This revolutionary device is popular now but regular readers will recall that I got on the SPOT bandwagon early. Not because I'm easily impressed by bright shiny gadgets but because it worked as advertised in my field tests and it solved an extremely important problem in my system. Communications. Before SPOT came out I tried satellite phones, VHF radios, FRS/GMRS radios, PLBs, and cellular phones but each of them had fatal flaws. SPOT is not 100% fail-safe either but based on my experience with it, as long as I give it a clear view of the sky and enough time to communicate with the navigation and communications satellites, it is very reliable and the best single communications device I have carried. Period.

Trust me, if there was something else out there that I thought was better than SPOT, I would carry it regardless of the cost because communications is that important to my system. Good communications is critical in an emergency because without it the good guys don't know that they are needed. SPOT not only makes that critical notification to emergency services, it also provides them with the location of the incident. This is especially important in a wilderness emergency where response times routinely exceed "the golden hour". As if the emergency communications feature were not enough to win me over, SPOT also gives me rudimentary non-emergency communications capability so my family and friends know where I am and how I am doing. For a guy that goes solo as much as I do, that is a big deal. What's not to love about this thing?

The SPOT Satellite Messenger is an amazing device. Even if you do not buy my Wilderness Emergency Kit
, please consider purchasing a SPOT for yourself or for someone you care about or both. They will be safer and you won't worry as much.