

Mapping an Abandoned World in *No Man's Sky*
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Andrew Reinhard

Introduction

The capital planet of *No Man's Sky's* old Galactic Hub, Drogradur N0425, hosts dozens of communication stations from players who attended the farewell "portal party" of August 20, 2017, saying goodbye to a now-frigid world before heading to a new system. Other comm stations lay scattered across the icy surface, left by players as markers to points of interest. This follows the protocol set by the Galactic Hub, to tag significant features for others to find and use. Outside of publicly visible bases (when a player turns the base-sharing feature on), comm stations remain as the only evidence of past visits by other people. Comm stations are not procedurally generated and placed by the game, but must be "hand-crafted" and deposited by players.

As of April 10, 2018, there are 23 "outlier" comm stations on Drogradur. One of these is mine, placed near procedurally generated ruins I discovered by accident during a flyover. Occasionally clusters of comm stations (2-4) occupy the landscape, placed near one of the five bases so far identified. Three of these bases remain unclaimed. My "dig house" sits relatively close to the portal, but on the other side of some mountains. On either April 7 or 8 one player left a comm station to welcome me. Although the planet was abandoned, it is still used, and there is evidence to support an active player presence, although a shadow of what it once was.

One base (flagged with an * in the table below and on the map) has been claimed (or was claimed). It contains a functional exopad for a Colossus vehicle as well as a cube with a galactic trade terminal façade. It is unclear whether or not the base is new or old, and I will revisit it every few days to see if it is either being built or deconstructed. If built, we are seeing a resettlement. I have seen a few other players arrive and depart, using starships, vehicles, or the portal, perhaps tourists to the capital. I have been taking screenshots of the portal from up above to see if new comm stations are left behind by these visitors.

Mapmaking in *NMS*

The map that introduced this post shows the approximate locations of the outlier comm stations, plus bases, as well as ProcGen built environments such as outposts, an observatory, beacon, shipwreck, monoliths, and ruins. Absolute distance is a rough estimate when on the ground. In space it is easy to see how far away something is. As soon as one approaches the atmosphere of a planet, however, units of distance switch to units of time. Travelers in *NMS* are time-focused. They are time-travelers, if you will excuse the pun.

To make the map, I needed to know time-to-target and direction. The current version of *NMS* contains north-south ordinals only, and one must estimate the rest. This can be fine-tuned by recording either video of rotating on a central point, or in stitching together a 360-degree image and then measuring with a protractor.

Each comm station appears in the landscape as an icon. Hovering one's crosshair over an icon reveals time-to-travel. When standing still, that travel time is assumed to be standard walking speed. Informed by the angle off of north and of the travel time to an objective, I could then map these features within a circle representing the planet. I used the portal as the central, fixed point. Its address/location is a constant in the universe. Standing atop it, I took my measurements, and then flew to each location.

At each stop I took screen captures of the comm station and of any notable features nearby. On occasion (e.g., monoliths), I took detailed notes. Those notes are below, organized by comm station number. For each comm station, I recorded color, player name, and message, assigning each station an incrementing number (1-16) as well as a letter (if a comm station was part of a cluster).

What follows are my notes about significant features found (so far) on Drogradur. No doubt given the size of the planet and the nature of the ProcGen algorithms used to populate it, there are other buildings out there in the frozen wastes, although the number of bases seems set at five, and monoliths at two. Planets may have one portal only.

Comm station 2: Monolith, "Visitation of Beodit"

Lower-left text: "underling! Elj Gek First Spawn demand kuje destroy nitr weak!"

Right text: I see a strange vision. A small winged creature lands on the very top of the monolith. Suddenly, its eyes glow red and its head revolves in a full circle. It screams for mercy in an ancient voice that wants itself dead.

The poor animal has clearly broken its neck, but the monolith's power of possession still animates it. I wonder if the right thing would be to shoot it, and put it out of its misery.

Choices:

1. Shoot the creature
2. Leave the creature alone.
3. Locate a Portal (1 Gek Relic): Pointed me back to Drogradur's portal.

I chose #1: Learned Atlas word for "perfection." Received max health. Received 1 Gek Relic.

Knowledge stone to left of stairs: Gek word for "critical"

Knowledge stone to right of stairs: Gek word for “stability”
Knowledge stone at rear of monolith base: Gek word for “”

Comm Stations 3a/3b: Unassigned base currently named “Utund-Gute Base” with the option to “Claim Home Planet”.

Comm Station 4: Shipwreck. B-class hauler, *Ushimaru S90*. Abandoned Starship (46 slots).

Comm Station 5: Monolith. Did not activate or give its name. This is likely the one I found earlier. Note, however, that the knowledge stones provide different words when re-activated:

Knowledge stone to left of stairs: Gek word for “eyes”
Knowledge stone to right of stairs: Gek word for “liquid”
Knowledge stone at back of platform: Gek word for “tank”

Comm Stations 6–7: The “dig house” base that I occupy with permission from the president of the Galactic Hub.

Comm Station 8: Located 1:22-walk to NNE for a waystation with Gek admin, trade terminal Site 95R-F63/ES1 and Multi-Tool *Strange Jayahunch-Veic* (B-class rifle, 22 slots).

Comm Station 9: Beacon. Unlocked location of “advanced life form.” Also has two floating green crates, which means a change in topography here with 1.3 update, the only evidence for this on Drogradur that I have found so far. The unmarked outpost from Comm Station 9’s directions contains a 24-slot multi-tool, Alpha-class rifle, ALSO called *Strange Jayahunch-Veic*. (same name for the tool as the one from the outpost at Comm Station 8). Trade terminal 3T-UI8/K/S.

Comm Station 10: Unassigned base, Yonso-Jukbe Outpost. Option to “Claim Home Planet”.

Comm Station 11: Unassigned base, Gadar Outpost. Option to “Claim Home Planet”.

Comm Station 13: Outpost. Multi-Tool station, C-class rifle, *Experiment CM4-6*. 18 slots. Also Trade Terminal *Data Store NJ2/Q/KB7/GL7*.

Comm Stations 15a–d: Claimed base. Unclear when constructed, or if construction is ongoing. Colossus exocraft bay. Signal booster: GEYPT:0469:0081:0D6D:0211. Restore point. Cube with non-public trade terminal outside base unit. Base name: Kunopu-Afyd Base. “Register your visit.”

Comm Station 16: Ruins. I placed a beacon and signal booster. See ruins write-up from April 2.