

Transcription #190: Survival Retreat Planning Part 2

Welcome back, everyone. This is Jeff Anderson, from *Modern Combat and Survival*. We are talking about planning out your bugout survival retreat if you are ever forced to leave your home in a disaster or a major crisis.

We've already gone over the good option, which is always to start with what you have. That way you are prepared today—or in a very, very short time—and the cheapest way that you can possibly do it. But it's always better to level up wherever you can and look at alternative means of being prepared. So I'm going to give you some better options right now. The first one was good, this one is better and then we'll get to best.

The better option is still a mobile plan. It's still very similar to using your own vehicle. But you're going to level up what you currently have. I can tell you that in the military, even in light infantry—when I was in 10th Mountain Division, if we had—sometimes it might be a desert warfare train or something like that, where my vehicle was my Humvee. Sometimes they have shelter on the back. It's closed in on the back. Or sometimes it's an open Humvee. But the thing is that you can go pretty much anywhere with that Humvee, and we did.

When I was in light infantry, we had our own tents in our backpacks. We had that for our shelter. But if we did have a Humvee, if we were out driving somewhere or if I was a controller for a desert warfare train or something like that, that was our shelter.

The thing about being able to have something like a Humvee, or other four-wheel drive, is that you can pretty much go anywhere. You can stay off the beaten path. You can get away from people a lot easier because most people are going to be congregating around major highways, roads, towns and things like that. So if you can get away from all of that, and just find a place to put up, then you're going to be in a much better situation there. So that might require you to get something that is going to be able to go off-road, if you don't already have something.

You don't need a brand new four-wheel drive or anything like that. In fact, quite the contrary. I recommend getting something that is reliable but used, to be able to keep the cost down. Some of the older models of things are going to be much better off the road.

You don't need a Humvee either. There are very good options, from jeeps to—my favorite is Land Rover. I have a close friend of mine that is really into four-wheel drives and really four wheeling. He took me out in his Land Rover one time. The suspension on those things is independent. It's crazy. We would face these super steep hills that I was like there's no way—we're going to tip over. Nope. You don't tip over in these things. The wheels, it's like frog toes or something. They find

their way over stumps and giant boulders and things. You can get places where you never thought any vehicle go.

In fact, I like the Land Rover better than I like the jeeps. A lot of people I know, they go straight to the jeep. But the Land Rovers I believe are a much, much better option for off-road driving and everything.

So again, you can stay within your vehicle. You can sleep in the vehicle. You could do that. But what I recommend is some sort of a trailer. You can use a tent also, but I like the teardrop trailers that are out now. I'm personally saving up for one right now. I really want to have one of these things, and it's because you can take that same kind of military approach. You can have your four-wheel drive. You can go where other people can't go. We're going to talk about where that might be. But you can go right inside of a thicket. You can go into the waddies if you're in the desert area. You can really camouflage yourself using terrain by going into other areas where people are not going to go.

The teardrop trailers are really, really small trailers. You can get these—they're off the grid versions. They have solar power to them. They have a water pump. These things are really, really good. They're very small. They're very low profile. You can paint them. They can be camouflaged, but not look like actual camouflage. You can paint them a color that will blend in with the terrain. A lot of them have this popup on the back.

The teardrop, you get inside of it and it's basically just a sleeping quarters. You have a place that is out of the elements. They're really good. They have storage ability in there. The backs usually pop up on these things and open up to a sink, where you could have water stored underneath there. So you can use the sink. They have a propane stove. It's camping. It makes it more like a camping scenario. But it does give you a lot more options, a lot better shelter.

I have seen some bugout tents also, that kind of go on top of vehicles and then they pop up and things like that. You can use those. My only concern with those is that they've got to go up and they've got to come down. I really like things where you can quickly get in, you can quickly get out. So if things heat up you can quickly jump in the vehicle from the trailer and just haul ass down the road, or out of the wooded area or whatever it is. I really love these things. I am personally saving up for one now. I'm really looking forward to getting one.

Where to go—we're going to get more into location here in just a little bit. You can look at places like state parks. You can get a state park pass for your area or wherever you plan out your destination. Again, we're going to be talking about where that destination might be here. Basically, what I like the most about this option is that it is fully mobile. You're not anchored into a permanent retreat, where you have a fixed structure, and you have to basically stay there or you're back just living out of your car again.

This is a fully mobile option, so you can find a perfect destination. But then if things do heat up, or resources become scarce, you can just get in your vehicle, plan another destination from there, move to another semi-permanent location that's going to be out of the way, and give you all the advantages of being a little bit more remote but having the resources available and shelter available that's going to help protect you. So that's the better option if you want to plan something out. That's what I tell people. Your first level up should be that still mobile option like that.

But your best option, especially for a long-term crisis, something that is really going to be for an extended time period, an extended grid down blackout, some of the things we talk about that could literally change life as we know it for a long period of time, and you really need to have someplace that is away from where you currently live, and that's going to be your long-term retreat. That's going to be your best option here. That really mostly comes down to your location. Location, location, location.

We did a full episode on this early on when we started *MCS* podcasts. So if you want to check out episode number 11, that was my interview with Joel Skousen, who is the author of *Strategic Relocation*. He's really seen as one of the gurus here, because he has looked at all of the United States and he's come up with all of the threats in each state. It's an incredible book. I highly recommend that you check it out. Again, the book is called *Strategic Relocation*. You can just Google that and find Joel. Or actually, Joel is in our network. I'll link over to his bio as well. You'll find that episode there if you want to check that out, as well as I'll link over to his website where you can get his book too.

I highly recommend it, because it really gives you insights into where you live, the threats around where you live right now, and whether you live in an area that's considered a good location for a survival retreat. Or if you're planning something else, it basically gives you a breakdown on every single state with maps and everything like that. Again, highly recommend it.

But it does really come down to location. What are you located near that could possibly be a threat for you? A long-term retreat is most likely going to require you to get some sort of land. But you're looking for something that's more remote anyway, so the land isn't going to be super expensive. But you also don't need to go and get one of these survival retreats that are out there. I mean, it's great if you have the money to be able to do that. There's real estate websites specifically for survival retreats that you can go and check out. But if you don't have the money for that, you don't need to go out and buy some really elaborate off the grid bugout retreat or bunker, or anything like that.

But when you are looking for land, or when you're looking for any location, even if it's you're looking for a state park that you can hide up in for an extended period of time, here's what I recommend. Let's talk about what that location might be.

First of all, you have to be able to get to that location. I live in Texas. If I'm planning my survival retreat in the middle of Utah, well that's a long ways for me to travel. I'm going to need a lot of fuel to be able to get there. Who knows what threats are going to be there along the way, no matter whether I take back roads or whatever. That's a lot of buffer zone there, where there could be things heating up. There could be poor resources in certain areas. There could be civil unrest in certain areas. That's a long way for me to try to plan for, especially with a changing environment or changing conditions that are out there. So you have to be able to get to where you're going.

What I tell people is you really want to start with looking at a 75 to 150 mile radius from where you currently live. So if you have to leave your home, you're looking at worst case scenario a quarter to a half a tank of fuel, because you don't know what you're going to have in your vehicle. We tell people you should never go below a half a tank of gas. Well, most everybody goes below a half a tank of gas. But you should absolutely never go below a quarter of a tank, because you never know what you're going to need.

We always recommend as well that you do have some fuel stored in your garage or in some safe location, like in a shed or something like that, that you can use to fuel up your vehicles, given that power might be down, which means gas pumps go down. Then a lot of people run out of fuel along the highway, or they never leave because they're sitting down at the gas station waiting for the pumps to come back on in this giant line with everyone else. You never want to be in that scenario. So if you have your own fuel, then you're good to go. So have fuel on standby there.

But for your location you want to look at a radius of about 75 to 150 miles. That's about a quarter to a half a tank. If you are in that location and it's safe to come back to your home again, that would allow you to get back there. If you're a half a tank away, you can fill up. Use the other half tank to get back, so to speak. All right. So that's just kind of a general zone there.

When you're looking at that location, you want to look at what resources you have nearby to be able to sustain yourself. So you want to look at a topographical map. Or road maps will give you some resources, like water. It will show you where maybe state parks are. In state parks there could be more game there. There's usually fishing there. So if you see lakes and streams and things like that. Topographical maps are better because it allows you to see where you can get out of the way. It shows you elevations where other people likely won't find you. It will show you where there are trails, hiking trails, or you might be able to bike along trails to get to other resources. So it will show you more about those locations where you want to go to.

Again, going back to last episode where we were talking about the don'ts. Don't think you're going up into Grizzly Adams mode in the middle of nowhere, where

you're just not even near civilization. We're going to talk about that too. But again, you are looking for something that is out of the way that people are not going to be at. But does it have water available? Is there going to be game there that you might be able to hunt? Are there fishing locations that are going to be there, that you can put some yoyo reels out and just do some fishing that way or something?

Or is there even a place, if it's a longer term stay, where you might be able to garden? How is the soil there? I live in Texas. We're not known for having great soil for growing anything. But there are ways around that as well with things like earth bucket gardening, things that you can do above ground that will make it easier to be able to grow some food if you need to. With earth bucket gardening you could possibly even just take that stuff with you, in a trailer or things like that, to give you some better options there.

But you do want to look at what resources are nearby the location that you're looking at. So draw that radius around where you're at, and then look and see what state parks or more remote areas that you can get to.

Let's talk about the remoteness of this. So you don't want to be near a major population if you can avoid it. Right? You want to try and stay away from any major urban population because people are going to eventually start to branch out from those urban populations. They're going to just start roaming around. Then you have a bunch of clueless, desperate, panicked people out there that could take your stuff, stumble across you, or whatever. So you want to be as far away from major population as possible. I always say at least one full gas tank away from a major urban area.

However, you don't want to be far from "population" either. I put population in quotes that time. So you want to be far away from a major urban population, but you do want to be near some sort of a town, if you can possibly do it. In fact, I tell people you want to be about 7 to 15 miles from some smaller town that you can get to. Seven to 15 miles, that's like a two-hour walk at about seven miles or a two-hour bike ride at about 15 miles roughly. That's just generally.

But what that means is that you can get to other resources or a populated area if you need to. Why might you do that? Well, you have things like what if there's a major medical incident that you have, something that requires urgent care that you're not going to get from your skills. You need to go to a hospital. You want to have something like an urgent care clinic, or something like that, that's in the town you're in. I'm talking about a smaller town, not a major urban area here.

Something that has a hardware store, so if you do need to go and get supplies. Even for your vehicle or whatever it might be, that you have resources there, that somebody might be open. You might be able to use cash or even bartering, whatever it might be, to be able to go and get resources. It could be to get fuel when fuel becomes available again. Or it might even just be cell service. You're

not going to typically get cell service out in the middle of nowhere. A lot of areas you can't get it, especially if you're down inside of valleys and things like that and you are staying more remote. But you might need to be able to get to cell service in a small town or area like that.

You can also get resupply of food from this area. So you want to be near some sort of a smaller population. Most of these types of small towns—I want to say especially in the south. Where I live, we're very close knit communities in these small towns. So people are more friendly, typically than, more self-reliant. They're used to being self-reliant because they don't maybe have a Walmart nearby or something. But you're going to find better resources, and maybe even better people to be able to link up with to be able to help you out as well.

So that gives you, I think, some planning points for where to put your location. But now let's talk about the structure, because we're going to level up again from the trailer sort of a thing and we're going to go to a more permanent-like structure. I've got my best option here coming up, that is actually kind of in between permanent but it's also very mobile. But let's talk about what your structure options are.

The thing that most people think about is a bunker. We talked about this in the don'ts, that you don't need a bunker. You don't need a doomsday bunker to have a survival retreat. I really caution people about bunkers because I know that's where a lot of people think that they need or that's the ultimate plan. I'm personally not a huge fan of them. Are they cool? Sure. It's a cool little fort. Right? But when you're inside of that thing, one, it can get very claustrophobic. So don't think you're going underground while the mutants are rallying up on top of you. It's very difficult to live in those kinds of surroundings, even with your family, maybe even especially with your family, during some sort of an extended crisis.

You're really trapped inside of those things, so if people do come across you—these do have ballistic door hatches and things like that, where people might stay there and try and get in and maybe they're not going to get in. But you're stuck down there too. You're not coming out. So eventually your resources are going to be under siege and you're going to run out of things. There might be other ways that people can get inside of there, or they might just be really determined and come and find whatever they need to, whether it's they use their four-wheel drive to pry off the hatch or whatever it is. You're stuck there and you're not getting it out. I have seen some of these with escape hatches and things like that, but they're not truly like a tunnel network that's going to take you 150 feet away from your bunker and get out of there.

I'm not going to spend too much time on this because most people don't have the money for a bunker. I've seen them anywhere down to \$36,000 for a bunker. It is an option. I'm not going to say it's not an option. But they're very expensive. They

require a lot of work. You have to have them installed. You've got to dig them in and all kinds of stuff like that.

Another option that people can think of is some sort of a cabin. That's a very simple thing to do. You can make a very small cabin. Especially if you're very handy, you can make it yourself. Cabins aren't necessarily good for security. It's a small home, and if people come across you then there's not a lot of security there. You can put up things like sand bags on the inside. You can fortify it like you would a small home. So it is an option. You can do that pretty inexpensively. You can even get little kits for little cabins and stuff like that.

That's good if you have some land, and you want to put a cabin on there. It makes it a nice little vacation retreat so it's not just your, hey honey, the zombies are coming out of the ground, let's head off to the cabin in the woods for our survival retreat. You can use it for other things. I'm a big fan of that as well.

Another option that people are using instead of cabins are geodesic domes. This is a true dome. It's basically a concrete dome that you can use. One of the guys that I know, he's one of our followers, I actually played golf with this guy out in Florida for the charity event we did for Operation Save Our Soldiers. I was really interested in what he put together, because he put together a concrete geodesic dome for his home, and even tested this thing out with a .50 caliber rifle and it was not able to penetrate the concrete around his home. So this thing makes it ballistic. It's very sturdy. It will stand up to hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, you name it. These are really, really cool things. Even to live in. You could live in these things and they're really, really nice. I've seen some of them that are very elaborate.

These are going to be less expensive than a home might be, so they are a more economical option. I've seen them down to about \$26,000 for the materials for it. So these are things that you can build yourself, sort of. If you're a contractor and you're really handy with this stuff, these kind of geodesic domes you can build yourself. They're not hard to put together for a contractor. But you do need to figure about \$100 to \$200 per square foot for building them. That \$100 range to \$200 range—if you are handy and you can make this yourself, you can do a lot of it yourself, you're looking at about \$100 per square foot, or if you're going to need a contractor to be able to do this for you, you want to figure about \$200 per square feet. So that makes it about \$32,000 to about \$64,000 for a geodesic dome retreat.

Let me give you a better option. This is the one that, for me, I think is probably the ultimate plan out there for a true survival retreat. You can use this thing for other options also. But it's kind of the best of both worlds, because it gives you the geodesic dome but it's a more mobile option. What I'm talking about, it's called an InterShelter. You can go check this out over at InterShelter.com. This is a dome retreat. It's an easy to put together dome retreat that's also mobile. So you can take this thing apart and put it back together multiple times.

In fact, these things, they're very versatile. These are being used right now—they're being used by military, they're being used by hunters, they are being used for homeless villages, because they're very economical. They're really super inexpensive, but very durable. When you check these out, I think you're going to be really amazed at what they are. I spoke with the owner. Three guys—or three people. Sorry, ladies. Save the hate mail, please. But three people, basically with a screwdriver and a wrench, can put these things together in a couple of hours. You can see some of their videos online. You can check that out.

They're really simple. They're basically a geodesic dome that comes in panels, that you can put in the back of a pickup truck and take with you or put on a trailer, put on top of your teardrop trailer or anything like that, and then take these things with you and put them up in a matter of a couple of hours. When you do, they are essentially storm proof. They're tornado proof. They are hurricane proof. I mean, a tornado might be able to pick this thing up. But nonetheless, heavy winds, 30 feet of snow can be on top of this thing. So they're very durable, they're very sturdy and they're going to provide protection there against disasters.

I love the mobile thing because—they can be permanent. You can put this thing on a structure if you want to. You can cement this thing in and make it a permanent structure. In fact, the owner told me that one of the ways that you can make it ballistic—they do offer ballistic panels and things like that. But he also said, look, you can put these things together and then just hire a pool contractor to come out and spray some Shotcrete on it. Basically it's this spray concrete that they throw on it. Throw a few inches of that on there, and now you've got something that's pretty ballistic. A ballistic bunker dome, if you will. So that's really cool. That's one of the things I really like about that as well.

Now, this is how economical it's going to be. A 14-foot shelter, which is their bottom line one that you get to, it's 14 feet across but it's about 8 feet high. So you can stand up in these things. We're not talking about very small. But it gives you about 154 square feet of shelter that you can put some bunks in there. You can put your sleeping bags down in there. But it gives you a really great shelter there. For that whole shelter, that's only about \$7,000 for that shelter. That's really super economical when you consider that another shelter, like a geodesic dome, is going to cost you upwards of about \$32,000.

What's also cool about the InterShelters is that you can connect these things together. So you could have basically one main living area. Let's say that you have a survival team with five different families. You could have a main living area that everybody has that's a larger shelter. Then you can have these smaller shelters that have doors, that go off the main living area into your own little dome area there for you and your family. So this is really great for a survival team option as well.

So that 14-foot shelter is eight feet high. It gives you 154 square feet. The next one up from there is a 20-foot shelter. What I like about these is that for just a few extra feet and just a few extra dollars here, you get a whole lot more room. The 20-foot shelter is 12 feet high in the middle, but you get 320 square feet. So for an extra six feet of width there, you're getting about 320 square feet of—you're getting almost twice the space. You are getting twice the space, basically. That's only \$12,000 for that larger shelter.

I really like these things, and this is what I'm working towards right now. In fact, I'm probably going to turn one of these things into—I'm definitely looking at geodesic domes for my next office is what I'm looking at. So this is one of the things that I'm considering as well.

Go check them out over at InterShelter.com. I don't get anything out of that. But I just had a conversation with the owner about these things, and he's really passionate about it. You can go check these things out. You can have them sent to you. You can put it up yourself. You don't need contractors to do it or anything like that. So go check it out.

So that wraps up the good, better and the best for this week's episode for part number two in the two-part series for planning out your bugout survival retreat. The main thing here, though, again, what was my warning to you? Don't procrastinate. Yes it would be great to have a geodesic dome bunker retreat ballistically out in the middle of nowhere. Right? But that should not hold you up from prepping for what you have right now and being prepared to go tomorrow.

So take these notes to heart. Go and download the free show notes here. Again, you can go do that at www.MCSMagazine.com/190 for episode 190.

Until our next *Modern Combat and Survival* podcast episode this is Jeff Anderson saying prepare, train and survive.