Using NifSkope To Make New FX

Things you need:

1.) Freedom Force or Freedom Force vs the 3rd Reich.
2.) NifSkope: http://sourceforge.net/projects/niftools/files/nifskope/1.1.3/
3.) A Graphics Program, in this case, PaintDotNet: http://www.getpaint.net/
4.) The Mod Tools for FF/FFvt3R, specifically "FFEdit".

This is going to seem like a lot of Steps, and it might look like a lot of work, but to be honest, I am just breaking things down to try and make this easier to understand for those who have never used NifSkope to make their own **FX** before.

Before we get started though, I just want to remind you that anytime you are planning on making changes to any File, backup your work first. I really cannot tell you enough how important that is.

If you are not very familiar with NifSkope, that's ok, I'm going to try to be as thorough as possible to make sure everyone is able to follow along.

Also note, I use the Disk Versions of the Games, and am running Windows 8.1. This may mean that my File Paths are different from yours, if so, I'd be glad to help you find out where your Game's File Paths are.

For this example, we will be creating an **FX** for FFvt3R.

The first thing you need is an idea of what you want to make. In this case, we will make a "Rally" **FX** for the fabled realm of Atlantis (DC or Marvel, it doesn't really matter right now).

(http://houseofgeekery.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/awuanamorbanner.jpg)

Now that we know that we are planning a "Rally" **FX**, we need to find the necessary Files. If you have not already done so, make sure that all of the Files from your "Art.ff" File have been properly extracted. Once your "Art.ff" File has been extracted, this is what your **FX** Folder should look like.
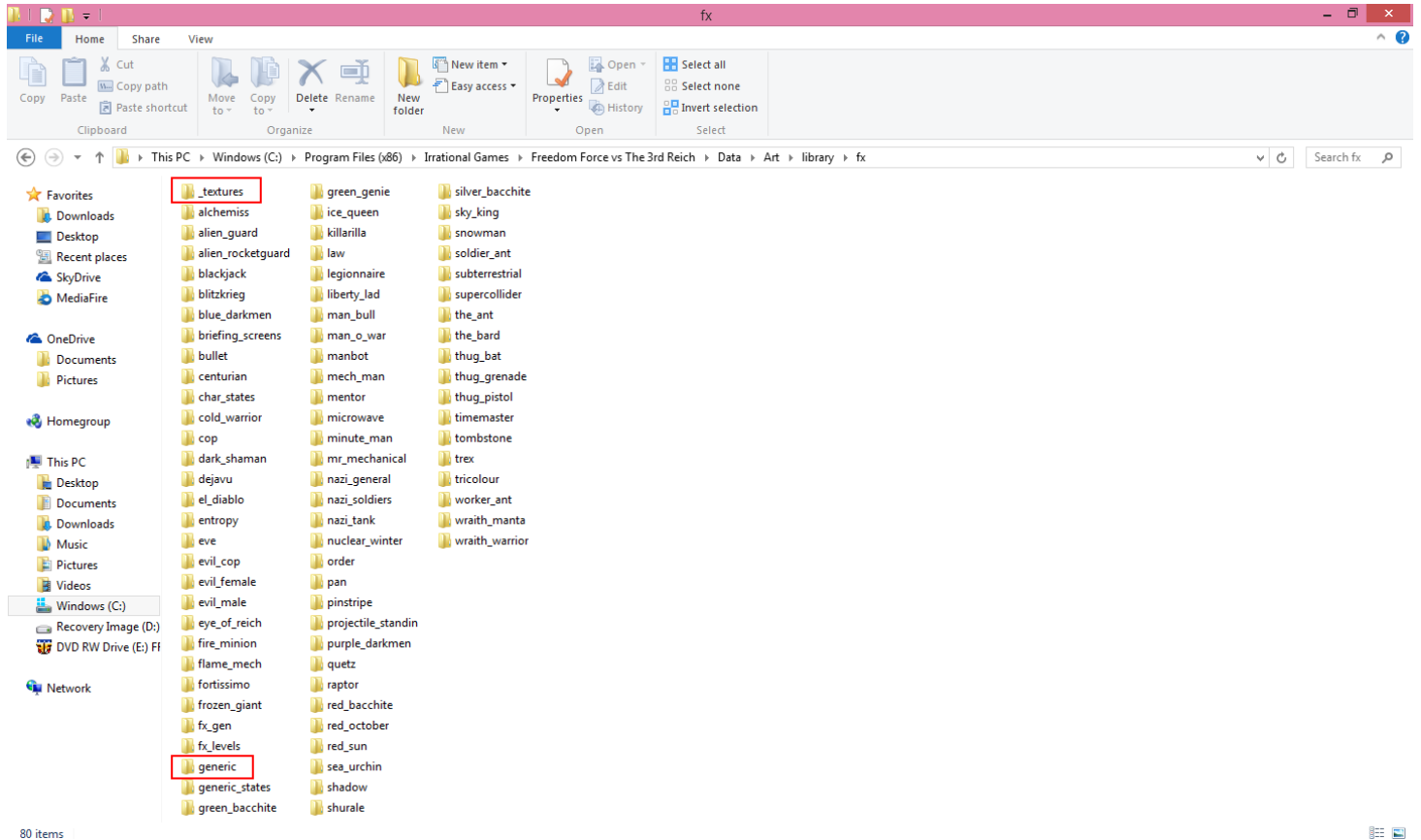
Pay attention to where your "_textures" and "generic" Folders are, you'll be needing those later.

Go to your **FX** Folder, go in to Minute Man's Folder, and copy the "Rally" Folder.

Now we need to find a place to work. Personally, I keep a Folder in my main "Irrational Games" Folder called "**WIP_FX_Projects**", so I will open that in a second Window, and paste a copy of Minute Man's "Rally" **FX** in there.
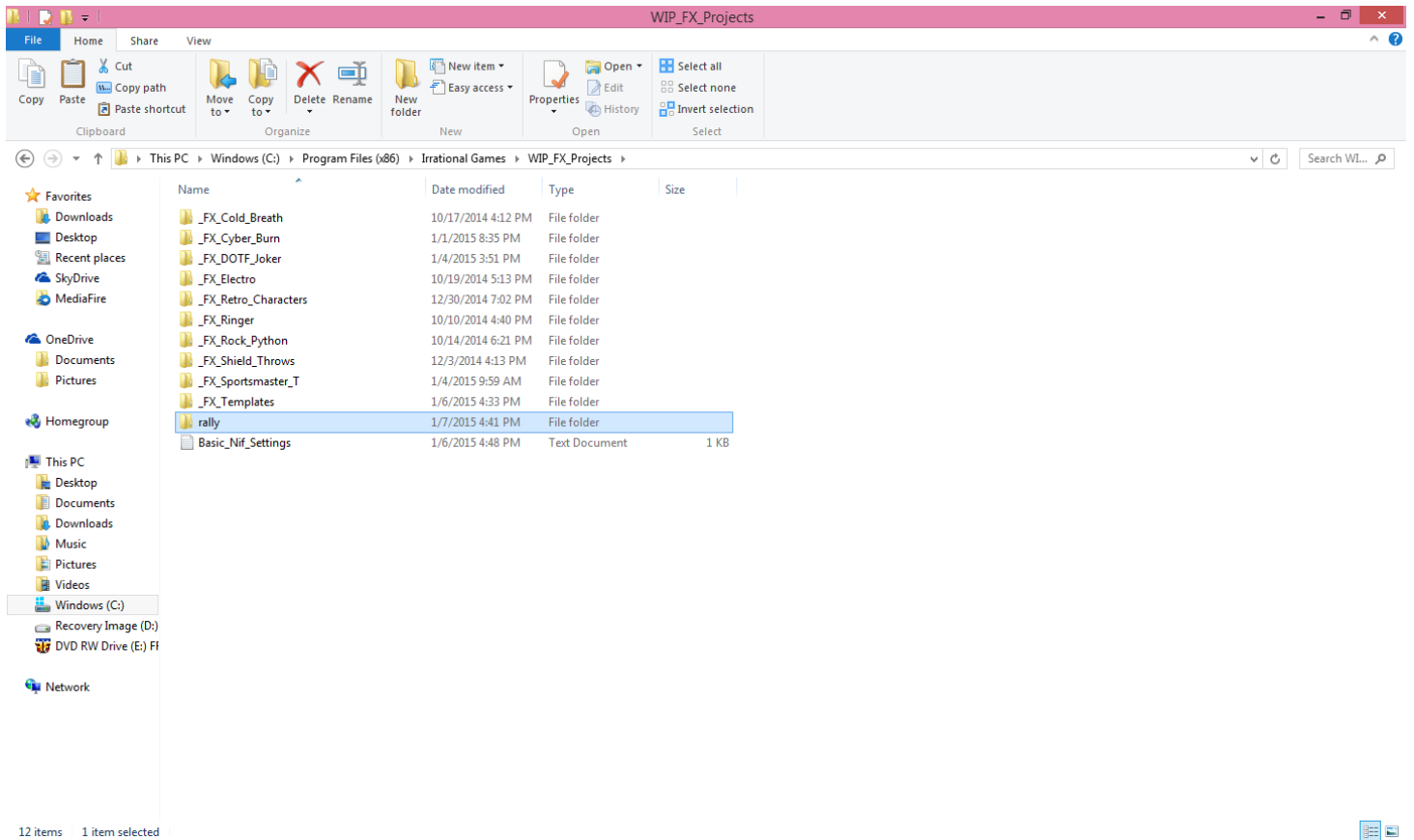

You can now rename that "Rally" Folder to whatever you want to call your new **FX**, in this case, I will call this **FX** "Atlantis_Rally".

Now before I do anything else, I like to create a backup file of the **FX** that I'm working on. So, if you want, go ahead and make a copy of the "Atlantis_Rally" Folder so that you also have a Folder called "Atlantis_Rally – Copy".
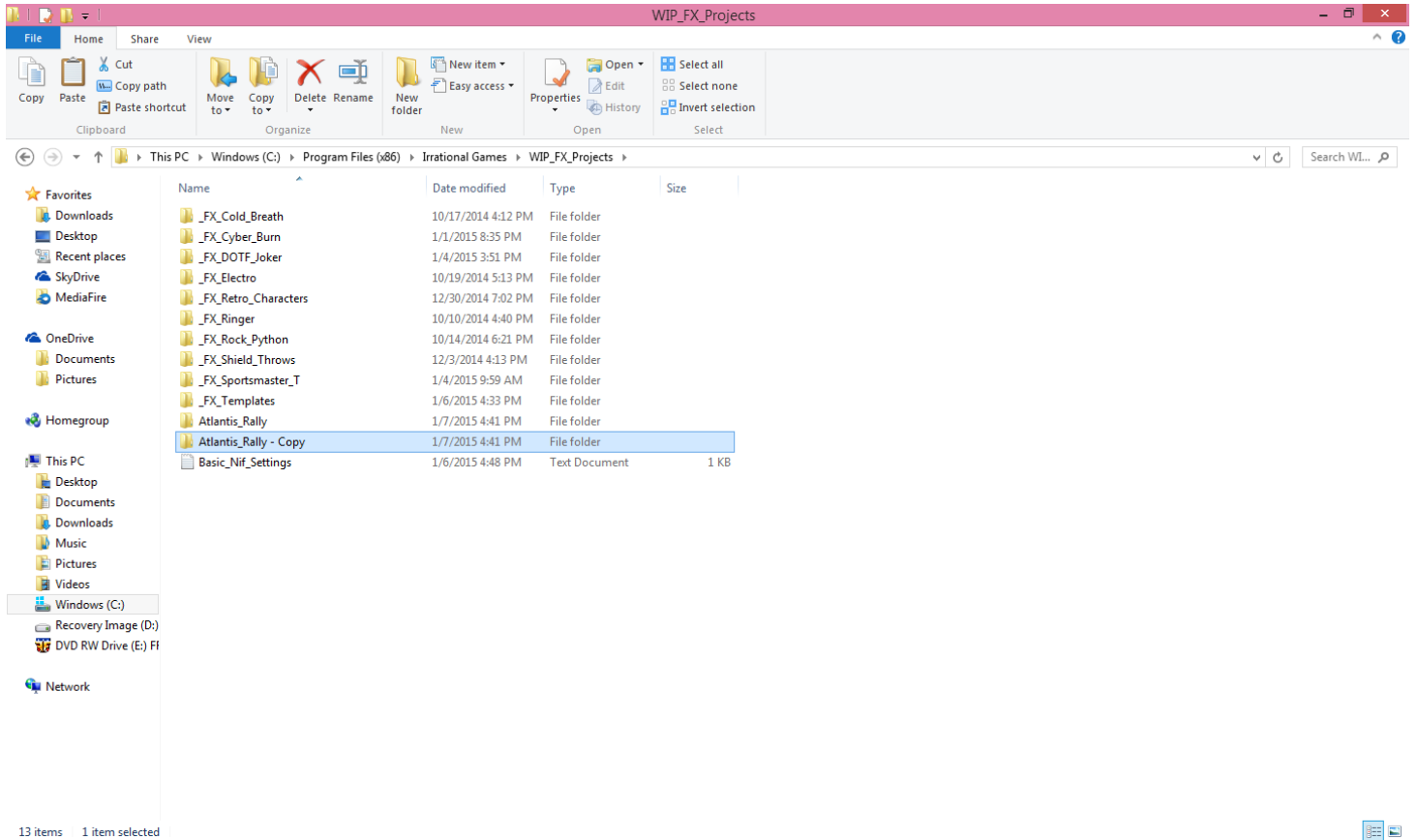

Next we need to figure out what Art Files we need for this **FX**. Because we are making this **FX** for FFvt3R, we will be working with DDS Files instead of TGA Files.
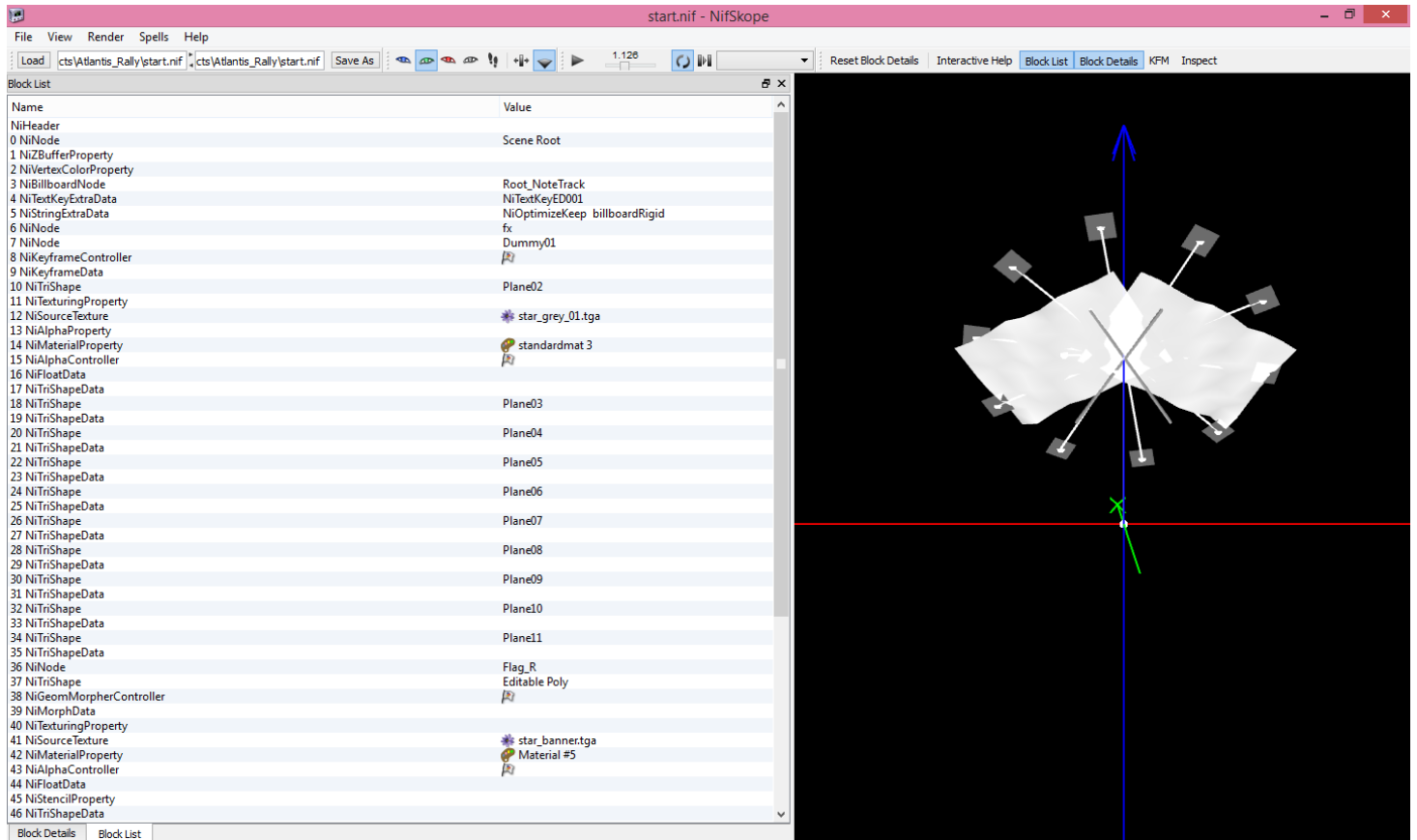
If you open your "Atlantis_Rally" Folder, you will find two Nif Files (Start.Nif and Core.Nif).
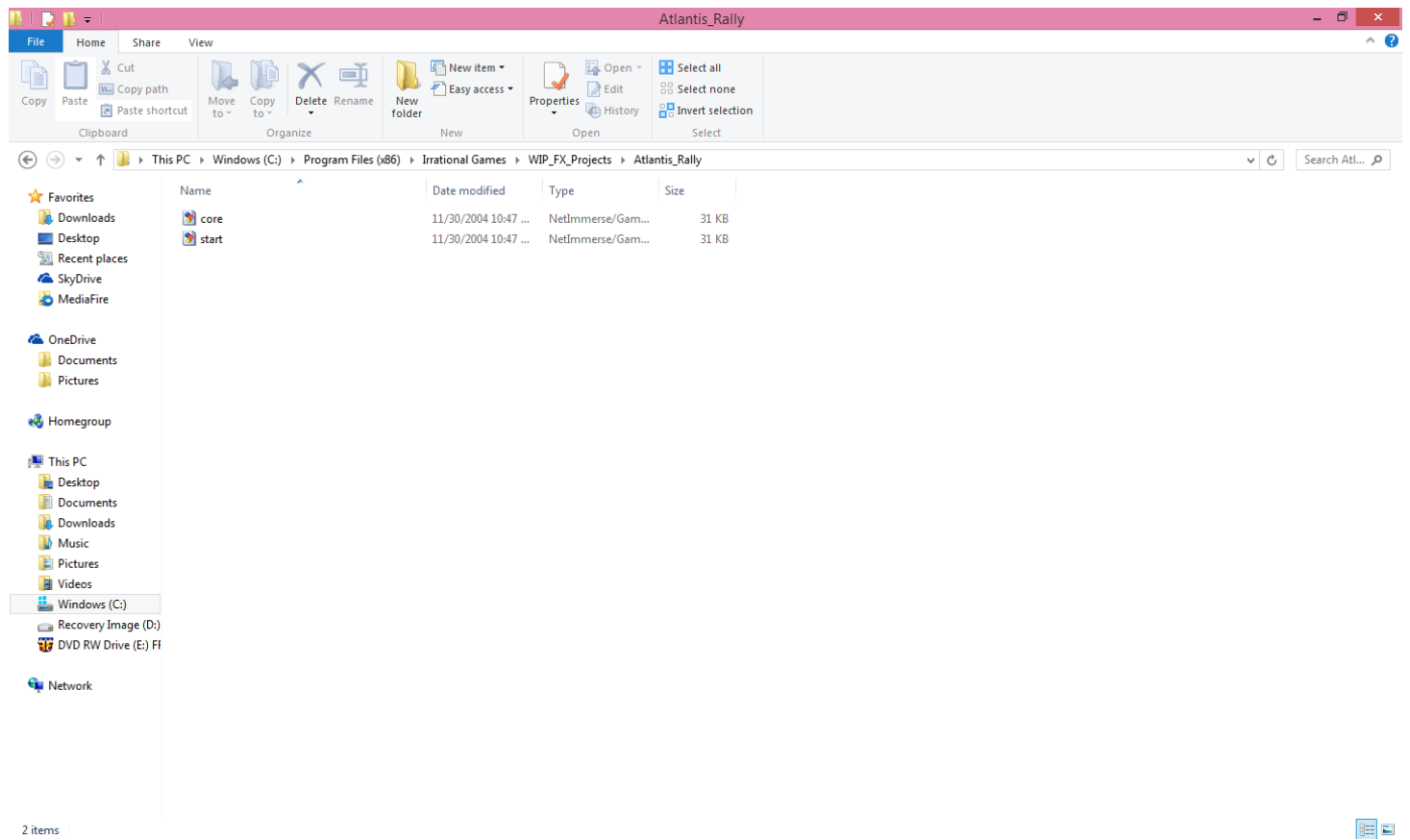
Open your "Start.Nif" with NifSkope. Go to the top left of your screen and click on "View". When the Menu pops up, click on "Block List". When that Menu pops up, click on "Show Blocks in List". This will allow you to find out what Art Files are needed.
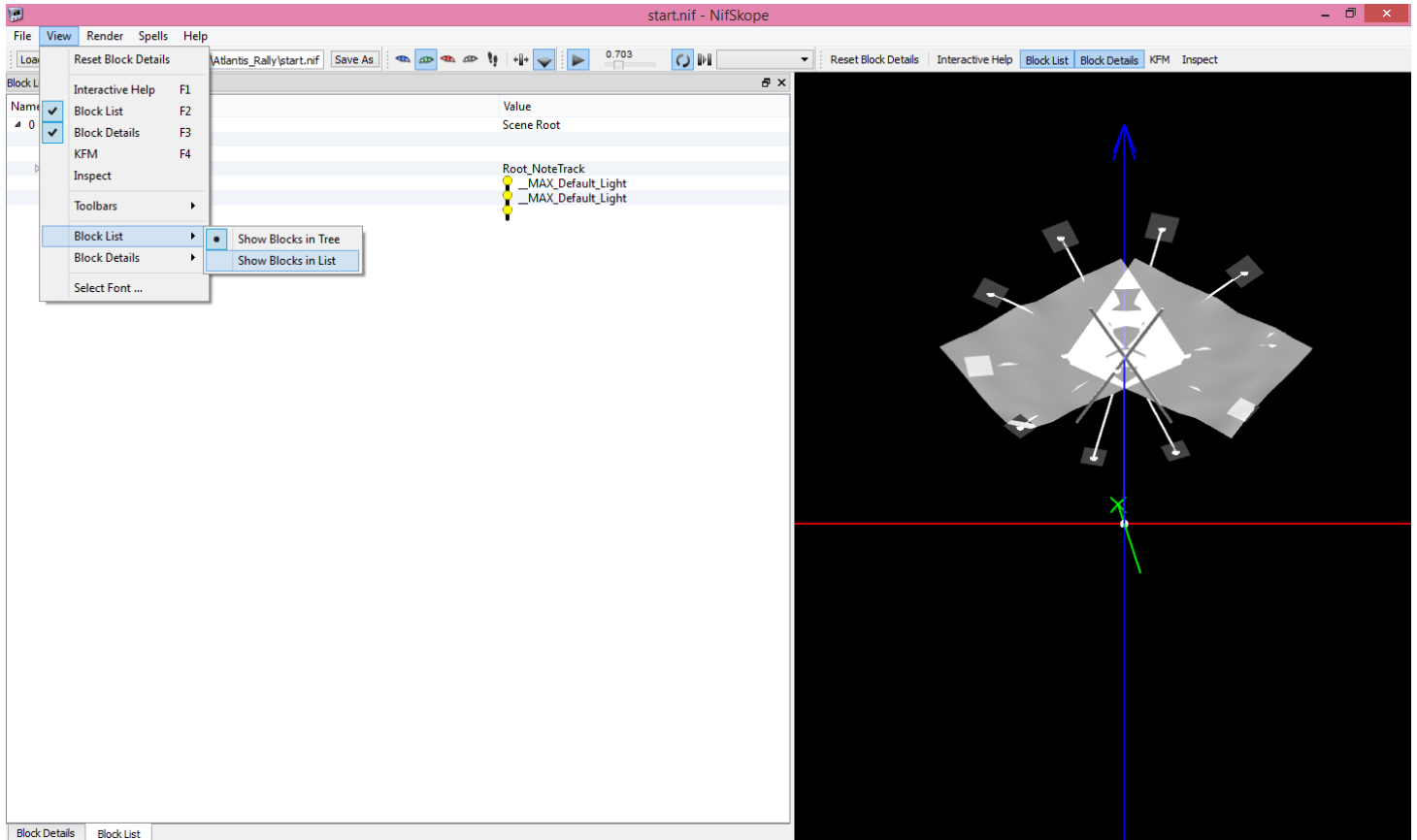
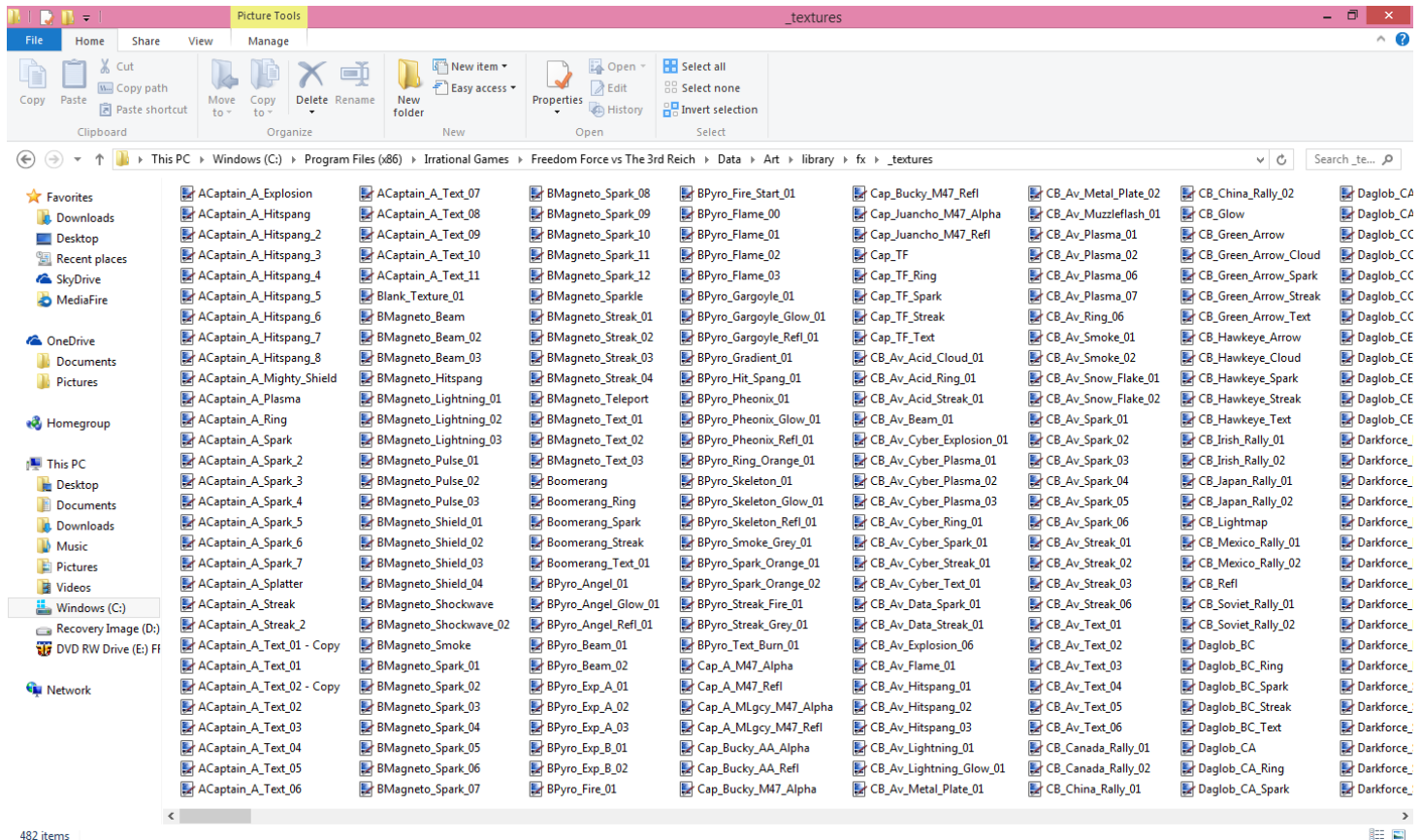This is what you should now see in NifSkope.

Since we are looking for the Art Files associated with our Nif Files, we want to look for the symbol that looks like a little Purple Flower. This "Start.Nif" has 3. The first one you will see, should be "star_grey_01". The next one you will see, is "star_banner". The last one you will see is "flora_pine_bark_01".

Block List

Name	Value
NiHeader	
0 NiNode	Scene Root
1 NiZBufferProperty	
2 NiVertexColorProperty	
3 NiBillboardNode	Root_NoteTrack
4 NiTextKeyExtraData	NiTextKeyED001
5 NiStringExtraData	NiOptimizeKeep billboardRigid
6 NiNode	fx
7 NiNode	Dummy01
8 NiKeyframeController	
9 NiKeyframeData	
10 NiTriShape	Plane02
11 NiTexturingProperty	
12 NiSourceTexture	star_grey_01.tga
13 NiAlphaProperty	
14 NiMaterialProperty	standardmat 3
15 NiAlphaController	
16 NiFloatData	
17 NiTriShapeData	

Even though the Nif Files will say that they use ".tga" Art Files, our "_textures" Folder should have DDS Files in them.

Now we need to find the DDS Files that our Nif File points to. Go back to your **FX** Folder, then go into your "_textures" Folder. In your "_textures" Folder, find your 3 DDS Files, copy them, and then paste them into your "Atlantis_Rally" Folder. If you are not sure where to look, follow the path shown below.

We will now check our "Core.Nif" to see what Art Files we need. Open up the "Core.Nif" in NifSkope. If your settings did not automatically stay the same, then go back to the top left of your screen and click on "View". When the Menu pops up, click on "Block List". When that Menu pops up, click on "Show Blocks in List".

Once again, we are looking for the Art Files associated with our Nif Files, we want to look for the symbol that looks like a little Purple Flower again. This "Core.Nif" has 3. The first one you will see, should be "star_grey_01". The next one you will see, is "star_banner". The last one you will see is "flora_pine_bark_01". I'm not going to post pics of this because these are the same Art Files that are used in the "Start.Nif".

Before you start making changes to your DDS Files, I recommend creating copies first. Once you have made copies, then you can open up your Graphics Program (In my case, it will be PaintDotNet), and then use that program to open your DDS Files.
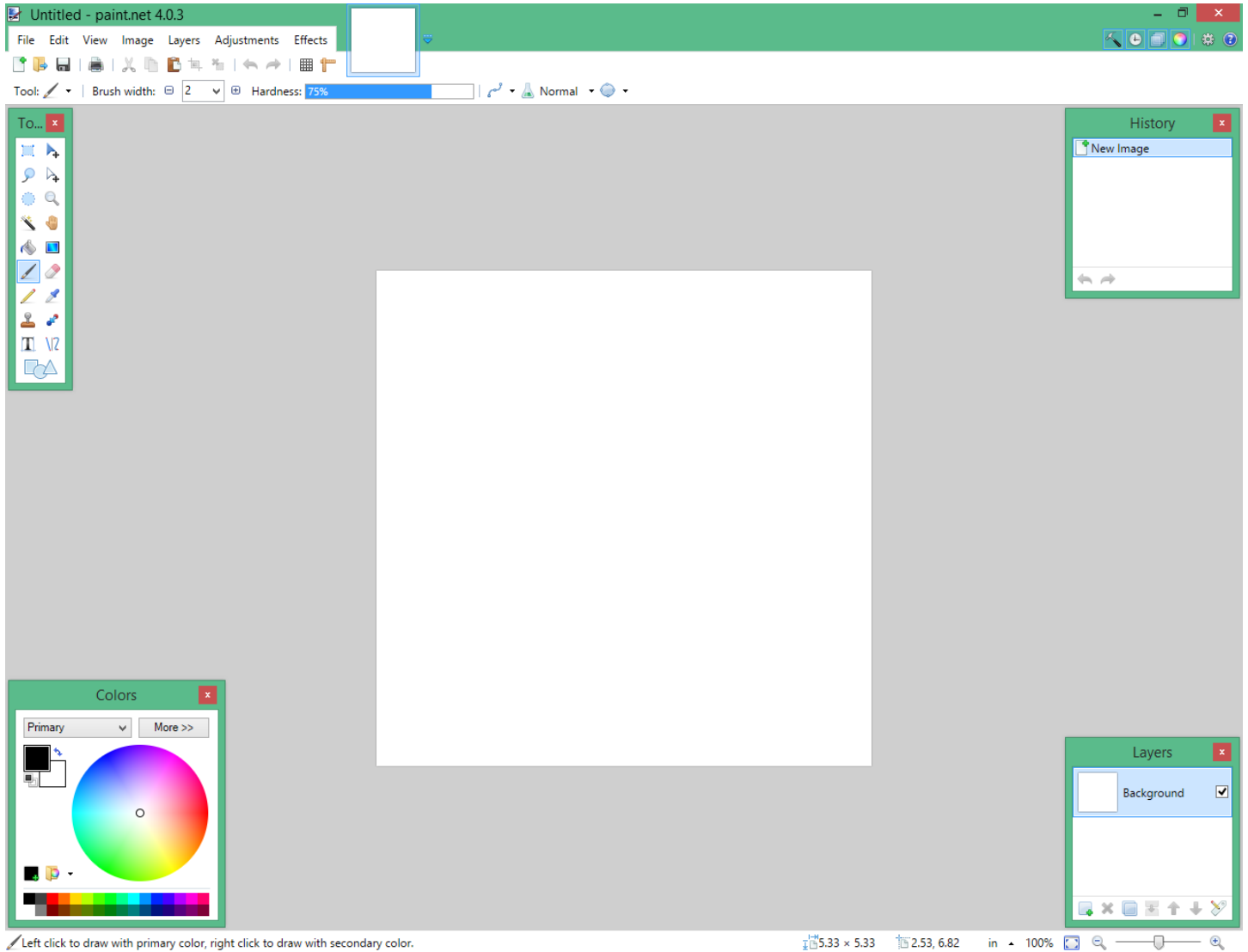
If you are familiar with Minute Man's "Rally" **FX**, then you will recognize the "star_grey_01" as the Stars that circle around during the **FX**. You should also recognize the "star_banner" as the Flag that displays during the **FX**. The "flora_pine_bark_01" belongs to the Flag Poles that display during the "Rally" **FX**.

"**star_grey_01**"

"**star_banner**"

"**flora_pine_bark_01**"

We will start by changing the "star_banner" File, the Flag. There are different ways to do this, but I will use the easiest method. Do a Google Image search for "Atlantis Flag". Find a Flag that you like, right click on it, and click "Save As", and save it to your "Atlantis_Rally" Folder. I will save my Flag as "Atlantis_Flag_01". To make things easier, here is the Flag that I will be using, as well as the Link to it:

http://img3.wikia.nocookie.net/__cb20111109050658/cybernations/images/d/d6/NewAtlantisFlag.svg

Now open up your Flag in your Graphics Program, on the top left of the screen, go to "Image", when the menu pops up, click "Resize".
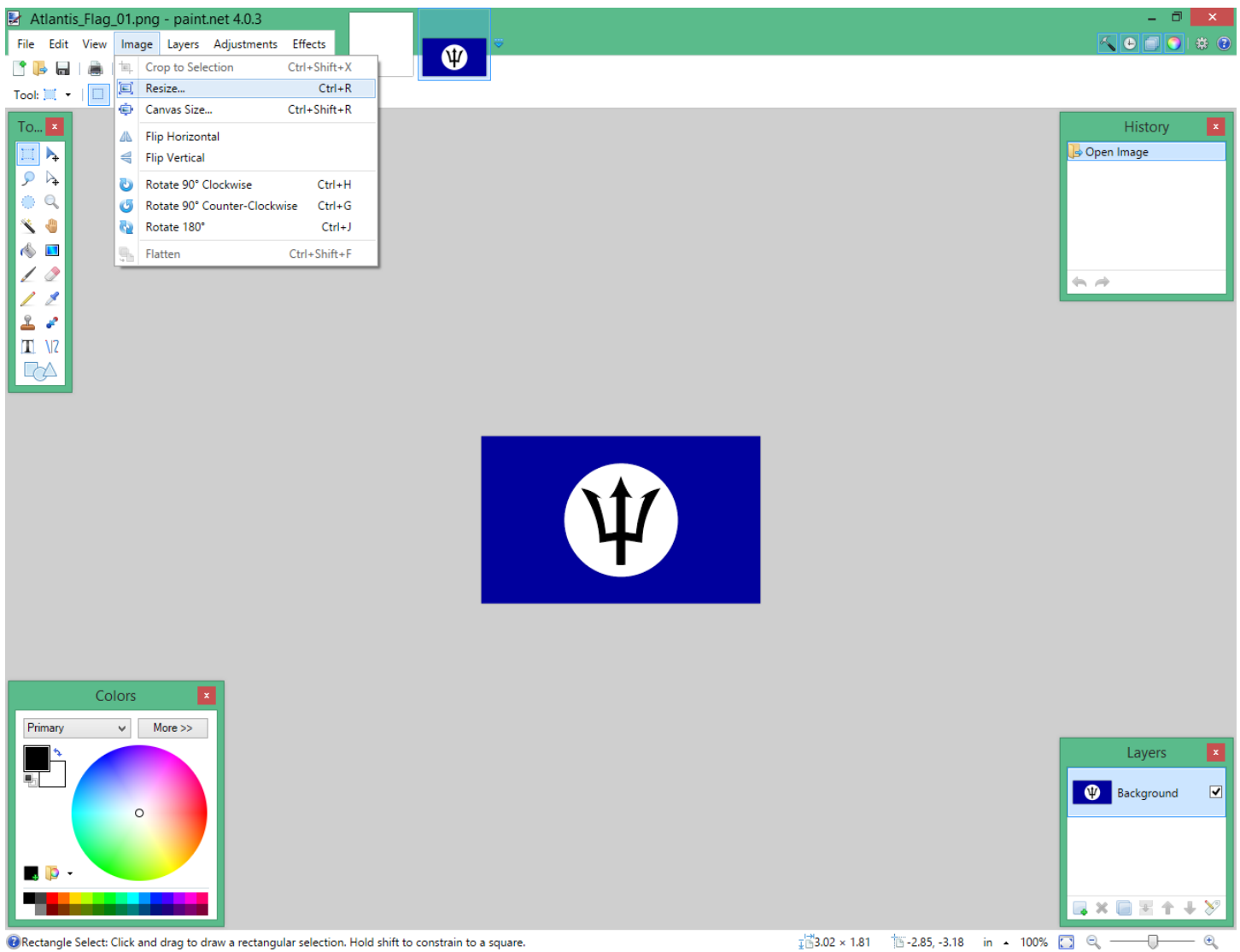
A new menu will pop up letting you change the dimensions of your Flag. You will want a Width of "128", and a Height of "64". Once you do that, then save it as a DDS File.
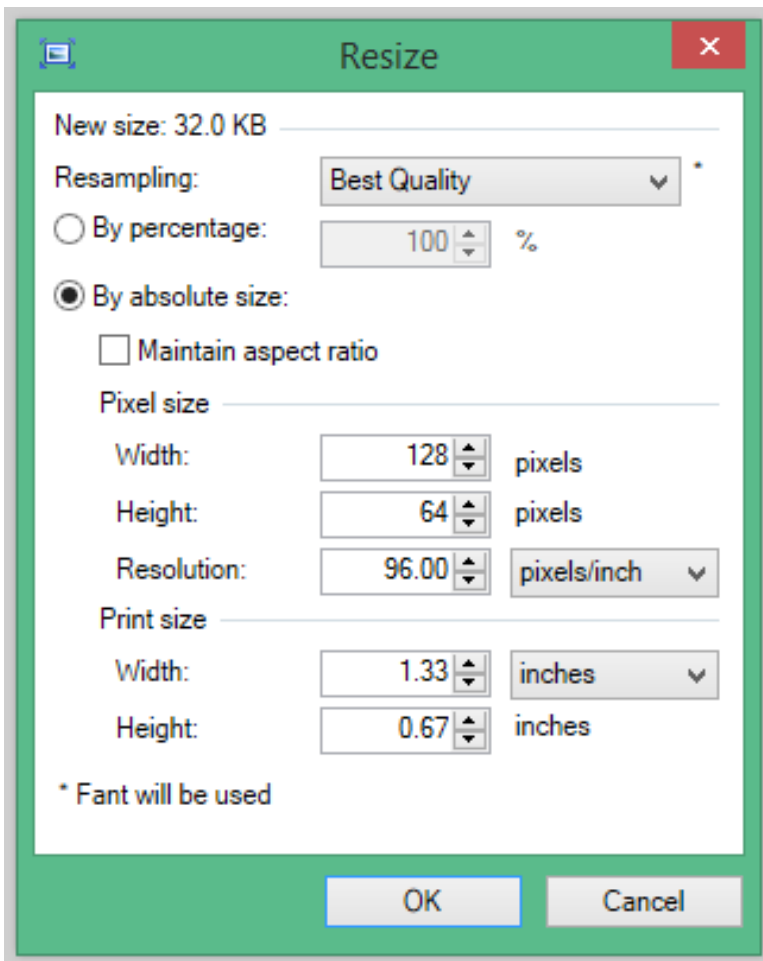
When you save your Files to DDS Format, make sure that in the top left corner, you save it with the setting shown: **A8R8G8B8**. Saving using any other setting may crash your Game.
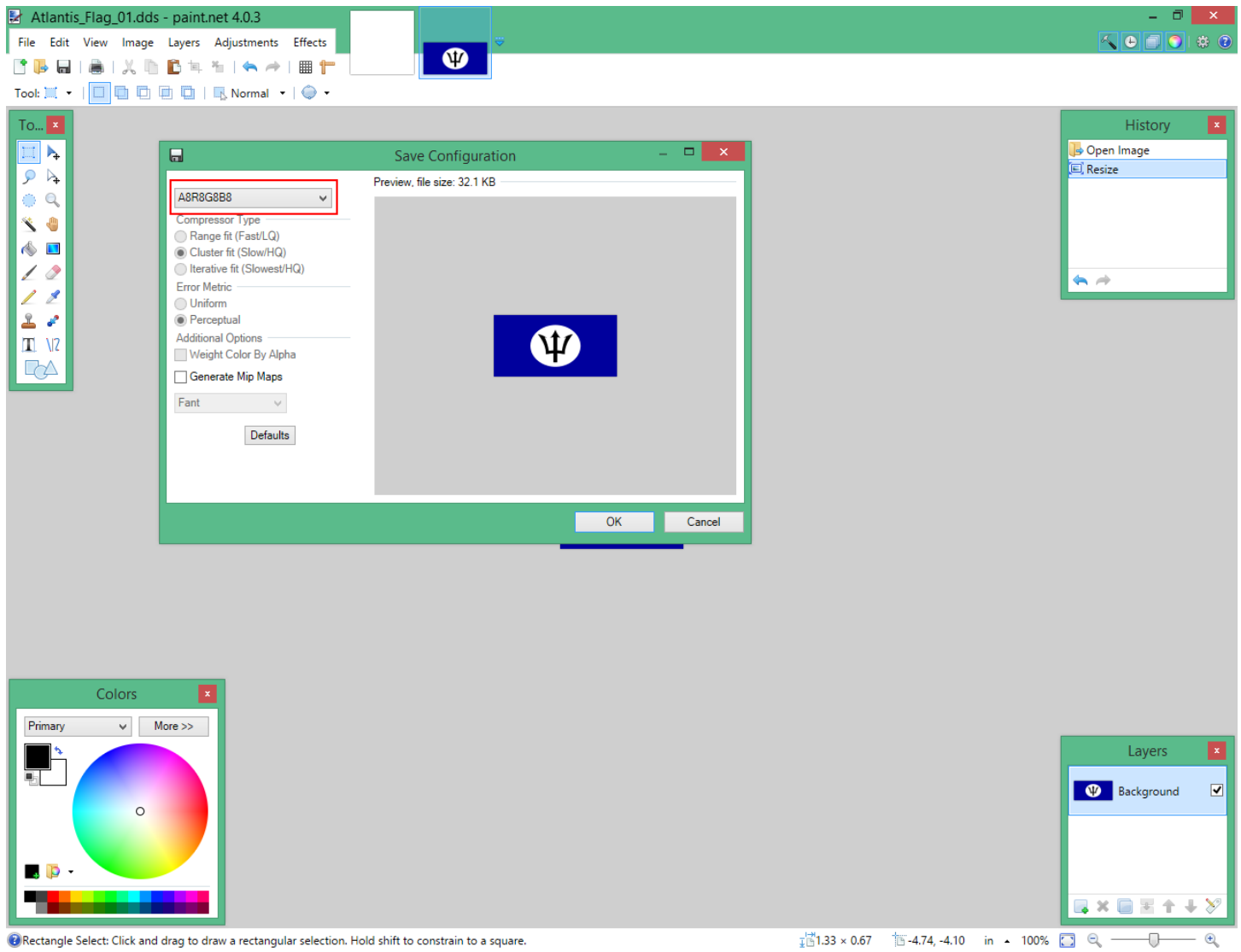
Next, we will change the "star_grey_01" File, the Star. Again, there are different ways to do this, but I will use the easiest method. With this DDS File open in your Graphics Program, in the top left corner of the screen, click on "Edit", when the menu opens, click on "Select All". You will see that the entire DDS File has been selected. Go back to "Edit", and when the menu opens, click "Cut".

It's kind of difficult to see in the pic below, but you should see a Grey and White checkered image, this means that this DDS File has been "Alpha'd Out", and will not show up in Game. Since we are keeping this simple, we will leave this blank for now, so go ahead and save this File as "Atlantis_Flag_02".
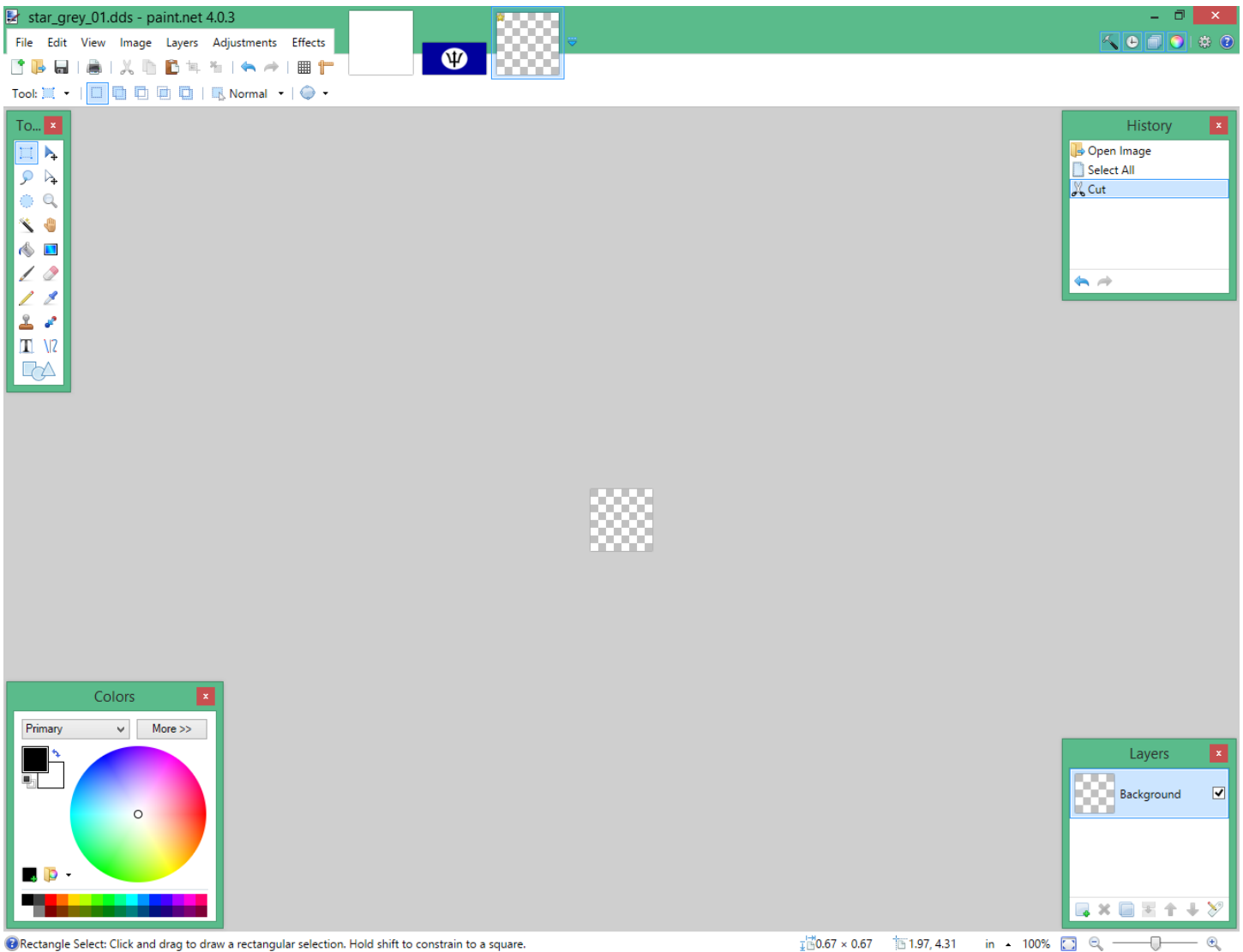
If you want to change what the Flag Pole looks like, you can, but it's really not that noticeable in Game, so I would recommend leaving the "flora_pine_bark_01" File alone.

Make sure that you remember what you named your Files to, because you will need to know this when you set up your **FX** in NifSkope. In this case, you changed "star_banner" to "Atlantis_Flag_01", and you changed "star_grey_01" to "Atlantis_Flag_02".

Open your "Start.Nif" with NifSkope, find "star_banner", and rename it to "Atlantis_Flag_01". Now find "star_grey_01", and rename it to "Atlantis_Flag_02". Save your Nif File.

This is what you should see after changing the names to the Art Files.

Block List	
Name	**Value**
NiHeader	
0 NiNode	Scene Root
1 NiZBufferProperty	
2 NiVertexColorProperty	
3 NiBillboardNode	Root_NoteTrack
4 NiTextKeyExtraData	NiTextKeyED001
5 NiStringExtraData	NiOptimizeKeep billboardRigid
6 NiNode	fx
7 NiNode	Dummy01
8 NiKeyframeController	
9 NiKeyframeData	
10 NiTriShape	Plane02
11 NiTexturingProperty	
12 NiSourceTexture	Atlantis_Flag_02.tga
13 NiAlphaProperty	
14 NiMaterialProperty	standardmat 3
15 NiAlphaController	
16 NiFloatData	
17 NiTriShapeData	
18 NiTriShape	Plane03
19 NiTriShapeData	
20 NiTriShape	Plane04
21 NiTriShapeData	
22 NiTriShape	Plane05
23 NiTriShapeData	
24 NiTriShape	Plane06
25 NiTriShapeData	
26 NiTriShape	Plane07
27 NiTriShapeData	
28 NiTriShape	Plane08
29 NiTriShapeData	
30 NiTriShape	Plane09
31 NiTriShapeData	
32 NiTriShape	Plane10
33 NiTriShapeData	
34 NiTriShape	Plane11
35 NiTriShapeData	
36 NiNode	Flag_R
37 NiTriShape	Editable Poly
38 NiGeomMorpherController	
39 NiMorphData	
40 NiTexturingProperty	
41 NiSourceTexture	Atlantis_Flag_01.tga
42 NiMaterialProperty	Material #5
43 NiAlphaController	
44 NiFloatData	
45 NiStencilProperty	
Block Details	

Open your "Core.Nif" with NifSkope, find "star_banner", and rename it to "Atlantis_Flag_01". Now find "star_grey_01", and rename it to "Atlantis_Flag_02". Basically, you are doing the same thing to your "Core.Nif" that you did to your "Start.Nif". Save your Nif File.

Block List	
Name	Value
NiHeader	
0 NiNode	Scene Root
1 NiZBufferProperty	
2 NiVertexColorProperty	
3 NiBillboardNode	Root_NoteTrack
4 NiTextKeyExtraData	NiTextKeyED001
5 NiStringExtraData	NiOptimizeKeep billboardRigid
6 NiNode	fx
7 NiNode	Dummy01
8 NiKeyframeController	🏳
9 NiKeyframeData	
10 NiTriShape	Plane02
11 NiTexturingProperty	
12 NiSourceTexture	✹ star_grey_01.tga
13 NiAlphaProperty	
14 NiMaterialProperty	🎨 standardmat 3
15 NiAlphaController	🏳
16 NiFloatData	
17 NiTriShapeData	
18 NiTriShape	Plane03
19 NiTriShapeData	
20 NiTriShape	Plane04
21 NiTriShapeData	
22 NiTriShape	Plane05
23 NiTriShapeData	
24 NiTriShape	Plane06
25 NiTriShapeData	
26 NiTriShape	Plane07
27 NiTriShapeData	
28 NiTriShape	Plane08
29 NiTriShapeData	
30 NiTriShape	Plane09
31 NiTriShapeData	
32 NiTriShape	Plane10
33 NiTriShapeData	
34 NiTriShape	Plane11
35 NiTriShapeData	
36 NiNode	Flag_R
37 NiTriShape	Editable Poly
38 NiGeomMorpherController	🏳
39 NiMorphData	
40 NiTexturingProperty	
41 NiSourceTexture	✹ star_banner.tga
42 NiMaterialProperty	🎨 Material #5
43 NiAlphaController	🏳
44 NiFloatData	
45 NiStencilProperty	
Block Details	

This is what you should see after changing the names to the Art Files.

| Block List	
Name	Value
NiHeader	
0 NiNode	Scene Root
1 NiZBufferProperty	
2 NiVertexColorProperty	
3 NiBillboardNode	Root_NoteTrack
4 NiTextKeyExtraData	NiTextKeyED001
5 NiStringExtraData	NiOptimizeKeep billboardRigid
6 NiNode	fx
7 NiNode	Dummy01
8 NiKeyframeController	
9 NiKeyframeData	
10 NiTriShape	Plane02
11 NiTexturingProperty	
12 NiSourceTexture	Atlantis_Flag_02.tga
13 NiAlphaProperty	
14 NiMaterialProperty	standardmat 3
15 NiAlphaController	
16 NiFloatData	
17 NiTriShapeData	
18 NiTriShape	Plane03
19 NiTriShapeData	
20 NiTriShape	Plane04
21 NiTriShapeData	
22 NiTriShape	Plane05
23 NiTriShapeData	
24 NiTriShape	Plane06
25 NiTriShapeData	
26 NiTriShape	Plane07
27 NiTriShapeData	
28 NiTriShape	Plane08
29 NiTriShapeData	
30 NiTriShape	Plane09
31 NiTriShapeData	
32 NiTriShape	Plane10
33 NiTriShapeData	
34 NiTriShape	Plane11
35 NiTriShapeData	
36 NiNode	Flag_R
37 NiTriShape	Editable Poly
38 NiGeomMorpherController	
39 NiMorphData	
40 NiTexturingProperty	
41 NiSourceTexture	Atlantis_Flag_01.tga
42 NiMaterialProperty	Material #5
43 NiAlphaController	
44 NiFloatData	
45 NiStencilProperty	
Block Details	

Take a breath, we are almost done.

Copy your new DDS Files into your "_textures" Folder, then copy the "Atlantis_Rally" Folder into your "generic" Folder.
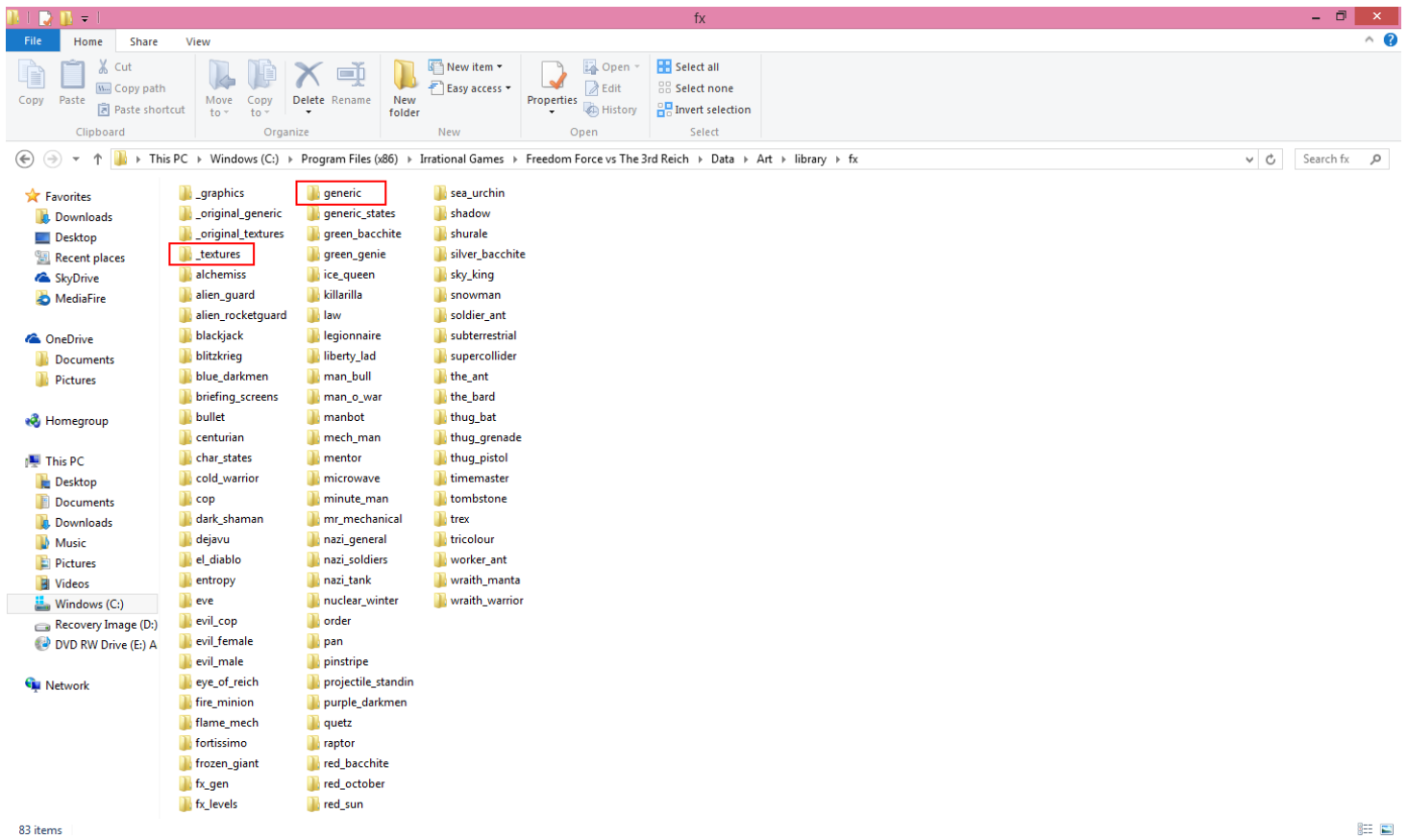
Open up "FFEdit", find Minute Man's "Rally" **FX**, and copy it. Then rename the copy to "Atlantis_Rally".
Now find the "Atlantis_Rally" **FX**, and make sure that the Path for the "Nif Base" is correct.
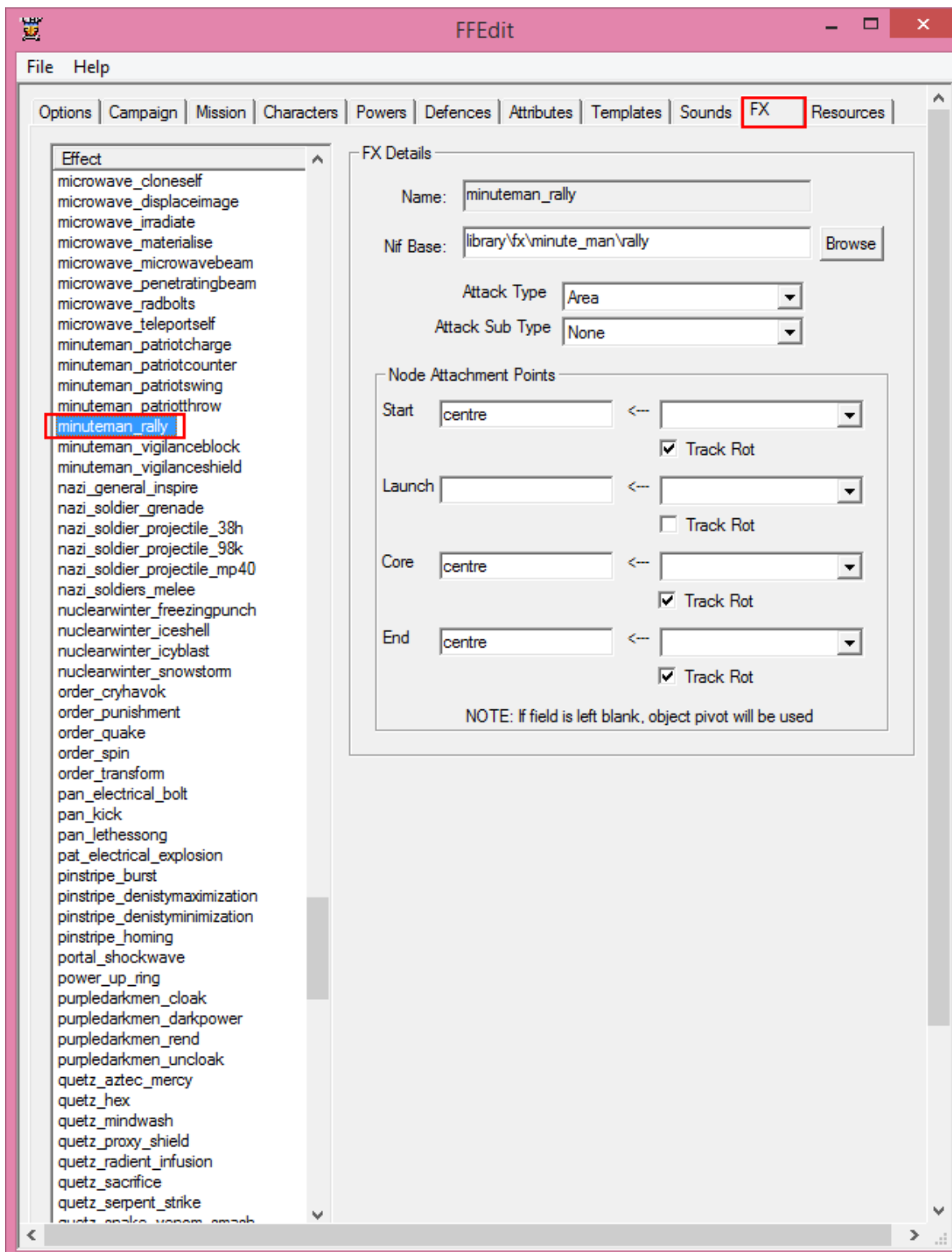
This is what you should see after setting up your "Atlantis_Rally" **FX** in FFEdit.
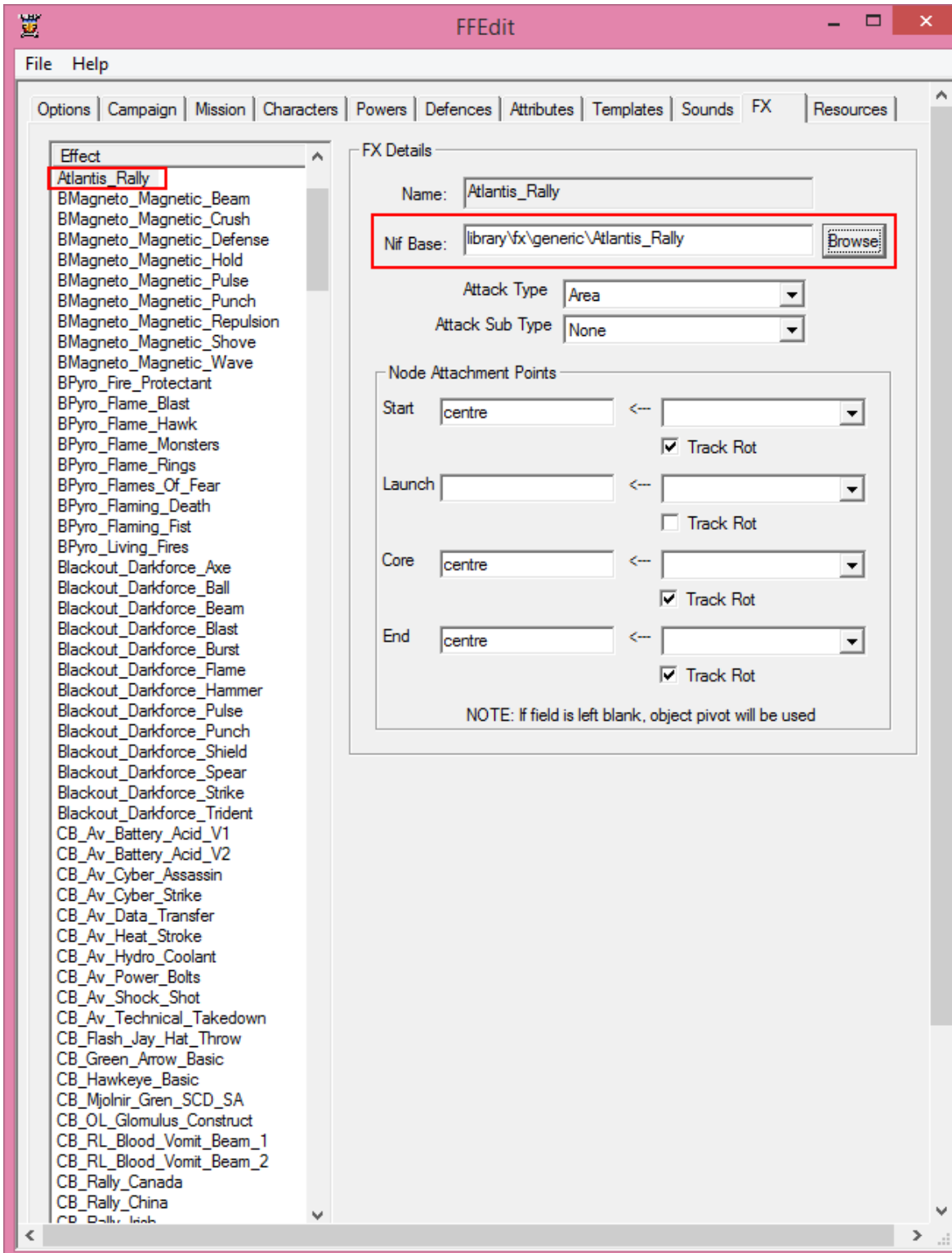
Save your work, and you should be finished.

This is what your new **FX** should look like in Game.