riding. That may not seem like all that much compared to, say, the amount of time spent sleeping. But when you consider how crucial your car is to your logistics, as well as your family's mobility, it really starts the wheels turning, so to speak.

No matter how you slice it, the chances that you'll have to navigate through some type of emergency while riding in a car (if not behind the wheel) are extremely high. Your car, whether it's a monster truck or a compact sedan, will factor heavily into

your emergency response plan. Even if you plan to shelter in place, rather than “bugging out,” your vehicle is your life boat at the very least.

Hopefully, we’ve made our point by now. The importance of having at least a basic emergency kit stashed in your SHTF-ready car is hard to overstate. Evacuations of all kinds are typically sudden, messy, and include crushing gridlock.

There’s more to this mindset, however, than simply hauling around a bunch of prepper supplies. Most drivers rely on state inspections and quickie lube shops to highlight any drivability or safety problems they’re likely to face in the near term. Let’s face it, these aren’t exactly the highest standards or the best stress tests for your vehicle.

Delaying maintenance items on your vehicle can really put you and your passengers at risk in an emergency. Keeping your preventative bases covered won’t deter all breakdowns, but they sure can help you spot trouble brewing before you’re stranded on the side of the road in a snowpocalypse.

The people riding with you are your passengers, i.e. your responsibility, even if you’re just giving someone a ride home from work. Adopting an aggressive approach when it comes to boosting your family vehicle’s readiness factor can pay major dividends, plus it can also be pretty fun.

DISASTER-PROOF VEHICLE MAINTENANCE PLAN



Maybe you’re a “car guy” and maybe you’re not. You might be surprised by what we’re about to say, but... it really doesn’t make much difference either way. If you’re not a self-reliance minded car owner, it doesn’t matter that you have a fully restored ’67 Camaro parked in your garage. Without a self-reliance mindset, you won’t be any more prepared than the next guy.

Now, will being a DIY gear head save you a little money here and there? Sure it will. Labor makes up most of the repair costs every time you see a mechanic’s bill. But the DIY mindset has its drawbacks too, with procrastination being a big one.

Disaster-proof maintenance has two major areas of concern; we’ll begin with the side that we think is more fun: Upgrades.

BETTER TIRES



Even your modest family sedan can become significantly more crisis ready with a few upgrades. When it’s time to buy a new set of tires, consider a heavy-duty tire with more tread and the ability to withstand modest off-road excursions.

If you drive a light SUV or a cross-over, consider a mild all-terrain tire like you’d see on a 4-wheel-drive pickup. The fact is, many, if not all, SHTF scenarios will result in unbelievable gridlock on major roadways in the affected area. Having the ability to cut across rocky medians without damaging your tires will be a huge advantage.

If you drive a truck or large SUV, then the all-terrain tires idea should be a given. Many manufacturers like BF Goodrich, Wrangler, and Cooper make several grades of all-terrains, some that are very aggressive and others more pavement oriented. You might also consider a higher load range tire (increasing the thickness and weight), which may stiffen your ride but create some gains in durability and longevity.

Note: Installing larger than the factory tires on any vehicle is a double-edged sword, especially on lighter cross-overs and SUVs. Yes, it can smooth out some bumpy trails, but your vehicle's brakes, ball joints, axles, etc. will be under more strain than they were designed to handle. Unless your daily driver is a 4X4 pickup or Jeep, we don't recommend altering your vehicle's center of gravity with larger tires.

CARGO SPACE: FICTION VS REALITY



Cargo space is one of the most problematic factors when it comes to being realistic. Most drivers prefer, particularly in densely populated areas, vehicles that are nimble and easy to park. Sure, that's practical in most everyday scenarios, but it can be a serious liability in an evacuation scenario.

Let's go through a brief cargo space checklist:

- Does your vehicle accommodate all of your family members?
- Will it fit all your loved ones and their luggage?
- What about any pets?
- Who or what are you prepared to leave behind if not?

The fact is, most people can answer yes to the first question. The second question is often where people begin to fall off. If you have pets that you'd like to take with you in a "bug out" emergency, you're likely going to need to do some problem solving.

Cargo space is generally what's most lacking in our daily drivers. There's room for family members, but not if they bring their backpacks. And, sure, you have room for Rover, as long as your cargo area is empty. The good news is there are several good, low-cost workarounds.

ROOF RACKS - One of the best ways to get more space for people and pets is to throw your gear on top of your vehicle. Of course, lots of vehicles come standard with

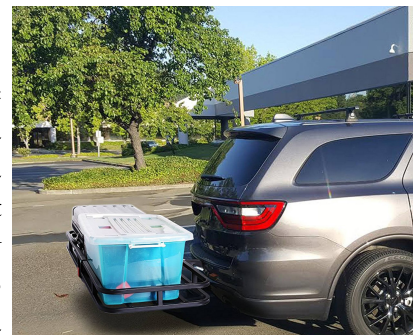


so-called "roof racks." Try to use one of these, however, and you'll find they're seriously lacking. In fact, without excessive tie-downs, these things aren't much better than just setting your luggage on the roof and driving down the highway.

An aftermarket, basket-style roof rack is a great way to free up space inside your vehicle. But you don't have to restrict your thinking to actual "racks." There are hard plastic roof mounted cargo carriers and even cargo bags from manufacturers like Thule.

HITCH MOUNTED CARGO BASKETS

— If you own a vehicle stout enough for a 2" receiver hitch, a cargo basket might be an option. Many of these cargo baskets can hold a



few hundred pounds of cargo, some up to 500lbs, in a convenient spot where it won't block visibility through your rearview mirror. Now, your receiver may not be able to handle as much weight as the carrier, so double check your receiver hitch's rating before you go loading 500 pounds on there.

Additionally, there are bag style hitch carriers, if that is more appealing to you. It's nice to be able to stuff your cargo directly into a bag, zip it closed, and not have to worry about how well your load is secured.

EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN HORSEPOWER



We love our horsepower as much as the next guy, but this form of power is actually much more critical. Yep, you guessed it: battery power.

We all know that a perfectly running vehicle with a dead battery is basically a useless hunk of steel on wheels. A working battery is essential if you are facing down any number of emergency situations, most of which place added strain on your battery and charging system.

The fact is, batteries aren't cheap, even if you opt for the "cheapo" option. Of course, it's hard to convince yourself to spend more money on such a non-thrilling item, but given the importance of your car battery, upgrading this component is a no-brainer.

Optima YELLOWTOP batteries are preferred by most off-road enthusiasts, with the REDTOP virtually tied. AC Delco Professional AGM batteries are also highly rated for cold weather starts.

The primary thing to keep in mind is to select a battery that exceeds the minimum requirements for your vehicle. Cold-cranking amps are important, but reserve capacity is also key. Whichever you choose, it's a good idea to have it tested annually to make sure you aren't on the verge of getting stranded.

MAINTENANCE



Not to beat a dead horse, but getting your battery tested annually is huge. That's because doing this helps diagnose problems with your vehicle's charging system. Even if your battery is new, a failing alternator will eventually leave you stranded. In fact, a loose terminal can fry connections in several key places. So, check your battery connections when you check your oil levels.

Routine maintenance like oil changes, air filter replacements, and coolant checks are absolutely part of your SHTF vehicle plan. However, we want to harp on one of the most overlooked safety items: Fuel.

After the hurricanes of 2017 and subsequent gas shortages, we've had fuel storage on our minds a lot recently. Yes, Jerry cans do make an off-road vehicle look more impressive, but they're not exactly practical if you drive a sedan. The best place to store fuel, by far, is your fuel tank.

It's easy to develop the bad habit of running on empty. It may be a little inconvenient, but we challenge NSRA readers to never park your car overnight with less than half a tank of fuel. For most vehicles, that's at least 8 gallons. A lot can happen overnight, and it actually doesn't cost you anything but discipline when you think about it.

If your vehicle is 4WD equipped, follow your manufacturer's maintenance instructions and engage your system regularly to make sure it's in working order. Also, invest the time to get familiar with how to properly engage your system. In this one rare instance, we even recommend actually reading the owner's manual.

Another key piece of routine maintenance is checking your coolant/antifreeze levels. It's easy to overlook this, but that can be very costly. As we stated before, chances are high that if you ever experience driving in an emergency scenario, it will put a lot of extra stress on your vehicle's systems.

Blizzards, gridlock, and any number of other scenarios will put your vehicle's temperature regulating systems to the test. The best thing you can do to help them work at optimum efficiency is to use the correct fluids designed for your vehicle and make sure you are at the fill line throughout all 4 seasons.

SHTF CAR KIT CHECKLIST



Next, it's time to cover the often troublesome SHTF Car Kit Checklist. Why troublesome, you ask? Like many other key emergency checklists, this list tends to grow longer and longer to the point where you may need to purchase a trailer to haul around all of your emergency supplies.

Our goal is to condense this down to the bare essentials, meaning the items that do the most work and take up the least space. Like an EDC kit, this is something that only really helps you if you can stand to carry it with you at all times. Due to the nature of "emergencies," the one time you decide to leave this in your garage will be the one time you desperately need it.

TIRE FIX SUPPLIES – The most accessible tire "repair" product is good ol' Fix-a-Flat type sealant sprays. It's not our favorite; it's not our tire guy's favorite, either, but it can get you out of a jam temporarily.

Instead, we prefer an actual tire patch kit with the hand drill, plugs, and tire tool. This does take a bit more time; however, the fix will generally last the lifetime of the tire. If you have the space, why not carry both?



JACK & TIRE IRON

– If you purchased your car used, you'd better double check that you have all the OEM tire change equipment included by the manufacturer. Even better, after taking inventory, run a quick drill to make sure it's all in working order.



AIR COMPRESSOR

– Driving around without a compact air compressor to re-inflate a flat tire seems foolish after owning one for even a few months.

GLOVES

– No matter what went wrong, we're betting that you'll be glad that you have a pair of gloves on hand.

JUMP STARTER/CABLES

– Jumper cables are the old standard; however, they do require another working battery. A jump starter is heavier and more expensive, but gets the job done solo. Compact models weigh as little as 5 lbs.



SPARE KEY – Enough said.

SHTF TOOL BOX

– Here's where many self-reliance types find themselves on a slippery slope. Most of us love tools and feel a bit naked without a good tool set at hand. Depending on your vehicle, however, a comprehensive set of tools may not be a realistic option. In fact, for the sake of argument let's say it's not.



In most cases, we prefer minimalism as a default. Mostly, this is because the less you have to lug around, the more likely you are to consistently lug it around. That's why we're going to keep this list as compact as possible.

- Multi-Socket wrench, metric or standard, depending on your vehicle
- Multi hex key set
- Philips head screwdriver
- Large slot screwdriver (that doubles as a pry bar)
- Heavy duty pliers
- Crescent wrench
- Vice grips
- Claw hammer (you never know)
- 5-minute epoxy
- Electrical tape
- Duct tape or Gorilla Tape

ZIP TIES – Need to make a repair on the fly? Secure a random piece of cargo to your roof rack? We gain more appreciation for the zip tie every time we find a new way to use one.

EMERGENCY BLANKET – In a cold weather emergency, a Mylar blanket may literally save you from hypothermia, frostbite, and even death. Given their conveniently small size, there's no reason not to carry one.

ICE SCRAPER – One thing is for sure, there's really no good substitute for an ice scraper. If you've ever improvised and left permanent scratches in your windshield, you know this already.

FLASHLIGHTS/HEADLAMP – Even in the light of day, you're going to need a light source if you have to poke around underneath your vehicle. In that type of scenario, a compact flashlight will do, but a headlamp is ideal. In fact, we recommend a headlamp over a flashlight if we have to choose. There's no reason you can't have both.



WATER – This is another item that tends to have a controversial component to it. Because how much water is really enough? How much are you truly willing to carry around? Water is notoriously heavy and takes up lots of space.

Because our intention is to keep this kit realistic and compact, we don't think it's necessary to carry gallons of water in your trunk. Keep a couple of sealed liter bottles tucked away out of the sunlight and know that this isn't your full bug-out stockpile, just enough to tide you over from point A to B.

LAMINATED MAPS – In an emergency, cellular signals may be down or overloaded with demand, rendering the maps on your smart phone useless. Likewise, you may be conserving your battery life. A good, comprehensive regional highways map is essential. Buy one and keep it in your glove compartment.

PORTABLE CHARGING – Let's face it; our communication devices are incredibly important to us. If you're like most Americans, you really can't be without your phone in an emergency. That's why a mobile charging device is absolutely critical, whether it's a 12-volt USB that plugs into your car's "cigarette lighter" or an MCG Portable Power Plant (mycrisisgear.com/powerplant).

WRAP UP

It doesn't matter if you drive a big honkin' 4X4 with 35 inch tires or a Honda Civic, it's high time you audit your vehicle's SHTF capabilities. Without the proper considerations and supplies, you could be putting your loved ones at risk without even realizing it.

That's why this process is so important. This guide is by no means exhaustive. Not because we forgot to include things, (because we no doubt forgot some important items), but because this guide isn't perfectly tailored to you. Use this as a guide, though, and you will no doubt have a much more SHTF-ready vehicle parked in your driveway.





**HOW LASER TECHNOLOGY
IS RESHAPING MODERN
GUN TECHNOLOGY**



Imagine for a moment you had a gun with unlimited ammo. Never jammed when you squeezed off round after round and was more powerful than any caliber you've shot.

With the advent of laser technology, the stuff of movies like Star Wars, this dream weapon is fast becoming a reality.

Recently, Lockheed Martin shot down five Outlaw drones in a test with its new ATHENA (Advanced Test High Energy Asset) laser.

Lockheed Martin was able to mount a lightweight, mobile laser on an armored vehicle and shot down the drones with, dare we say, laser like precision.

Already the U.S. Navy is testing lasers to shoot down incoming shells and take down small ships.

The way it works is a highly concentrated beam of energy is directed at the targets. When the laser hit the drones, the outer shell of the aircraft overheated and its internal mechanisms were destroyed.

Since lasers move at the speed of light, it makes leading a target completely unnecessary. All that's required is to simply line the laser up with the target, fire and it's destroyed. It's ruthlessly simple and efficient.

What's the cost of shooting a laser powerful enough to take out a drone?

The cost is staggering... staggeringly low, that is; it cost the taxpayers only \$1 per shot.

In contrast, it costs taxpayers \$3 million to use a Patriot missile to shoot down an enemy rocket. What this means is with the advancement of laser technology, the threat from nuclear rogue states like North Korea could be vastly reduced, if not eliminated.

LASER TARGETING SYSTEMS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

Already, laser technology is helping Americans improve accuracy with their guns. Laser sights aren't exactly a radically new technology; however, they have become incredibly versatile and affordable.



These devices, which are as lightweight as a cigarette lighter, can be mounted easily on almost any type of firearm and be used to sight targets, day or night. Rifles, revolvers, and even tactical carbines have the same shortcoming: They lack low-light shooting capabilities.

Even a high dollar riflescope can't pick up enough light to use with any accuracy after sunset. For any home defense plan, this is a major liability. A weapon without a low-light optic may level the playing field, but it doesn't tip the scale in your favor.

Just like with the lasers used to knock out drones, a shooter can use the laser's lightning fast speed to acquire targets, even in the dark. While it may be years before lasers become as common as conventional handguns, one thing is clear: laser technology is the future of weaponry.

Now, any gun owner can harness the accuracy lasers can provide with a Weaver or Picatinny rail (and it won't cost you \$3 million a shot like a Patriot missile would).

20 Winter Survival Must-Haves

Every season presents challenges for survivalists, but winter is definitely the trickiest (followed by summer). As snow begins to fall and the temperatures drop, the thought of having to head into the woods because the SHTF becomes increasingly less comfortable, psychologically and physically.

Of course, we don't get to decide when it would be convenient to deal with an emergency situation. This means being prepared for all possibilities, including the very real chance that a wintertime bug out may be necessary.

Do you have a bug out bag built specifically for winter? Do you have winter appropriate supplies in your home and shelter? Also, do you pack the right items when heading into the woods for a little wintertime camping? The following list will help ensure that you and your family are fully prepared to ride out a winter emergency, including a scenario that causes widespread, long-term power outages.

1. High-Quality Sleeping Bag



The number of sleeping bags available is simply staggering, which can make it difficult to narrow the options down to just one. Ultimately, the type of sleeping bag you select needs to be a good fit for the environment you intend to use it in. For example, the Coleman North Rim 0 Degree Sleeping Bag is best for extremely cold areas.

If you plan to bug out high in the mountains or somewhere that's traditionally brutally

cold in the winter – such as Minnesota or Canada – a zero-degree bag makes a lot of sense. On the other

hand, someone bugging out in Florida doesn't need a sleeping bag with this much intensity.

A Summer Season bag, which is rated for temperatures above 35 degrees, is probably more than adequate for anyone living in the southern portion of the United States.

A three-season bag, which is made for temperatures down to 10 degrees, would be a good compromise pick if you're nervous about staying warm but don't need a zero-degree bag.

2. Winter-Ready Tent

A four-season tent with a snow skirt such as the Greertop 2 - Person 4 - Season Backpacking Tent pictured above will help



keep you safe from freezing cold weather, and many of them are reasonably priced too. Keep in mind that even if you have a shelter to head to, anything could happen that keeps you from reaching your destination. This makes a winter appropriate tent a must.

If you have the money to invest into it, you could even get a larger winter tent that comes with a camp stove. Of course, bugging out with something so bulky would be very impractical. Even if you kept it stashed in your car, there's still no guarantee you'd be able to take it with you when the SHTF.

There's a lot of bells-and-whistles available in the tent world, but keep one goal in mind – protecting yourself from the winter elements. If a tent can do that, it's a good choice.

3. Balaclava Ski Mask

Your face and neck can suffer extensive damage from extended exposure to freezing temperatures and high winds. A traditional ski mask is helpful, but

the Self Pro Thermal Retention and Moisture Wicking Balaclava in the nearby photo is a much better option.

These ski masks are made for a variety of situations. In fact, you can wear this particular balaclava in at least six different ways. This is especially useful because you can carry just one item and have everything from the pictured full face, neck and head protection all the way to just a hat or scarf. These options alone make a balaclava that smartest decision. After all, it will take up less room in your winter bug out bag than an individual hat and scarf.



4. Folding Shovel

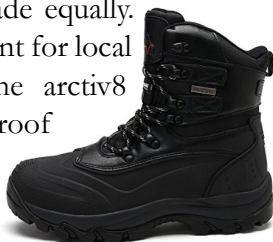
A shovel is a must for wintertime survival, but traveling with a full-sized one isn't going to be easy. Instead, opt for a steel blade shovel that folds up such as the Gerber Gorge Folding Shovel.



This shovel and hammer combo weighs 28 ounces and folds down to only 9.25 inches. Sure, it will take longer to dig out of a snowbank or to dig into the ground, but it's also compact and lightweight enough to run with. The same definitely can't be said for a traditional shovel.

5. Hiking Winter Boots

Winter boots are not all made equally. Some are very warm but meant for local usage. Others, including the arctiv8 Men's Insulated Waterproof Snow Ski Boots, are designed to provide comfort, warmth, protection and enough traction for hiking.



Yes, these are going to weigh more than your basic pull on boots, but they're also a lot more practical. If push came to shove, you could wear them all-year too, although your feet would likely be sweaty as a

6. Flexible Polyester Gloves

Gloves are a no-brainer, but what type do you have put aside right now? If they're a knit material, they can easily get soaked. If they don't have easily moveable fingers, you could find yourself in trouble during an emergency. At the same time, you need enough insulation to ward off the cold and wind.



Under Amor presents a good solution with their Mountain Gloves. They're lightweight but nicely insulated, and they're also waterproof. You don't have to choose Under Armor, of course, but look for something with similar qualities.

7. Portable Propane Space Heater

What if you're able to stay in your home, but there's no power? Or you are able to get to your shelter, but soaked firewood makes it impossible to stay warm? A portable propane space heater is a good answer, as long as you're also able to store some propane at home and in your shelter. The Mr. Heater Portable Buddy has a fold-down handle for compact storage and heats up a 200-square foot area with ease.



Many survivalists and camping enthusiasts will already have something similar because they work very well in a tent. In fact, combining this with a four-season tent and a warm sleeping bag could actually make you sweat on a frigid winter day.

8. Hand Warmers

Even if you have the thickest, warmest gloves, it's still wise to put some hand warmers in your winter bug out bag. Keep in mind that your gloves could get ripped, lost or soaked by snow – and we all know that even the waterproof ones can still get wet.



These hand warmers can make the difference between disabling discomfort and being able to perform necessary tasks such as chopping firewood, pitching a tent and hunting for food.

9. Insulated Snow Pants

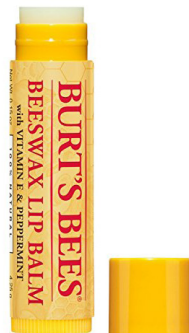
Looking at the Insulated Bib Snow Pants by White Sierra might bring up unpleasant childhood memories of snow pants that were uncomfortable and next to impossible to move in. However, these aren't your childhood snow pants.



They're made to keep you warm, but they also have more flexibility than what you might be used to. They're waterproof too, of course, and contain 2 ounces of polyfil insulation to ensure your legs don't suffer from extended exposure to wind, cold or snow.

10. Moisturizing Lip Balm

You might be wondering how in the world lip balm landed a spot in the list of items you absolutely need for winter survival. This might seem like little more than a luxury item, but you will have serious need for it in cold, windy conditions. After all, having extremely chapped lips is painful and leads to cracking. It's also possible to get a sunburn on your lips, even in the winter. Using lip balm will help avoid these issues so that you can focus your attention on more important things.



As some of you may be aware, a tube of lip balm can also be converted into an emergency candle with just a small amount of preparation and supplies (a cotton swab, scissors and a lighter or match are all you need, besides the lip balm tube).

12. Sunglasses

The next item on our list of 'do I really need that?' prepper supplies (and yes, you do need it) is a pair of quality sunglasses. The nearby image showcases

Torege Polarized Sports Sunglasses, but this is merely a representative example of the hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of choices that would work well.

The main purpose behind sunglasses in the winter is to prevent snow blindness. And believe us when we say that having the direct light of the sun bouncing off of a brilliant field of white and into your eyes is one of the most painful and disorienting things you can encounter. You could actually permanently damage your eyes in this way, similar to looking directly at a partial solar eclipse. Protect yourself with sunglasses to avoid future vision issues.



13. Hatchet

A larger hatchet or axe is going to give you better performance, but when space is at a premium, the Fiskars X7 14-Inch Hatchet still makes it possible to chop up small firewood. Remember: no matter where you're headed, it's possible you could end up forced to take shelter in the woods.



Don't find yourself unprepared in this situation or you will most likely freeze or starve to death. A hatchet is just one of the tools that can help prevent an untimely death, but it's equally important.

14. Wool Blanket

When a sleeping bag is impractical or isn't warm enough, you can use a thin, lightweight, but super warm wool option such as the OD Olive Green Military Blanket. Having one for every family member would be a good investment, especially if you live in an area that's prone to power outages.

The blanket pictured above is not only wool, but it's also fire-resistant, thereby making this one of the safest ways to protect your family from the elements.



15. Ice Fishing Rod, Reel and Lures

Do you plan to bug out or shelter near a body of water? In the freezing cold, it's not likely to be possible to use traditional fishing



as a way to feed your family. Ice fishing, though, is a completely different story. Make sure you have a drill or hatchet that's strong enough to make a hole in the ice. Next, use proper equipment such as the Shakespeare Ugly Stik GX2 Ice Fishing Combo.



A rod may not seem like the easiest thing in the world to travel with, but at least ensure you have one in your vehicle or at the bug out shelter to increase your odds of being able to successfully fish during the winter.

Always keep in mind that anything could get in the way of you and your stash of food, so it's wise to take precautions to open up additional food opportunities.

16. Insulated Water Bottle

Eating un-melted snow will cause you to dehydrate more quickly than drinking nothing. However, once you melt it, snow can provide an emergency water supply. The next issue is where to keep any melted snow or fresh (or freshly filtered) water you encounter so that it doesn't freeze.



Enter the Simple Modern Summit Vacuum Insulated Water Bottle. Made from premium gage stainless steel, this bottle keeps liquid cold or hot for hours. It's also easy to clean and doesn't become a quick breeding ground for mold, unlike plastic alternatives that contain a built-in straw.

17. Satellite Communicator with Navigation

Getting lost in the woods or, even worse, separated from your family during an emergency is

terrifying. Help minimize the risk by using satellite communication devices.

The DeLorme inReach Explorer offers two-way communication and built-in navigational tools to make it simpler than ever to know exactly where you are at all times. If search and rescue services or cell signals are still active, you can also send text messages to cellphones and email addresses, along with enacting an SOS.



This could be a valuable source of information from someone who chooses not to bug out right away. You may even get the good news that you can return home, but this type of communication might not be otherwise possible without you having a satellite phone device.

18. Insulated Winter Coat

There are tons of insulated winter coat options. The example pictured nearby, the North Face ThermoBall Jacket, is representative of the type of coat you'll want to purchase for your bug out supplies.



This particular coat has a ripstop shell, an insulated lining, zippered pockets and an adjustable cord to keep the cold out. It's also lightweight and flexible enough that it can easily be folded and put into a bag. Similar qualities in any other style or brand will also work well.

19. Cold Weather Boot Socks

You must keep your toes - and fingers - as protected as possible to minimize the risk of losing a digit (or more) to frostbite. Additionally, it's necessary to give your feet the proper padding to reduce your risk of painful blisters. Carhartt's Extremes line addresses this need with Winter Boot Socks.



Fully cushioned and equipped with FastDry Technology, these particular socks are a nice choice because their insulation keeps you warm, and they also fight odors. As with everything else on this list, the brand and style are merely suggestions. Anything with similar features deserves a spot in your winter bug out bag.

20. Wool Base Layer

Thermal Underwear

You're going to want thermal underwear underneath your snow pants and/or regular pants when it's really frigid outside. Choosing wool is a bit pricy (the pictured pair by Woolx features Merino Wool and retails for \$99) and harder to keep clean, but the warmth factor is off the charts.

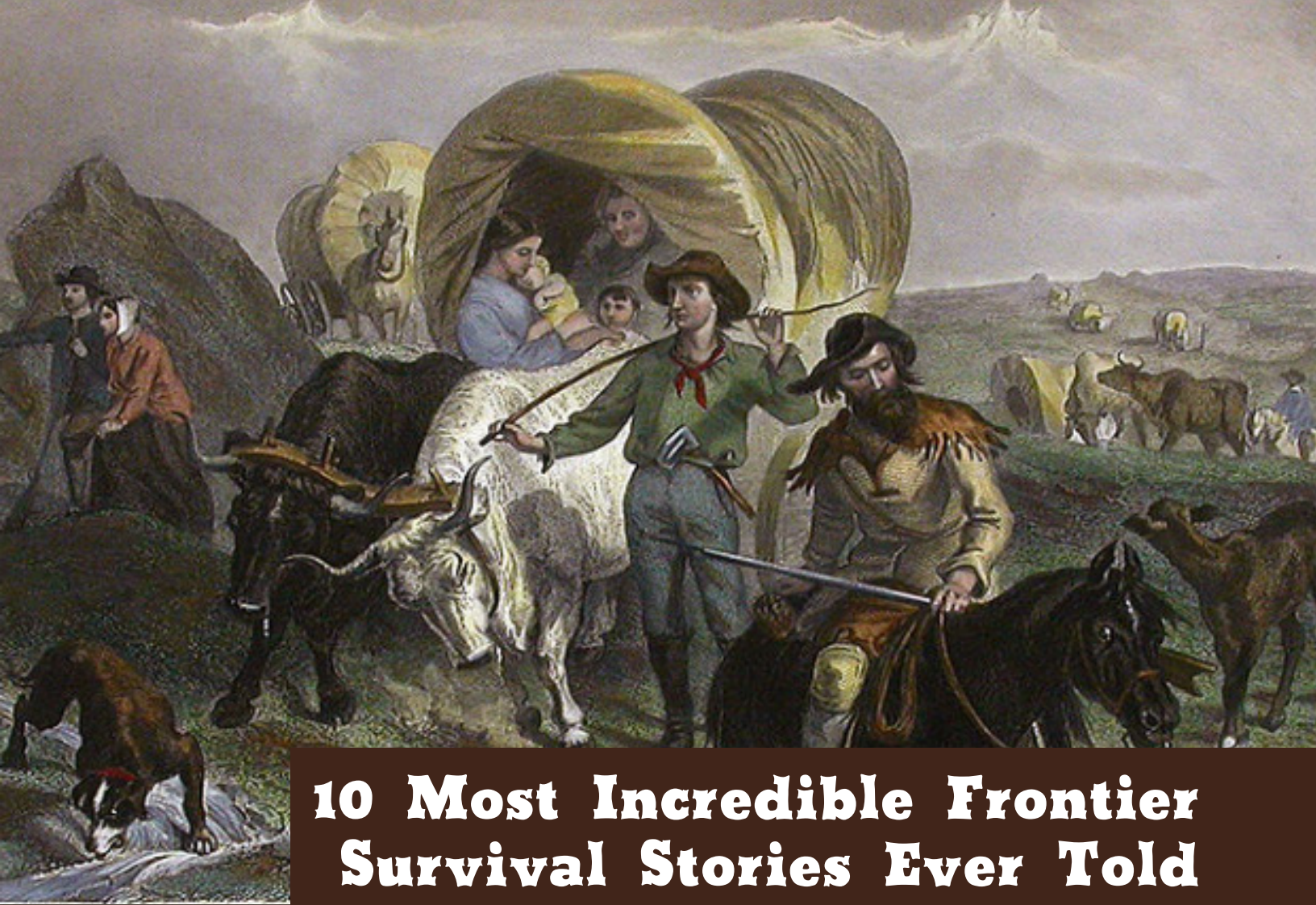


All the Basics



Everything mentioned above is specific to wintertime, but you mustn't get so distracted by this that you forget about the critical basics. As always, you'll need a first aid kit, lighting supplies, waterproof matches, food, water, sanitation supplies, a quality knife, paracord, a portable stove and cookware, batteries and much more. The basic idea is to add your winter necessities to your usual bug out kit. By doing this, you'll greatly increase your odds of surviving if the SHTF during the winter.





10 Most Incredible Frontier Survival Stories Ever Told

Without the mass immigrations, new settlements and personal sacrifices endured along the American frontier, life in the U.S. wouldn't be recognizable today. This time period, which ran from 1604 to 1912, encompassed some of the most fascinating moments in U.S. history, including the Wild West and the California Gold Rush.

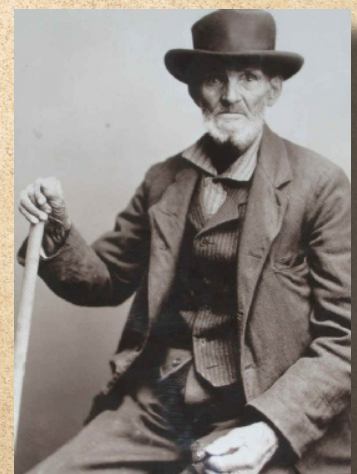
Frontier life wasn't easy. Instead of getting in a car or airplane, people moved long distances in horse or oxen drawn carriages. Those who didn't have this option walked. In many cases, these major moves took them hundreds, or even thousands, of miles away, but they often had no choice if they wanted to survive and thrive.

Today, we can look back at some of the most inspirational tales of survival from that time period to glean some insight into how far humans can go when they're pushed to their limits. In many ways, these individuals were the first American survivalists; they picked up and moved without much notice when the proverbial SHTF.

Our modern world doesn't often make it necessary or even practical to imitate our early forefathers, although today's homesteaders get close in some ways. If the modern world crumbled, though, we'd all need to find ways to survive despite enormous odds. Perhaps the following stories of survival will help when you need it most.

John David Alpert Faced 500 Opponents and Lived to Tell the Tale

What would you do if you and approximately 10 other men were forced to defend yourselves against a mob of 500 enemies who were intent on killing you?



John David Alpert and Thomas Tate Tobin encountered this exact problem in 1847. These frontier mountain men held off the mob long enough for the sun to set, which gave them the opportunity to escape – although not together. Sadly, no one else in their group made it out of the battle alive.

Getting away was only part of the problem, though. Alpert didn't have a coat, and it was the dead of winter. Armed only with the clothes on his back, his shooting bag and a few weapons, Alpert spent the next three days walking alone to a trading post located 140 miles away.

Yes, that's right; he walked more than 46 miles per day, on average, through brutally cold conditions. For those of you who don't feel like doing the math, this would have required him to maintain a walking pace of almost 3 miles per hour with insane, limits-testing 16-hour days.

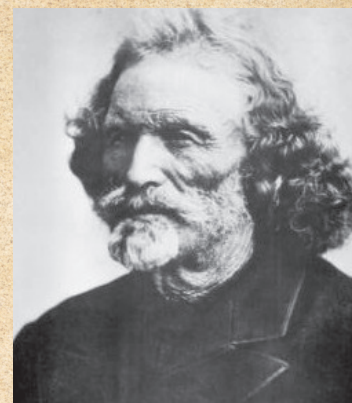
Alpert reached his destination, as did Tobin. Alpert went on to have three wives and 21 children before dying at the age of 88 in 1899.

Jim Baker Led a Group of Trappers to Victory

Jim Baker reinvented himself several times, ranging from a fur trapper to a territorial militia officer. Known by the nickname Honest Jim Baker, he encountered one of his most awe-inspiring survival situations at the tender age of 21. Baker and a group of 34 other trappers found themselves in serious trouble on August 21, 1841, when he noticed a disturbing dust cloud coming from Bastion Mountain.

Before they even had time to consider their options, a hail of arrows rained down upon them. The trappers were initially led by Captain Frapp, but when he died early in the battle, he left Baker as his successor. Baker rallied his troops, and they held off the hostile group of Arapaho, Cheyenne and Sioux warriors until August 27. Finally, the opposing forces vacated the area, enabling Baker and the other surviving fur trappers to return to their camp.

As a result of staging such an impressive standoff, Baker and the rest of the crew were honored when the mountain was renamed Battle Mountain.



John Colter's Naked Run for Survival

John Colter is arguably best known for his role in the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Records show that he was by far the most irreplaceable member of the team because he never got sick, he was able to communicate with Indian tribes and he helped find safe passage at almost every turn. These amazing skills were put to the test again and again throughout his life, even after he left Lewis and Clark. Colter was also one of the first people to explore Yellowstone.



In 1809, Colter literally had to run for his life while naked. He had been captured by Crow Indians, who took away his weapons and all of his clothing. They agreed to release him, but they made it very clear that he was simply getting a head start. If their trackers found him, he'd be killed instantly.

Naked and being chased by many expert trackers, Colter managed to outrun all but one of his pursuers. By this point, Colter was understandably exhausted, and he was also bleeding from the nose and suffering from
16 torn up feet. Despite these disadvantages, Colter managed to kill the man. He then wrapped himself in a

blanket the Crow Indian had been carrying.

This wasn't the end, though, because the other trackers were starting to catch up. Colter ran five more miles before finding a cave to hide in. After darkness fell, he slipped out and walked for 11 days to get to safety, all while wearing nothing more than a blanket.

Jedediah Smith Survived a Grizzly Bear Attack

Jedediah Smith is one of the most celebrated frontier men for numerous reasons, including surviving multiple stand-offs with opposing forces. Perhaps the most badass thing he ever did, though, was survive a grizzly bear attack.

Smith was in a group of 10, and he went looking for the local Crow tribe in order to trade for fresh horses. Unfortunately, a grizzly bear found him first.



The other men watched in horror as Smith was tackled to the ground and savaged by the grizzly. Smith's ribs broke under the impact of the bear's forceful shove to the ground, and he also had his side ripped open. Even worse, the grizzly took Smith's head into his mouth, removing his scalp and one ear. When the bear finally left, Smith's group ran to his aid.

For many people, this would be the end of the story. Not only did Smith survive and thrive afterward, he even gave instructions to a man who proceeded to loosely sew Smith's scalp back on. It left a nasty scar, but the emergency sewing job worked and Smith lived to have many more adventures.

The Donner Party Fought the Elements and Resorted to Cannibalism

No list of frontier survival stories would be complete without the Donner Party. Their story forces us all to look very closely at our personal morals and consider exactly how far we'd be willing to go to survive.

The wagon train, containing 87 members, left in May 1846 with California as their intended destination. If they'd taken the most conventional route, they would likely have reached California somewhere between September and November. However, they opted instead to try a new route, presumably with the hope of having an easier, faster commute. This decision would ultimately haunt every party member, and it would also provide the basis for many future survival books and movies.



Delay after delay plagued the beleaguered Donner Party, which sapped their energy and their food supplies. By November, they reached the Sierra Nevada Mountains, but that's as far as they could go. An early snowstorm trapped them at the top of the mountain, where they all stayed until mid-December. As their remaining food supplies began to dwindle, a few group members left on foot, in search of help.

What followed was three months of agony, during which many party members died of starvation or exposure to the elements. With their options running out, some of the remaining Donner Party members made a truly distasteful choice; eating the flesh of their fallen brethren.

When help finally arrived in mid-February, a gruesome scene was revealed. Only 48 of the original 87 party members had survived, and many of those 48 had dined on the flesh of the 39 who perished while waiting for help.

There were, of course, many judgments passed against the group, especially when Jean Baptiste Trudeau claimed to have eaten George Donner and a baby to survive. Others disputed these claims, saying that the flesh was only given to young children to help keep them alive.

Hugh Glass Survived Astronomical Odds After Being Left for Dead

If you've seen *The Revenant*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, then you're at least somewhat familiar with the Hugh Glass story. A grizzly bear attacked him, leaving him with what his traveling companions believed to be mortal wounds. Glass managed to kill the bear, but not before suffering extensive injuries that probably would have killed most men.

His group decided to leave him behind, but they also left two men to guard his body until he passed away. These men reportedly dug a hole to put him in, but then they ended up covering him with the hide of the grizzly that had attacked him. Convinced he was dead, the men left and told their fellow group members that Glass had died.



Reports of his death were greatly exaggerated, though, and he eventually regained consciousness. He found himself abandoned and without any weapons or other supplies. He also had a broken leg, back cuts that went so deep they exposed his ribs and festering wounds. Determined to survive, he set his own broken bone, laid down on a wooded log covered with maggots so that they'd eat his infected flesh and then covered himself in the grizzly's hide.

Next, Glass began crawling for help. He knew that the next American settlement, Fort Kiowa, was 200 miles away, but this didn't stop him. Eventually, Glass made it to the Cheyenne River, fueled only by berries, roots and the strong desire to live. Building a crude raft, he allowed the river to take him the rest of the way to Fort Kiowa, where he arrived six weeks after being abandoned.

Some historians believe the story of Hugh Glass was greatly embellished after the fact, but there's no way to know for certain. We do know for sure that a man named Hugh Glass was left for dead, yet somehow survived against incredible odds.

Pierre Viaud Fought Starvation and Alligators to Survive

Frenchmen Pierre Viaud's story may not be the first thing that springs to mind when thinking about the American frontier, but he had to face the elements of this often wild and unexplored land to stay alive. Viaud, his female traveling companion and his slave ran into trouble 300 yards from Dog Island, which is located 3.5 miles off the coast of Florida.



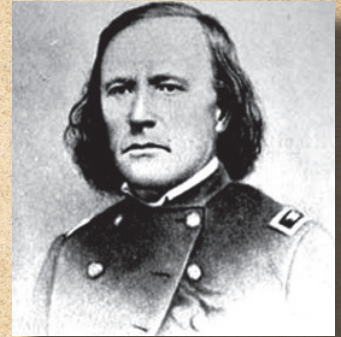
The group struggled to make it from their capsized boat to the island, followed by making the journey to Florida. During their misadventure, they went 10 days without food, struggled to find water that was clean enough to drink and had to fight off alligators. They also found it next

Eventually, Viaud began believing they were all going to starve to death. In an effort to be humane, he slit his slave's death so that the man wouldn't have to know the pain of starvation. It's unknown why Viaud didn't do the same thing for his female traveling companion or himself. The duo was vastly undernourished and in danger of dying when they finally found assistance.

The moral of the story here is to keep moving, even when you think all is lost. After all, if Viaud had let himself stop looking for help, all three of them would have died.

Kit Carson Walked Barefoot for Miles to Save American Soldiers

Kit Carson was yet another American frontiersman who repeatedly survived great odds, reinventing himself numerous times along the way. There are many stories about Carson, but one of the best survival tales dates back to the Mexican-American War.



In December 1846, experienced trail guide Carson was commanded to lead a group of troops from Socorro, New Mexico, to San Diego, California. The group made it as far as San Pasqual, California, before trouble befell them in the form of an attack by Mexican soldiers.

Unable to do anything to stop the attack, Carson, an Indian scout and a naval lieutenant set off to get reinforcements. San Diego was only 25 miles away, and the group's commanding officer, Stephen W. Kearney, believed they could hold off the opposing forces until help arrived.

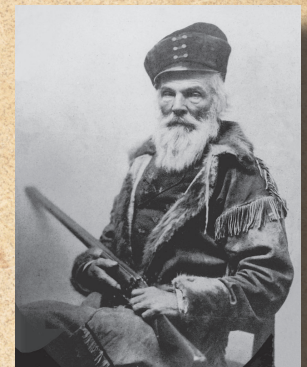
Carson and the two other men had to make it across the desert to reach their intended destination, but there was one big problem; their shoes squeaked so much that their position would immediately be given away.

Rather than face almost certain death, the small group took their shoes off and left them behind. From there, they walked barefoot through scorching hot sand, rocks and prickly pears. Four days later, as General Kearney began to give up hope, a wave of American soldiers from San Diego came to their aid.

Joseph Walker Survived Starvation to Discover Yosemite

Joseph Walker and his group of adventurers would become the first white men to discover the area now known as Yosemite, but first, they had to survive harsh elements and a lot of bad luck.

Walker became an emigrant leader in 1841. Leading groups to California helped him explore and document the California trail. Before that, though, he had an instance in 1833 that went very badly. His group was supposed to blaze more of the California trail to discover new areas. They succeeded in this goal, but not until misfortune left them so desperate for food that they had to kill and eat their horses.



If they had turned around instead of moving forward or, even worse, succumbed to starvation instead of finding a way to survive, it may have been a long time before another group of white men was able to lay claim to being the first to see Yosemite and giant sequoia trees.

Marie Dorian's Strong Survival Instincts Kept Her and Her Kids Alive

Marie was an Iowa tribe member who married Pierre Dorian. Together, they found employment with a fur-trading company. Marie Dorian was the only woman employed by the company, and she traveled toward the Pacific Northwest while pregnant and with two children in tow. Meanwhile, her husband was part of another expedition that took a different route.

In Oregon, approximately nine months after the Dorians took off on separate routes from their Midwestern home, Marie gave birth to her third child. Tragically, the newborn died eight days later. Marie and her surviving children eventually reached Fort Astoria, where she learned that her husband and his group were in danger of being attacked by members of a Bannock tribe.



Unwilling to sit back and let her husband die, Marie loaded up her two children and speedily went to the group's aid. Tragedy struck again, though, and she found her husband and everyone else dead, aside from one injured man. She tended to the man's wounds, but he died later that day. Heartbroken, the widow and her kids returned to their trading post, only to discover that every member of that post had been slaughtered while they were away.

In a bid for survival, Marie and the kids once again hit the road, this time in search of a safe trading station. On the way, one of their horses collapsed and they got stuck in winter weather. For the next 50 days, Marie kept her family alive by using the horse's mane to create snare traps. She also cooked the horse that died.

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After the winter weather began to abate, Marie and her children took off once again. This time, they reached safe harbor at the Walla Walla village. Although this wasn't their intended destination, the Dorian family was taken care of, including receiving material support for their journey back to Astoria, Oregon, where the fur-trading company was headquartered.



When this single most vulnerable resource you use every single day is taken out,
Life for everyone will fall apart and chaos will reign.



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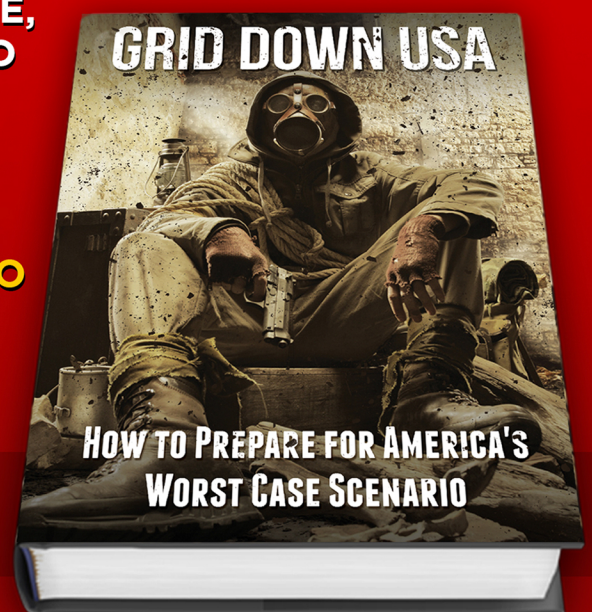
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