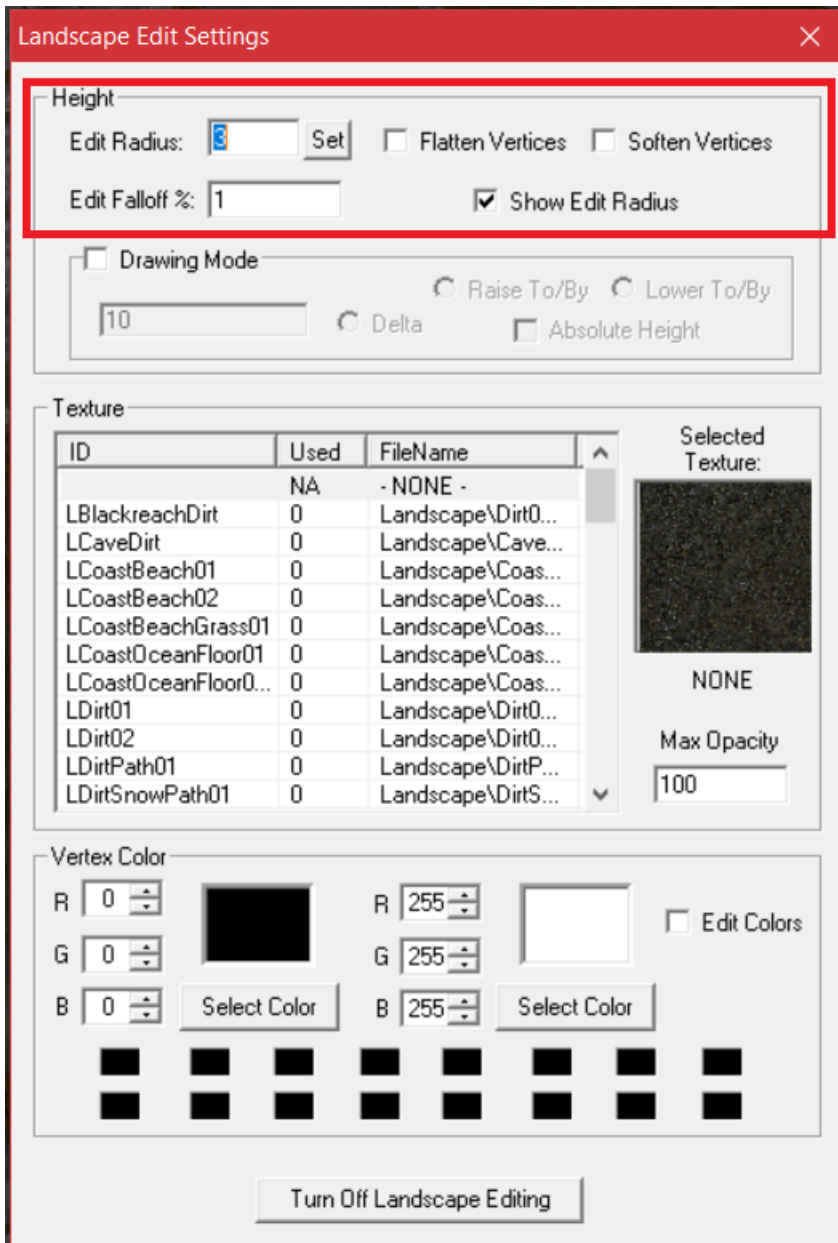


How to do Basic Exterior Cell Decoration, Raise and Lower Ground Elevation, and Scale Objects

Hello everyone. Welcome back. In this installment of my tutorial series, I will be teaching you how to decorate exterior cells with rocks, trees, and plants. I will also teach you how to raise and lower ground elevation and scale objects to change their size. This will be a relatively short tutorial, so let's get started!

Part 1:

1. Let's begin with lowering and raising land elevation. Basically, the tool I am about to introduce to you will allow you to bring the land up and down so you can create hills, valleys, rivers, lakes, and ponds. When you lower the ground by a certain amount, you will start to see water overtake the land where you have dropped it. That is how bodies of water are formed. The water in the CK looks like black fluid with sparkles, but don't be thrown off by it. It renders more beautifully and realistically in the game itself.
2. Open the CK and load your mod.
3. For practice purposes, go to your "Cell View" window under the "Object Window", then in the "World Space" drop-down menu, select "Tamriel". Remember, this is where you will find most of your exterior cells.
4. In "Tamriel", find the "PelagiaFarmExterior" cell that we worked with in our last tutorial.
5. Turn off your markers (the colorful transparent items) by pressing the "**M**" key. This will help reduce the amount of items on the screen and help you see the land better.
6. To access the land elevation tool, hit the "**H**" key. The dialogue box that appears should be this and be familiar to you since it is the same one that lets you texture the ground:



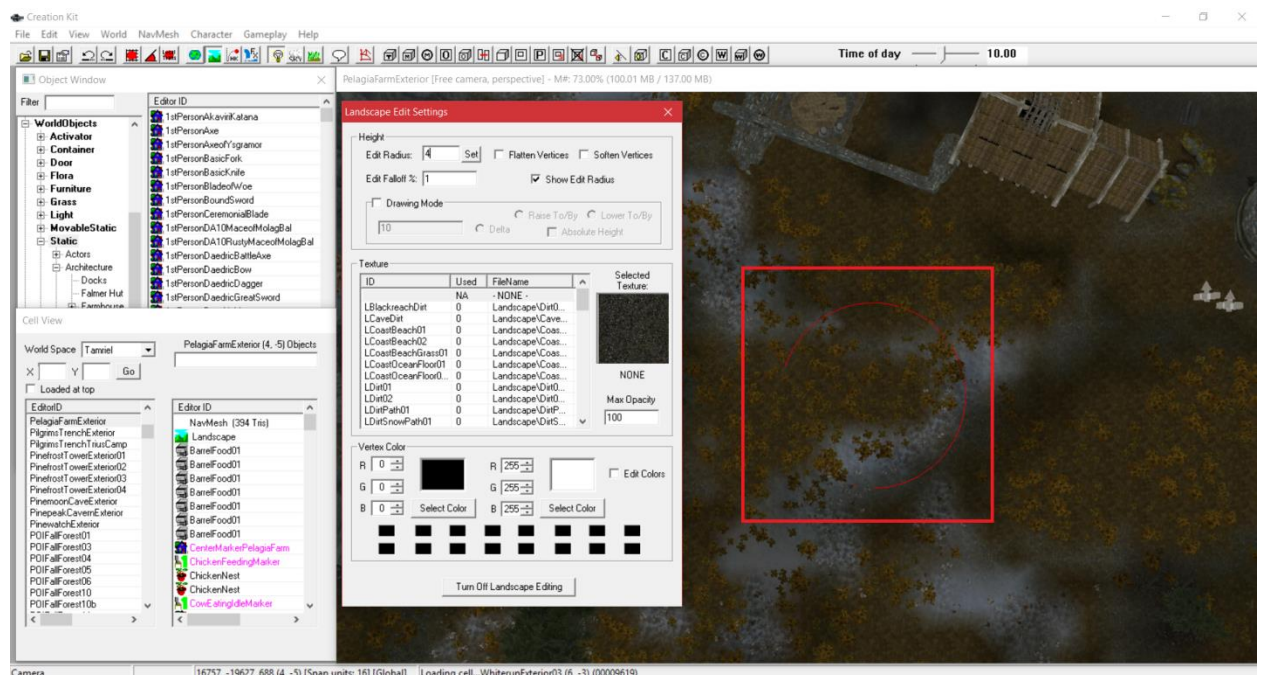
The items I have boxed in red are the tools for height elevation. The main settings you will want to pay attention to are in the top row where it says, “*Edit Radius*”, “*Flatten Vertices*”, and “*Soften Vertices*”.

Edit Radius: This setting allows you to set a value of your choice in the typing field for how much land you want to pull up or down at one time. I suggest keeping the value between 1-10. The smaller the number, the less land you will manipulate and the more control you will be able to maintain.

Flatten Vertices: This setting permits you to make land flatter where it has been raised or malformed. This is useful if you, for example, want a foundation for a building built on a flat surface or you want a road/path to be flat.

Soften Vertices: This setting lets you reduce the sharp, pointy vertices that result from lowering and raising the ground so that it does not look like a bunch of polygons. It makes the land more realistic.

7. Now that you know where the tool is and what the settings do, let's do a little practicing. Set the "Edit Radius" to 4. When you do and you place your cursor over the land, you should see a red circle develop around your cursor like this:



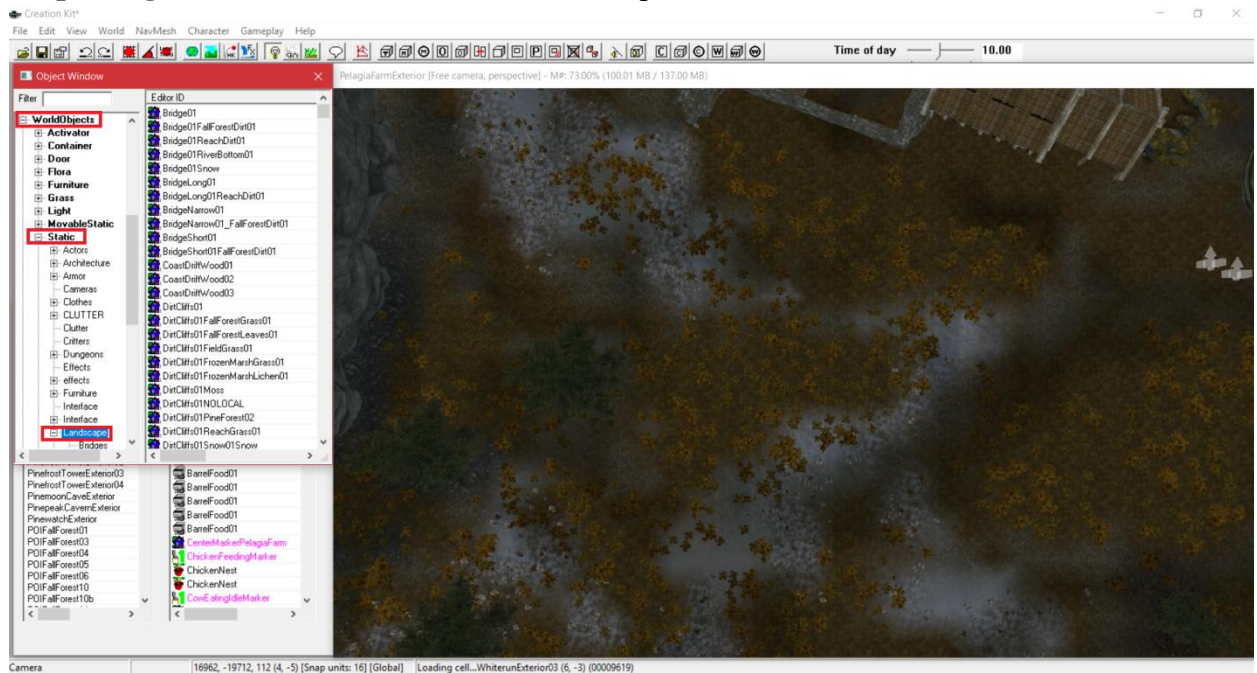
Some of the red circle is concealed under the land. That is normal. The circle snaps flat to the land as if there were an invisible grid that the land gets moved up or down with.

8. To raise or lower the land, simply **pull and push back or forth vertically on your mouse** while holding down the **left-mouse button**. You will notice how the land goes up or down depending on your mouse direction. Release the left-mouse button once you have the elevation at your desired height.
9. If you ever do not like how you have raised or lowered the ground, you can undo it with **ctrl+z**. That is true of most operations in the CK's render window as well.

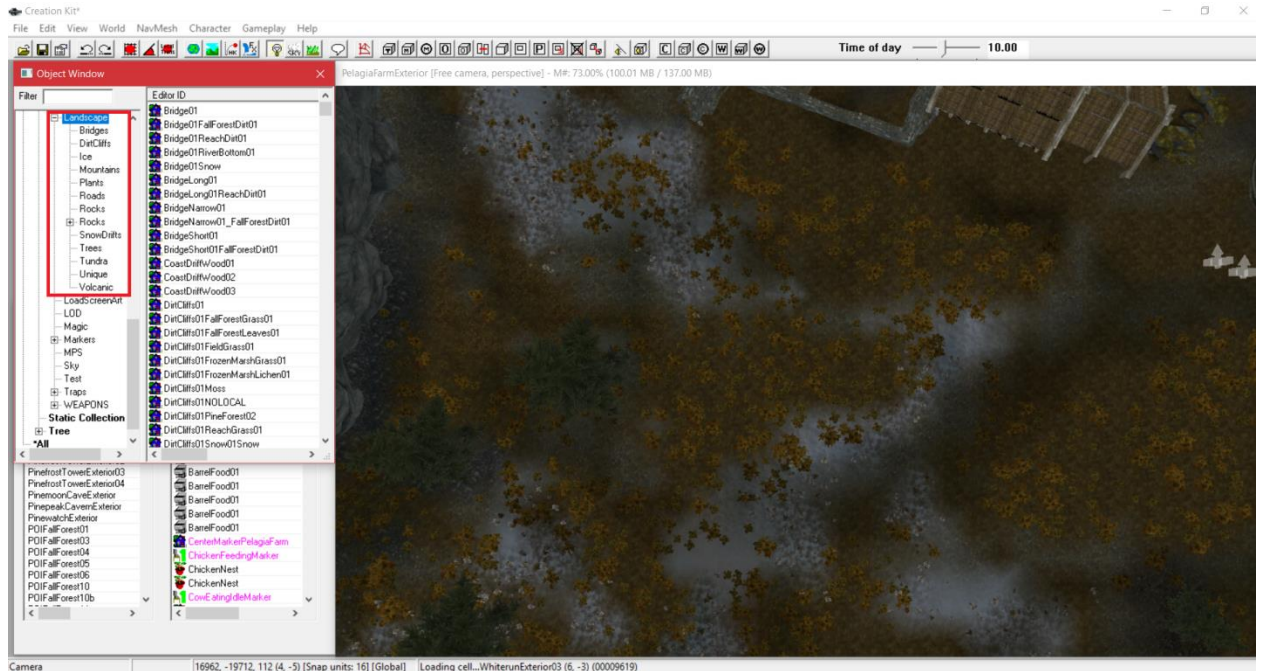
10. Once you release the left-mouse button, you will notice how the texture's plants and grass change with it in terms of their coverage and position. That is normal. The CK dynamically adjusts depending on the changes you make.
11. When you are done editing the ground elevation, hit the **"H"** key again to close out the tool.
12. See? It's that easy! Raising and lowering the ground is a cinch! Let's move on to part 2 of the tutorial now where we learn where rocks, trees, and plants are that can be added to the map. We will also learn how to scale objects.

Part 2:

1. Since we are adding objects to the map, return to your "Object Window" on the left of your screen. Go to "World Objects", hit the **plus sign (+)** beside it, hit "Static", hit the **plus sign (+)** beside it, and click on "Landscape". You should be here:

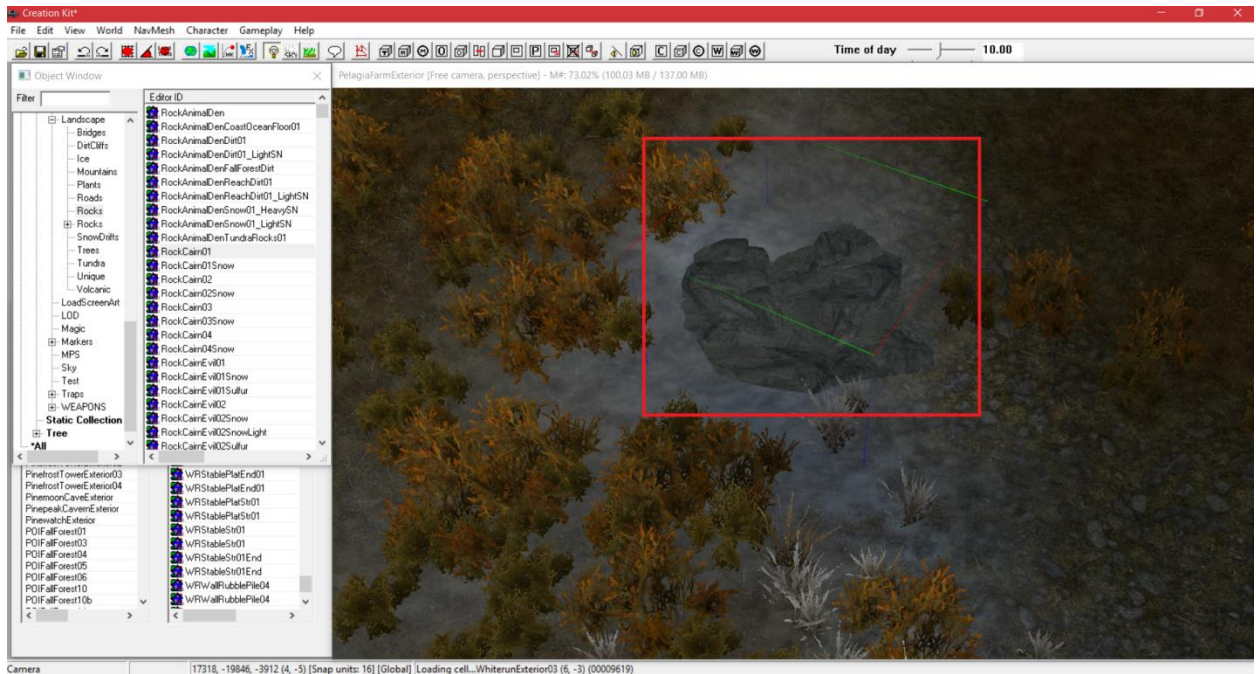


2. If you click on the **plus-sign (+)** beside "Landscape", you will have this submenu:



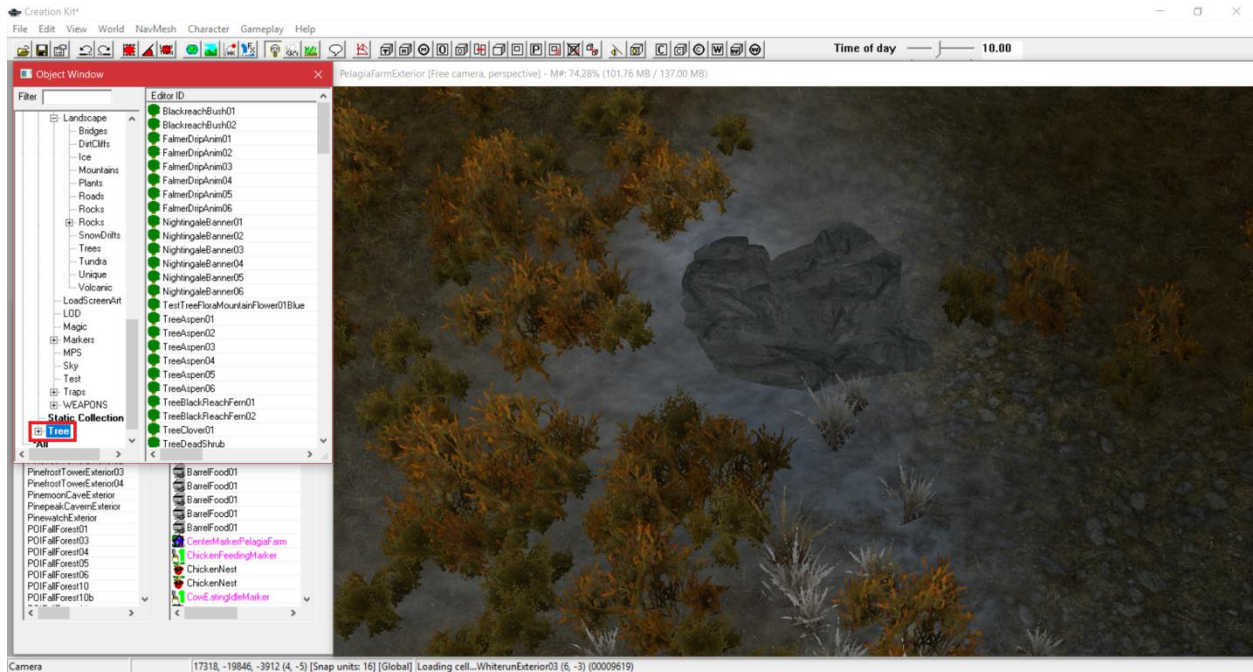
Here, you will see all kinds of goodies that relate to exterior cell decoration. You can peruse this list at your leisure, but for our practice purposes, I will be focusing on rocks. I know this submenu has “plants” but the models that list contains are actually limited. The main plants in the game are in another menu which I will show you momentarily. You can still look at this “plants” menu if you like, but the better plant models are elsewhere.

3. Go to the “Rocks” by clicking on it in the submenu for “Landscape”.
4. Go through the list that populates in the right-hand column and find a rock you want to practice with. Remember to use the “preview” window like we learned in the last tutorial to see what rocks look like beforehand.
5. Once you find one you like, drag and drop it from the list into the render window where you want it. Make sure it is on the ground by hitting the “**F**” key or manually lowering it with the “**Z**” key. I am going to choose “RockCairn01”. Here is what it looks like for me after I have panned, rotated the camera, and zoomed in on it to get a better view:

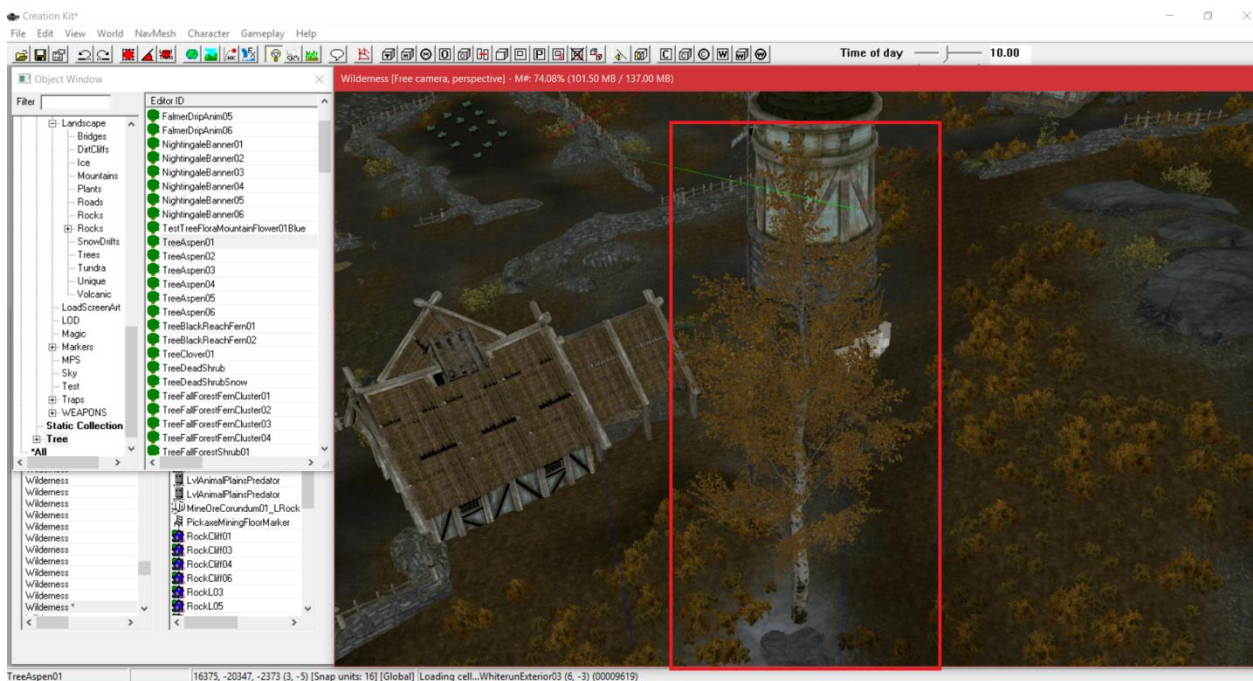


When you do exterior cell decoration, it is typically best to get plants, rocks, and flowers that are suited to that environment so you can maintain aesthetic consistency. For example, you probably would not want to have snow covered rocks in an area of the map where there is no snow. Because of that, I recommend taking a look at the exterior cell you are in and the cells around it to find trees, rocks, and plants that already exist in that area. You can duplicate them by clicking them and hitting **ctrl+d** and place them where and how you want after you obtain the copy. If your current cell and the cells around it are devoid of those features, however, look at the ground texture that exists to help guide your choices. If you are doing everything from scratch, develop the cell based on the story that exists in that part of the map. That means you might need to consult with the FL writers and ask them what they have in mind for that part of the map.

6. Now, I am going to add a tree next to my rock. For practice purposes, hit “Tree” beneath the “Landscape” submenu and find one you like the way you did with your rock. The “Tree” menu is here. You will, of course, want to click the **plus-sign (+)** to see its submenu:

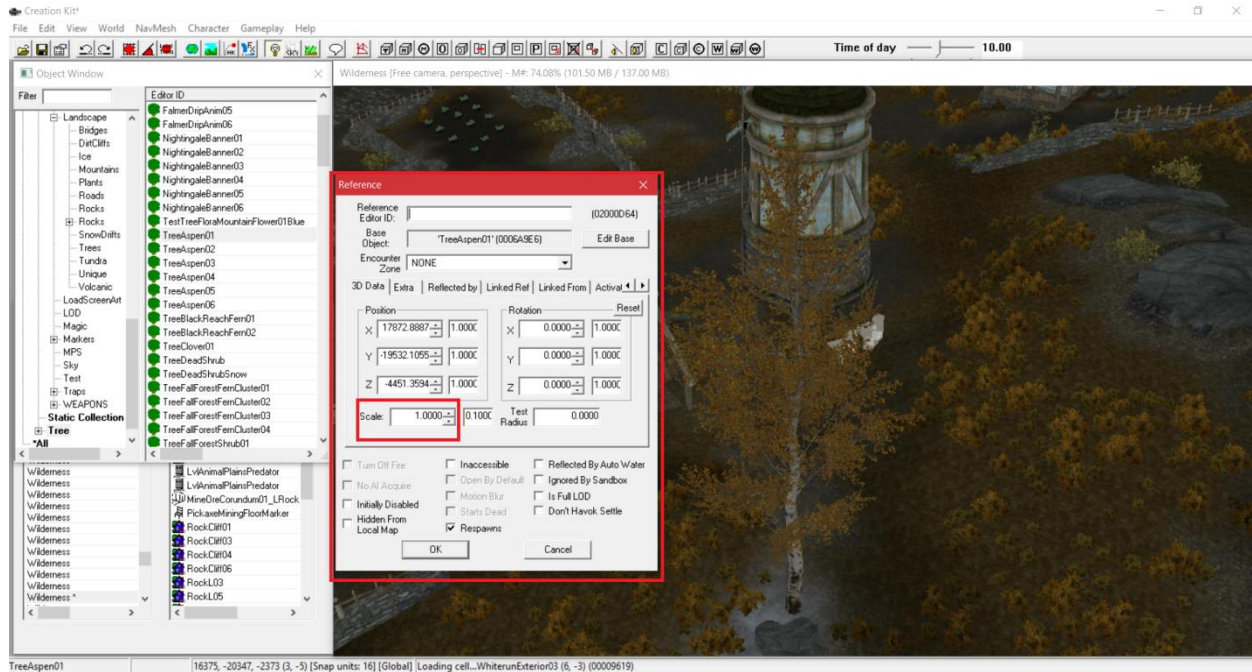


7. Drag and drop your desired tree on the map. For trees, make sure you have their roots or trunk sunk below ground level a little bit for added realism. You can do that with the “Z” key. I am going to choose “TreeAspen01”. I now have a cell that looks like this:

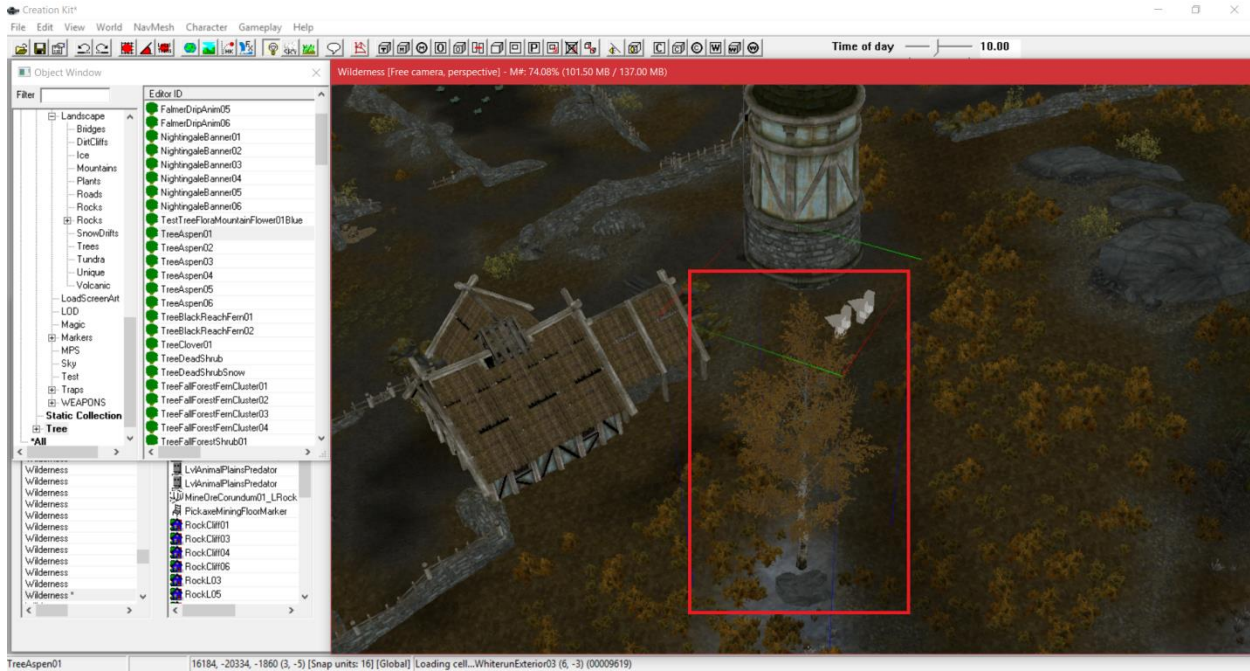


8. If you are unhappy with the size of the tree, you can scale it to make it smaller or bigger. Let’s learn how to do that now. Keep in mind that you can do that with rocks or anything else as well.

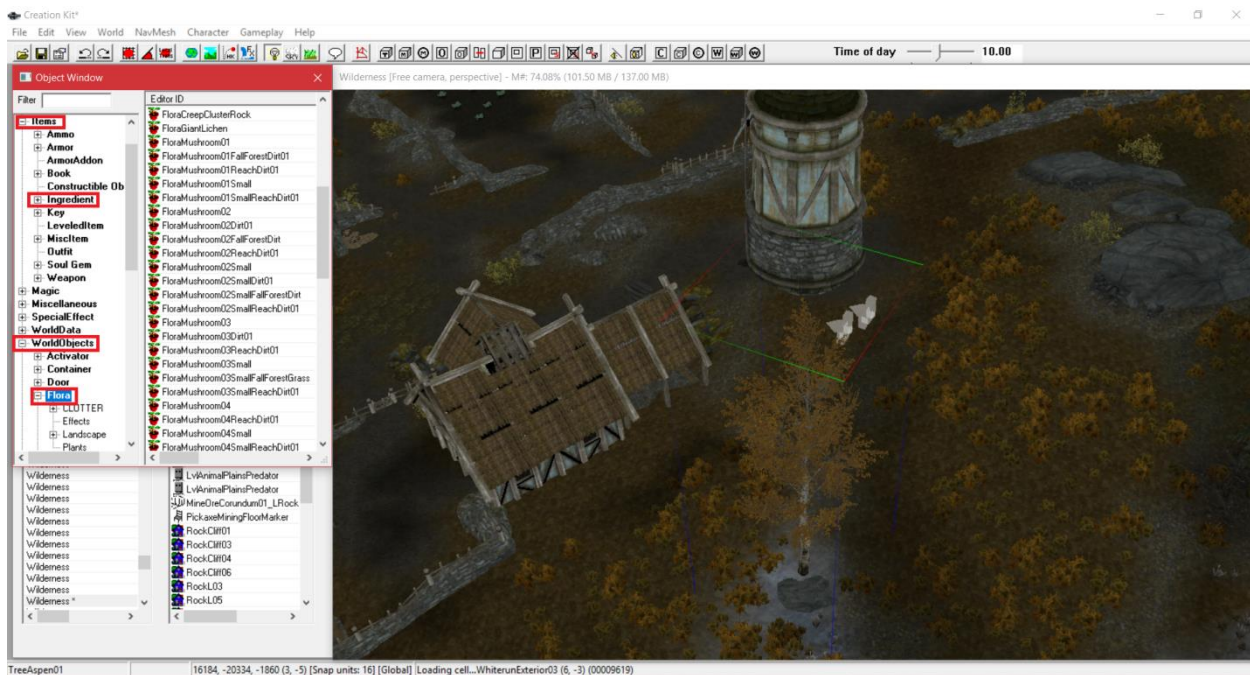
9. Double-click the tree to bring up its dialogue box. The setting you will want to pay attention to is the “Scale” one that I have boxed in red:



10. Use the arrows beside the number “1.0000” to adjust the size. You can also type in a value where the number is. Higher numbers will make the object bigger. The setting maxes out at roughly 10, so there is a limit on how big you can make objects in the CK. To go beyond that, you will need to import the model into a program like Blender or Nifskope and scale it there, but that goes beyond the scope of this tutorial. You can also dip below the default number, but be mindful of how low you decide to go to make items smaller. Make sure you hit “Ok” at the bottom of the dialogue box to see the changes. Most items will change as you hit up or down on the arrows, but trees are an exception to that rule.
11. For my tree, I went down to “.8000” to make it smaller. Take a look at this image and see how much smaller it is than the objects around it, like the windmill behind it for instance. You can see a noticeable change from its size in the first image:

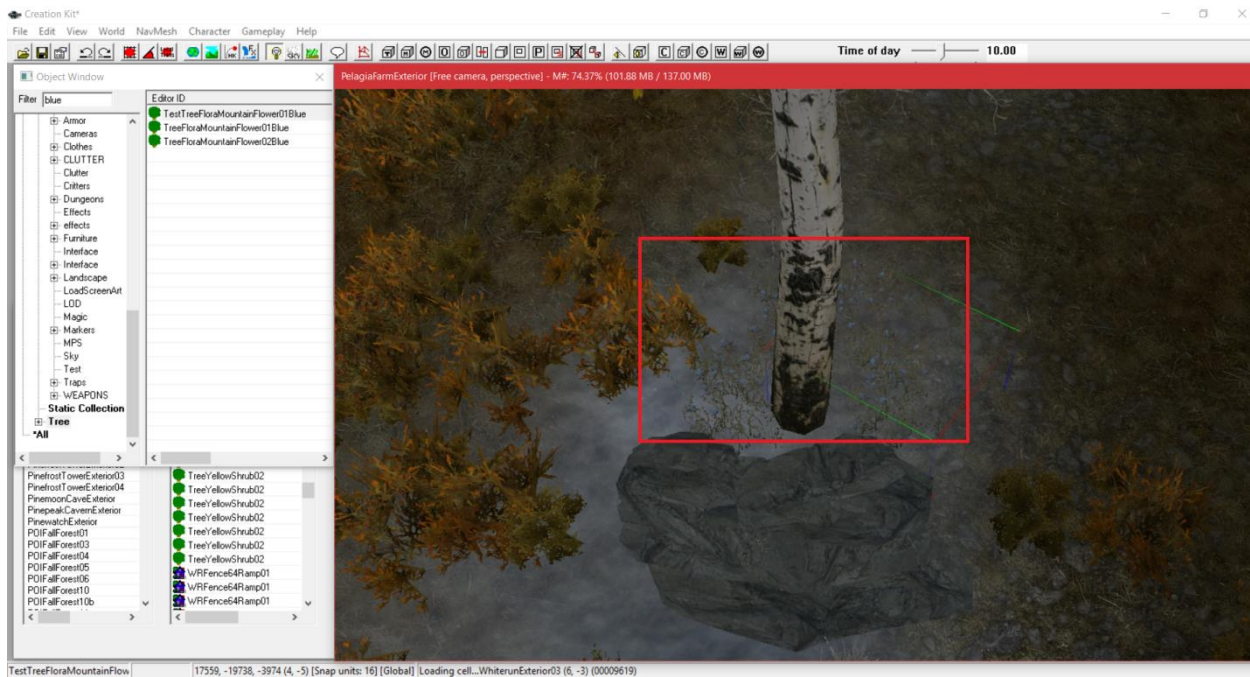


12. Finally, let's add some plants and flowers to our scene. The "Trees" menu where you just got your tree has some ferns, bushes, hanging ivy, and flowers you could use. I suggest simply scrolling around in that menu, looking at the names of the meshes in it, and finding one you like. If you want even more plants and flowers that have harvestable items (like mushrooms), access the "Flora" and "Ingredients" menu that you see boxed in red here and add them:



13. I am going to add some blue wildflowers to my scene. For aesthetic purposes, it is a good idea to cluster, meaning putting ferns, bushes, and flowers around the trees and rocks so it adds to the natural realism. You don't have to place many and remember

that you can duplicate items to make them more plentiful. Also remember to sink the roots of the flowers, bushes, and ferns into the ground slightly with the “Z” key. Here is what my scene looks like now, zoomed in:



14. Save your mod when you are done practicing or editing your current cell.
Congratulations! You have completed this tutorial and mastered basic exterior cell decoration, scaling objects, and editing land elevation. In the next tutorial, I will cover how to add cave entrances, waterfalls, and implement map markers. See you then!