

# CALM and private enterprise pacts

**PARTNERSHIPS** involving private sector investment in Western Australia's conservation estate were invaluable in developing the State's nature-based tourism industry, Premier Richard Court said recently.

Mr Court said upgrading facilities in national parks and reserves in conjunction with private investors would generate profits that could be re-invested in conservation management.

Examples of these partnerships were the refurbished restaurant at Matilda Bay and new leases for four caravan parks — Coalmine Beach in Walpole; Hamelin Bay in the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park; Logue Brook Dam in Harvey and Waroona Dam.

## New investment

Collectively, these represented new investment totalling \$5 million.

"This investment reduces the demand on Government funds by making profits that can be used to cross-subsidise other programs, especially nature conservation," Mr Court said.

"It also means CALM staff can spend more time

with visitors as the commercial operations also extend to day-to-day activities such as grounds maintenance and rubbish collection."

The Premier said CALM currently spent \$20 million a year on tourism and recreation programs across the State, but the actual return was just \$1.5 million.

"The question is whether taxpayers will continue to meet the difference, especially when there is enormous pressure for Government funding in other areas such as schools and medical services," he said.

Mr Court said the lessees of the Matilda Bay Restaurant had spent \$2.5 million upgrading the complex, and a further \$1 million would be spent over the next three years.

CALM was preparing a master plan for the 20 hectare reserve following the release of a management plan earlier this year.

The master plan would outline improvements to the reserve in keeping with the fact that it had been a popular attraction for almost 100 years.

"The plan will maintain the beautiful simplicity of

the area and will reflect the various periods of the reserve's evolution over the past century," the Premier said.

"When the draft master plan is released this year, the public will be invited to comment before it is finalised, so that the facilities reflect the wishes of the people."

Mr Court said Matilda Bay was a model that would show the private sector how they could invest

profitably in conservation.

"The Government particularly welcomes the investment by the private sector in the caravan parks," he said.

"Investment in these types of activities is not something in which the Government should be involved directly.

"Rather, Government should facilitate private investment that will generate funds for conservation programs."

Mr Court said the lessees would spend more than \$2.5 million on upgrading the parks. Works would include more campsites and caravan bays, chalets, cabins and other facilities.

"These partnerships also will build on Western Australia's tremendous natural advantage and encourage further nature-based tourism opportunities in regional areas," he said.



*Concept plans for the Matilda Bay Reserve on the Swan River foreshore were unveiled by Premier Richard Court at a function at the Matilda Bay Restaurant just before Christmas. The Premier took time to inspect the restaurant which has been upgraded under a special leasing arrangement with CALM. Here he discusses the plans with restaurant manager Warwick Davis.*

Photo by John Hunter



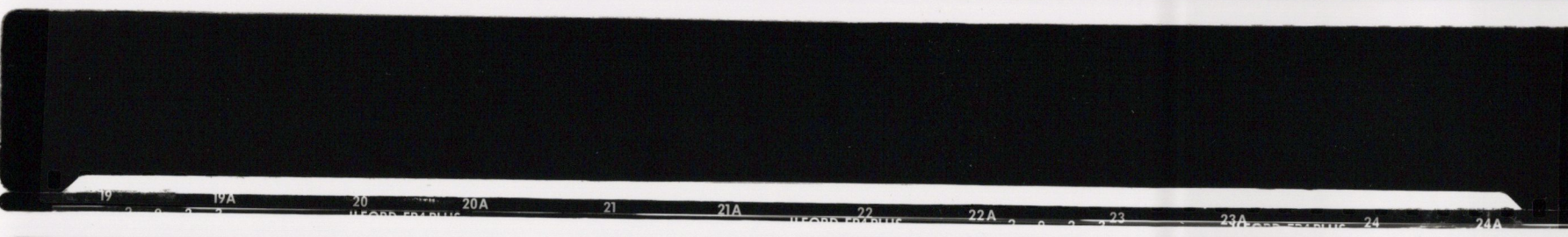
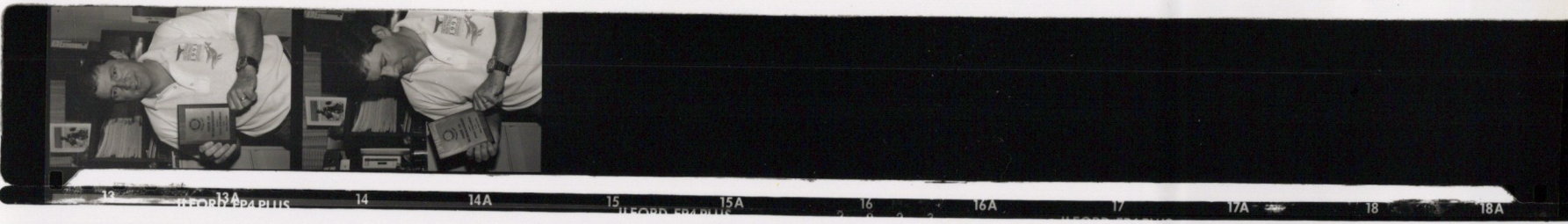


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