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Mapping: Creating Heightsmaps With GeoControl and BF2HMT

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☐ 06-27-2011, 02:43 AM   #1

Amok@ndy
Retired PR Developer

SUPPORTING MEMBER

◆ Brigadier

Join Date: Nov 2008
Posts: 5,086
🇩🇪 Germany
Location: Landshut, Bavaria
Blog Entries: 9

▤ Creating Heightsmaps With GeoControl and BF2HMT

Creating Heightsmaps with GeoControl and BF2HMT

By Fenring and some contributions by Lobo

Before reading this, the basic EA/DICE introduction to heightfields could be a good read.

Download Geocontrol
Download BF2 HeightMap Tool
Download bf2 grids for GeoControl

(Terrain generated/sculpted with Geocontrol 2 in DICE newest BF game Battlefield: Bad Company)

This tuorial doesnt explain in detail how to use geocontrol but rather how to adopt geocontrol for bf2 use, but geocontrol is relatively simple and has good help functions and presets.

One of the major disadvantages when using World Machine and really large heightfields (2048x2048+) is the high memory consumption/speed of filters and the relative lack of "painted/exact" control over the landscape. The surrouding terrain in bf2 is great in that way it can be modeled according to the rest of your map with shadows and everything and therfore more realistic (not like in BF42 where is just the heightmap repeated). If we want to create the surrounding terrain also the minimum heightfield size is 1024x1024 for the smallest map size. These are the sizes you need to work with in landscape generators in general to create entire terrain including your surrounding (mapsize *4):

256 any scale: 1024x1024
512 any scale: 2048x2048
1024 any scale: 4096x4096

When working with bf2hmt to export to bf2 you need to resize this to your mapsize+1*3 (example 1025*3 = 3075)
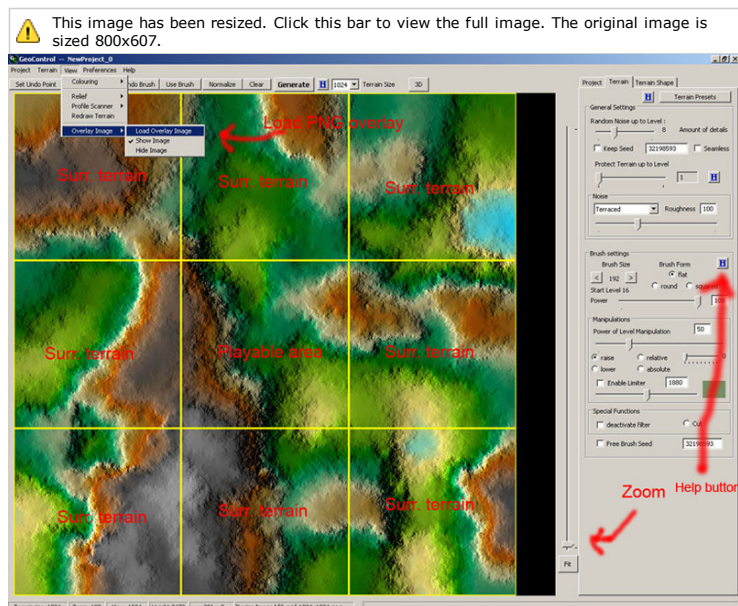1024 = 3075x3075
512 = 1539x1539
256 = 771x771

Example image 1024 map size:
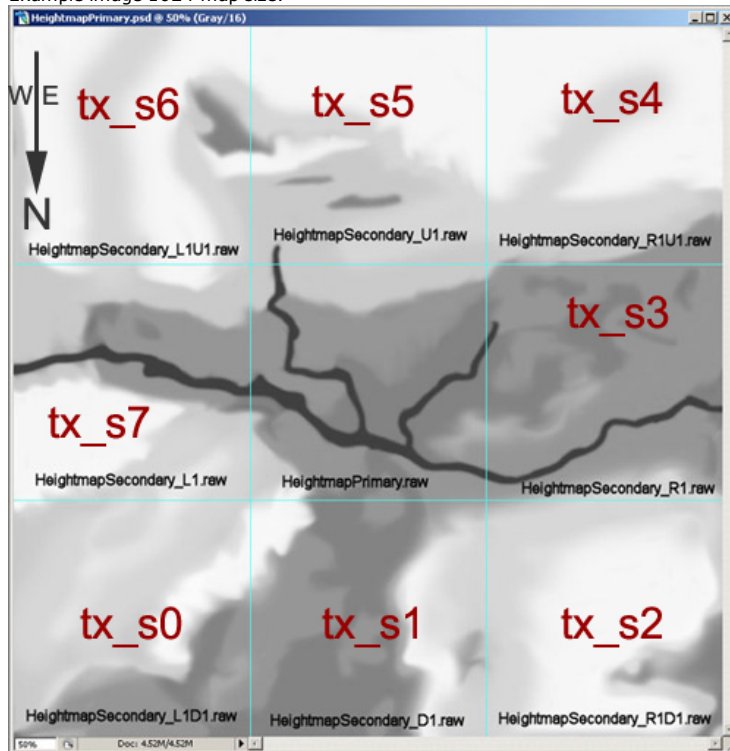
1025 for the main heightmap and other two 1025 for both sides in both axes for the surrounding terrain. These are croped and scaled down for the game in bf2hmt.

Now with this theoretic part over lets start up geocontrol. Load up one of the grids accoding to the map size your going to create, i suggest starting of with a 256 size map (1024x1024), faster to work with and faster to learn before tackling the bigger map sizes. Geocontrol is very memory friendly, even 4096 size can be used with as little as 512mb ram, but you do need a fast CPU to get decent speeds when sculpting the terrain with high demanding filters like erosion.
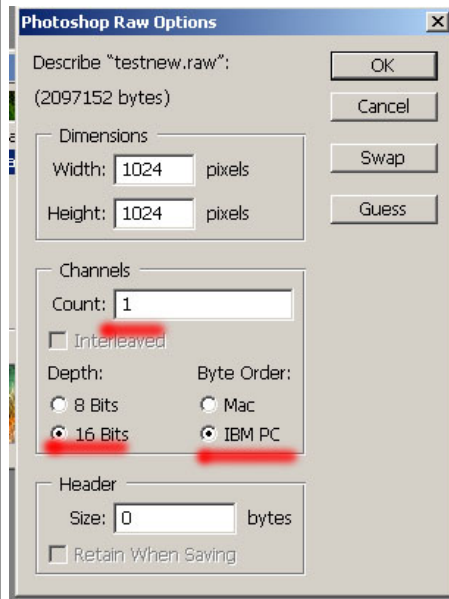
⚠ This image has been resized. Click this bar to view the full image. The original image is sized 800x607.

As you can see the grid separetes the surrounding terrain from the playable area directly in geocontrol. Use the zoom button to just work with your playable area

Now we export, I just do "Normalize" and export as .raw , ill just save mine in "My Documents" as test.raw.

⚠ This image has been resized. Click this bar to view the full image. The original image is sized 645x369.
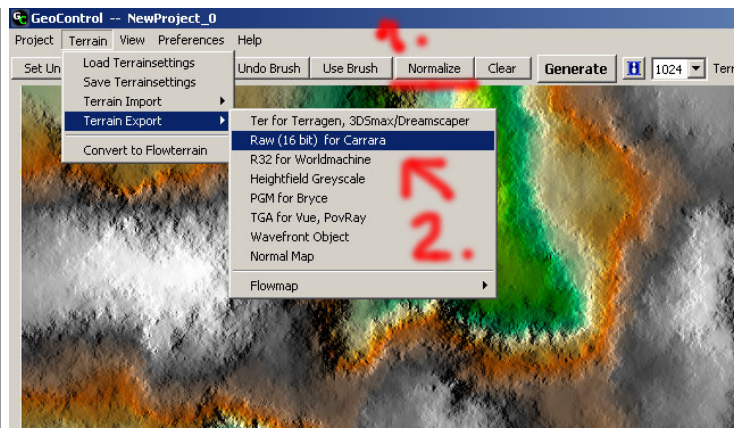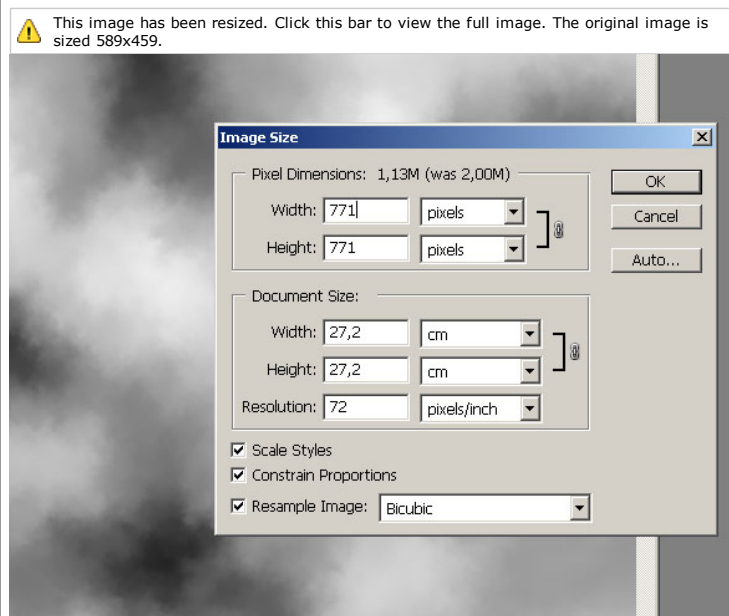
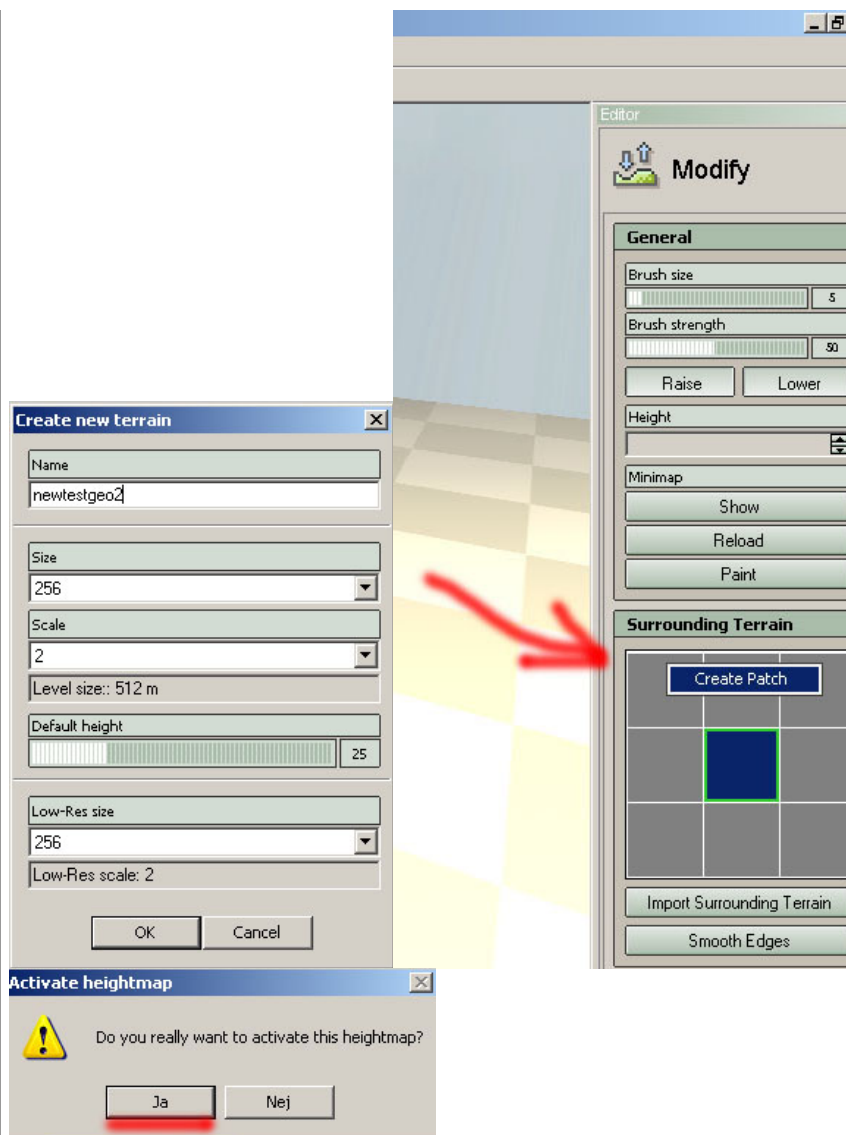Open it up in Photoshop with these values for raw import:

and resize to the figures shown in theory:
1025 = 4096x4096 resize to 3075x3075
512 = 2048x2048 resize to 1539x1539
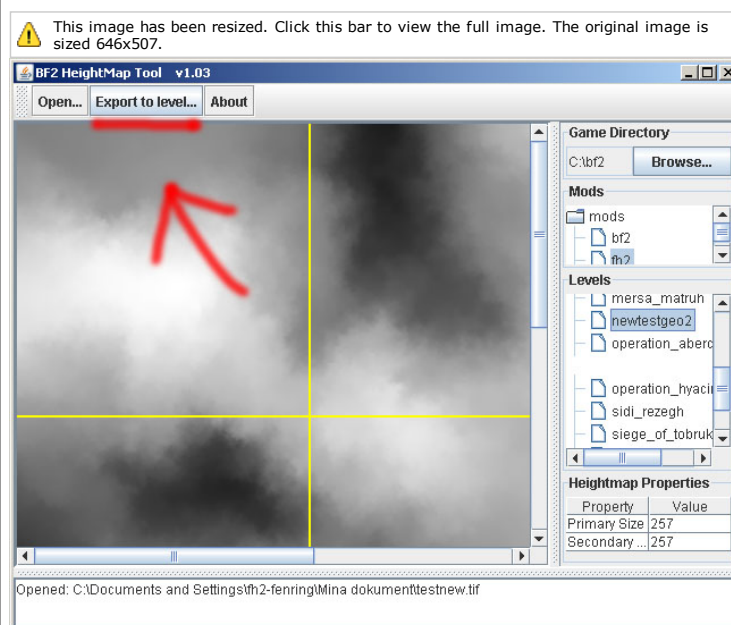256 = 1024x1024 resize to 771x771

Ill resize mine to 771x771

Save always in TIFF format, we save as test.tiff with standard options.

If you havent done this already create a basic 256 level in bf2editor:

Create new terrain

Name

newtestgeo2

Size

256

Scale

2

Level size:: 512 m

Default height

25

Low-Res size

256

Low-Res scale: 2

OK   Cancel

Editor

Modify

General

Brush size

5

Brush strength

50

Raise   Lower

Height

Minimap

Show

Reload

Paint

Surrounding Terrain

Create Patch

Import Surrounding Terrain

Smooth Edges

Activate heightmap

⚠ Do you really want to activate this heightmap?

Ja   Nej

Now lets open this file in bf2hmt:

⚠ This image has been resized. Click this bar to view the full image. The original image is sized 646x507.

BF2 HeightMap Tool   v1.03

Open...   Export to level...   About

Game Directory

C:\bf2   Browse...

Mods

📁 mods
  📄 bf2
  📄 fh2

Levels

  📄 mersa_matruh
  📄 newtestgeo2
  📄 operation_aberc

  📄 operation_hyaci
  📄 sidi_rezegh
  📄 siege_of_tobruk

Heightmap Properties

Property	Value
Primary Size	257
Secondary ...	257

Opened: C:\Documents and Settings\fh2-fenring\Mina dokument\testnew.tif

After some BF2_tpaint we have a complete basic map with surrounding terrain in like 5 minutes!
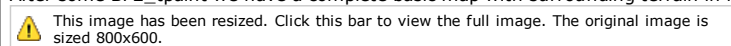
⚠ This image has been resized. Click this bar to view the full image. The original image is sized 800x600.

⚠ This image has been resized. Click this bar to view the full image. The original image is sized 800x600.

There will always be some stitching problems with the surrounding and main terrain so keep that in mind when designing your maps.

To texture your primary terrain in terragen just import the heightmapprimary.raw in geocontrol and save as .ter and open in terragen. Simple as that!

Also remember that bf2hmt can be used in the same way with any other landscape generator or photoshop.
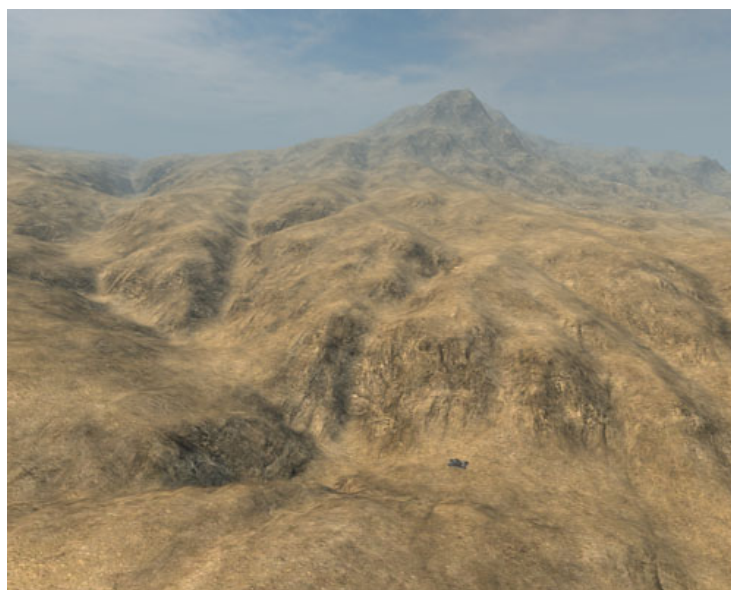
Heres a screenshot of geocontrol terrain lightmapped and colortextured in Terragen and detailmap in bf2_tpaint.
Notice the scale of things when the small veichle is a Panzer II!

****

EditorNotes: GeoControl2 has some small changes related to the previous version but with this tutorial you should be able to handle GeoControl2, though the Normalize button is not present in the Beta Version you are still able to create your terrain

cheers @ndy

Last edited by Amok@ndy; 06-29-2011 at 04:28 AM..

QUOTE

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Tags

bf2hmt, creating, geocontrol, heightsmaps, map, tutorial

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