

Feel Fine When it's TEOTWAWKI* 21



A Ruger 10-22 with a sling and Henry U.S. Survival Rifle.

From top, SIG 229 in .40, Glock 22 in .40, Detonics USA Model 9-11-01 in .45 and Metalife Custom S&W 686 in .357; all except the Detonics are fitted with LaserGrips.

no longer made kind that is a laser only. I did some serious shopping and got hold of a number of excellent condition 30-round magazines. I still see a few things to do with the AK-47 to make the rifle better suited for a wider range of tasks.

The third rifle is a Ruger Mini-14 (ruger.com) from 10 years ago, stainless steel. Danny and I put a Butler Creek folding stock on it and added a sling swivel to the already existing stud and some Pro-Mag larger-capacity magazines. I had a heavy duty cotton webbing carrying strap wearing metal buckles with the finish worn off. I added that. Of the three rifles, the stainless Mini-14 will heat up the fastest. If you move to an AR platform, you'll be paying quite a bit more, most of the time.

If I were dead set against .223 or wanted a 7.62x39 but didn't want a Soviet Bloc design, I could have obtained the Ruger Mini-30.

If you have two rifles or three, in two or three different calibers, that's great, because you've doubled or tripled your chances for locating ammunition in a crisis. One such rifle will do, if it is well maintained and you get to know it.

Additionally, you'll want a .22 LR. My two favorites are the Ruger 10/22 and the Henry Repeating Arms (henryrepeatingarms.com) U.S. Survival Rifle, the modern and improved variant of the original Armalite AR-7. Large-capacity magazines are available for the 10/22; but, nice as they might be, whichever .22 you decide on will likely be a utility rifle, not a potential defender.

We covered the shotgun, as well, but scantily. I've never been a shotgunner and have owned four shotguns in my entire life, one a Franchi SPAS-12, the other three Remington 870 (remington.com) pumps. I still own two of the 870s. I realize I'm the oddball, but I just don't care that much for shotguns. Be that as it may, through my own experience, the experience of people I've trusted over the years and analysis of the opinions of other people more knowledgeable than I concerning combat shotguns, I can definitely proclaim the Remington 870 an "oldie but a goodie."

In the event of a disaster, either manmade or natural, there are enough things about which to worry and, in many cases, enough danger without having to be terrified that an armed thug is going to try to steal what you have wisely put away for your family's safety. You need to be armed to pre-

vent that. Such an attitude is not vigilantism or right wing paranoia. In a disaster, the police – not to mention fire and emergency services – will be stretched to the point where response times will be protracted at best, even assuming that you'll have the communications capabilities to reach law enforcement. What are you supposed to do? Let someone deprive your family of what could be their best means of staying alive? Only a fool or a sociopath looks for trouble, wants to find an excuse to get into a fight – with guns or otherwise. But, as human beings, if we refuse the option of self-defense in a life or death situation, it is my personal opinion that such an action is the moral equivalent of suicide.

With that in mind, we all know that a handgun worn on body is worth two state-of-the-art semi-automatic sporters that you set left parked in your vehicle 25 yards from your current position. Although there are a great many handguns that I like and use, my main choices for a serious caliber handgun in a disaster survival situation would be these. First, a SIG (sigsauer.com) 229 in .40 S&W with a spare .357 SIG barrel; the magazines are interchangeable between the two calibers in the 229. Or, a Glock (glock.com) 22 in .40 would be a good choice. If capacity were not a huge issue – but it is – I'd happily rely on my Detonics-Black Detonics USA 9-11-01, in .45 ACP. We put 31 thousand rounds through one of the Georgia-made pistols in five days with no real cleaning and no malfunctions (the current company's website is detonics.ws). Unfortunately for this application, it's only a seven-plus-one handgun. Again, if capacity were not a concern, my Metalife Custom S&W (smith-wesson.com) 686 .357 Magnum six-shooter is a superb handgun. In a handgun, you want a caliber you're going to readily find. Stick with something the local cops carry – even if it's a 9mm Parabellum – and you'll have a better chance of acquiring or replenishing your handgun ammo from local shops, etc.

Stay informed and be prepared for natural and manmade disasters. Have a NOAA (noaa.gov) emergency radio, food, water, medical supplies – and be armed for "just in case."

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**The end of the world as we know it! [My apologies to R.E.M. – Editor]*