



Why is MDOT naming snowplows? Thank the Scots

Have you heard the names:

For Your Ice Only?
Gangsta Granny Gritter?
Gritallica?
Gritty Gritty Bang Bang?
Ice Buster?

These are not the names of films or rock bands. These are [monikers](#) for Gritters, which is what our friends in Scotland call snowplows.

On this week's Talking Michigan Transportation, recorded Jan. 26, Iain McDonald joins the conversation from Perth, Scotland. McDonald works with ice 24/7/365, at Transport Scotland by day and, when off duty, as a producer of gin at The Perth Distillery Co.

Listen now: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1374205/7556188-why-is-mdot-naming-snowplows-thank-the-scots>

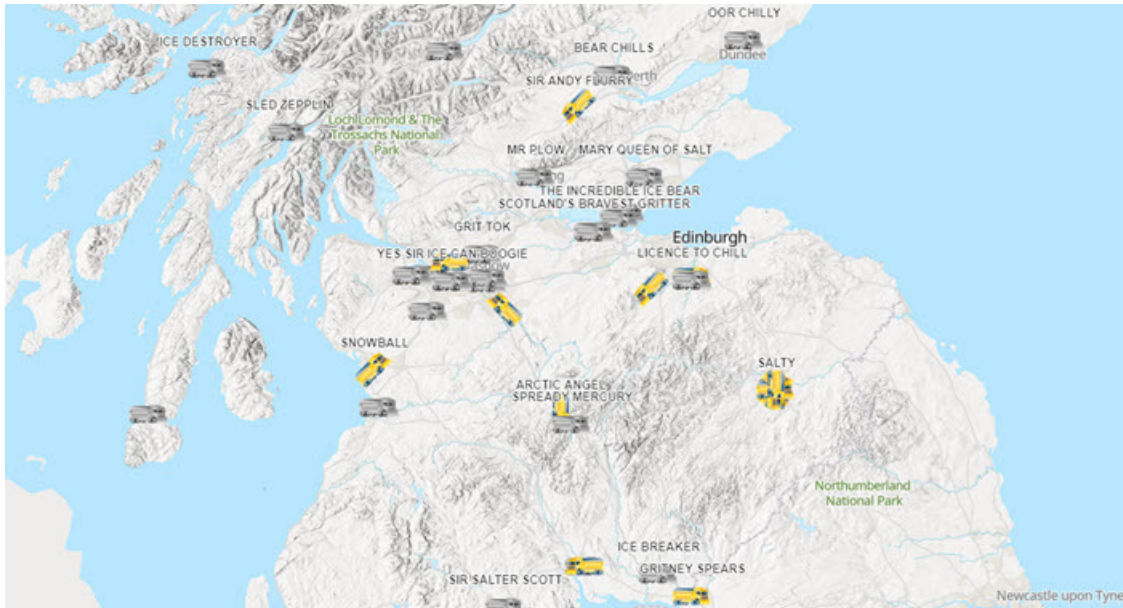


Transport Scotland's initiative to name the snow fleet generated worldwide attention, especially on [Twitter](#).

McDonald explains that the idea to name the vehicles came from frequent questions about when there would be a snowstorm and people would say, "We never see a gritter on the

road.” So, the “Trunk Road [Gritter Tracker](#)” was born. Naming the plows makes it easy for people to follow their location and progress and make decisions about what roads are clear and salted before embarking on a journey.

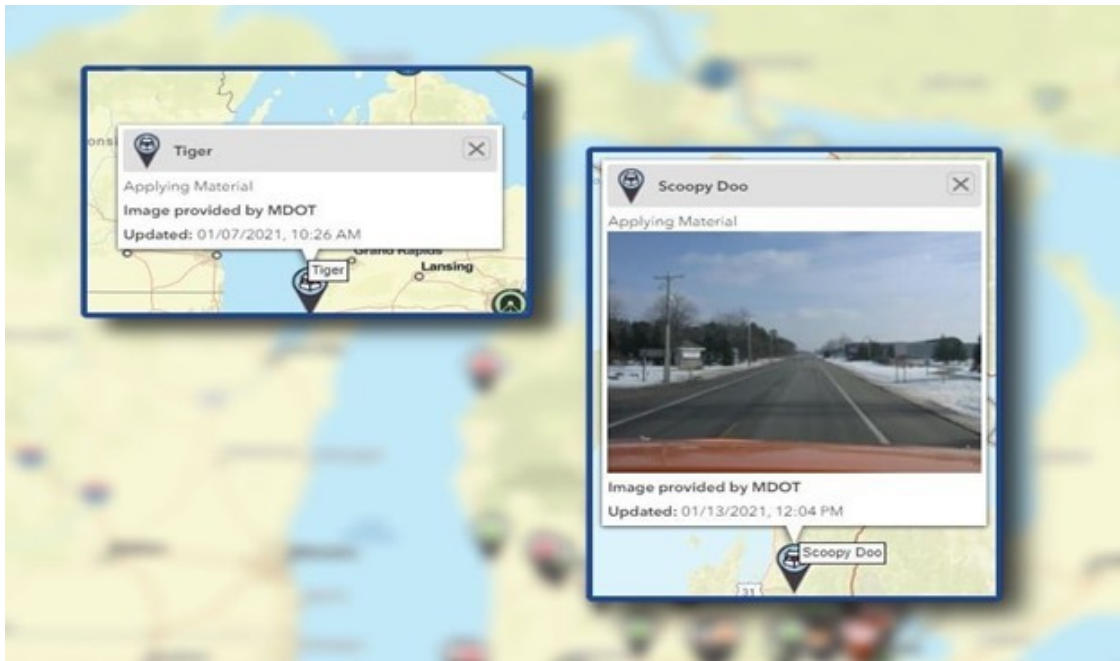
McDonald talks about how his team prepares for snow events, especially the all-hands-on-deck [Beast from the East](#).



The popularity of labeling the plows in Scotland inspired others, including the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

In the second segment, MDOT’s Nick Schirripa and Courtney Bates join the podcast to talk about the launch here. Bates tells us that as of late January members of the public have submitted nearly 12,000 ideas for plow names. As a website administrator working to keep the [Mi Drive](#) site up to date, she sees the naming initiative as a way to highlight all the features, including tracking the plows but also viewing real-time information about crashes, road work or other slowdowns, as well as camera images.

Schirripa tells [Fox 2](#) in Detroit that Plowy McPlowface and Sir Saltsalot were among the top nominations here. He also emphasizes there are not only educational and safety benefits from the project, but this also pays tribute to the people who brave the storms and clear the roads day and night.



First screenshot of [Traffic Scotland Trunk Road Gritter Tracker site](#).
Second screenshot of [MDOT's Mi Drive site](#).

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