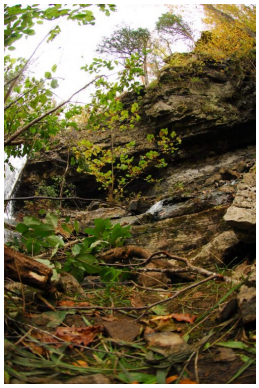

It all started as professional photographer Ed Cooley was pursuing his passion looking for the perfect shots in remote areas of the Ozark National Forest in Arkansas when some unstable terrain sent him 30 feet down off the end of a bluff into a creek bed. What followed was a rescue for the ages. For an immediate account of the story, please see the *Harrison (Arkansas) Daily* . Click Read More below for a summary of the story and more links.

In extreme pain and miles from anywhere, Ed pressed his 9-1-1 button on his SPOT Satellite Personal Tracker around 2:30 PM on October 15, 2009 that initiated the rescue process with the International Emergency Rescue Coordination Center (IERCC). GEOS provides 911/SOS monitoring and emergency dispatch through the IERCC based in Houston, Texas. Due to the remoteness and terrain of the location, Search and Rescue from the Newton County Sheriff Department and other local agencies took hours to arrive to the location, badly damaged from previous winter ice storms. Video link on a news story follow-up available here . Due to where he fell, SAR couldn't get a good lock on his position, but searchers found him by the green LEDs on the front of the SPOT unit flashing. At about 8:45 PM, members of the US Forest Service arrived on the scene. Ed was deemed severely injured and the crew waited for another crew to arrive with a backboard. Still, it was dozens of hours later that the team of many rescue professionals was able to hand carry Cooley to a sight where a helicopter could transport him.

Cooley's injuries included a broken ankle, collarbone and pelvis. For another account of the story, please see the blog of son-in-law T ravis Williams .

We’re so glad that Ed used his SPOT in the proper way and the US Forest Service Echoed this sentiment: - Mark Morales, the U.S. Forest Service district fire management officer assigned to the Hector and Jasper offices commented on how prepared Cooley was for being in the wilderness:

“Ed was about as prepared as a person could hope to be,” he said. “He had that SPOT beacon, and not only had it, but used it properly. There’s no doubt in my mind that beacon saved his life. It took people almost seven hours to get in there, even with the beacon transmitting his location. We had the coordinates, and our people were using our GPS and were sending it to us, telling us where he was, and we were able to find him.” Morales said if Cooley had not had the emergency transponder, the story would have had a different ending, because the search probably would have had to be called off until daylight on Friday.

“With him in the water, there’s no doubt in my mind what the outcome would have been,” he said.

"The SPOT was a gift from my wonderful wife Faith. I will now have the rest of my life to thank her," says Cooley.

SPOT extends a sincere thank you to all of the volunteers and professionals that did a superb job to rescue Ed Cooley.