

# CALM builds a better bibbulmun

Story and photos by Penny Walsh



*Environment Minister Peter Foss and John Day MLA, Member for Darling Range, award certificates of appreciation at the opening of stage one.*

**IN 1993, the Building a Better Bibbulmun Track Project was launched to upgrade, realign and extend the Bibbulmun Track. In August 1995, the first section—65km from Kalamunda to Brookton Highway—was officially opened by Environment Minister Peter Foss.**

He said the upgrade was more than just cosmetic, and by the end of 1997 more than \$1 million would have been injected into the extended 840 km track that will stretch from the outskirts of Perth down to Albany.

"On the way, it will pass through some of the South West's most beautiful natural attractions, and the variety of terrain will provide a dramatically improved wilderness experience."

A great deal of this improvement will result from realignment work carried out by CALM staff along the way. The

'new' Bibbulmun will retain less than 20 per cent of the existing track.

There will also be new campsites, sleeping shelters, toilets, picnic tables, barbecues, route markers and other facilities installed to make it easier for more people to use the track.

During his speech at the opening, Mr Foss paid tribute to the initiative of CALM and its network of supporters, including government departments and corporate sponsors, who are committed to producing a world-class walking track.

"The wide range of parties involved in the project is proof that initiatives like the Building a Better Bibbulmun Track Project can really serve to unify communities and departments."

He said updating the track reinforced the trend towards nature-based tourism and the responsible management of natural resources to

facilitate recreation as well as conservation.

Some of the issues that were considered during preparation and construction phases of the project included erosion and dieback, access to towns and facilities, the track surface, water supply and camping areas, and alternative land uses such as timber production and bauxite mining.

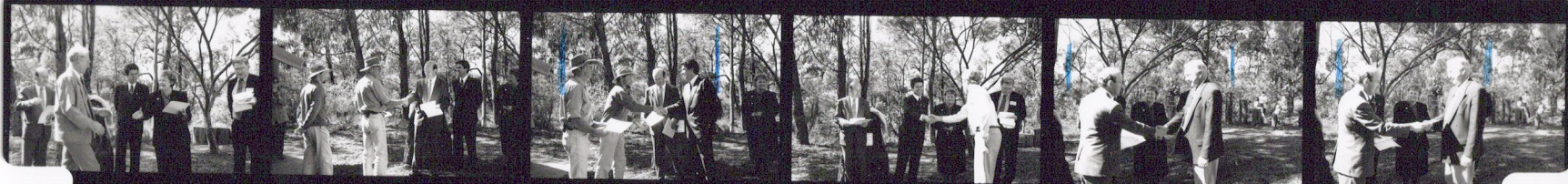
"The 'new' Bibbulmun Track will meet the needs of users now and far into the future. Those to benefit will not just be walkers, but all those who have worked together to produce the first part of what is going to be one of the world's great long distance wilderness walks," Mr Foss said.

The northern section of the track, through to the Blackwood River, should be completed by the end of 1996. The southern (final) section is planned for completion by the end of 1997.

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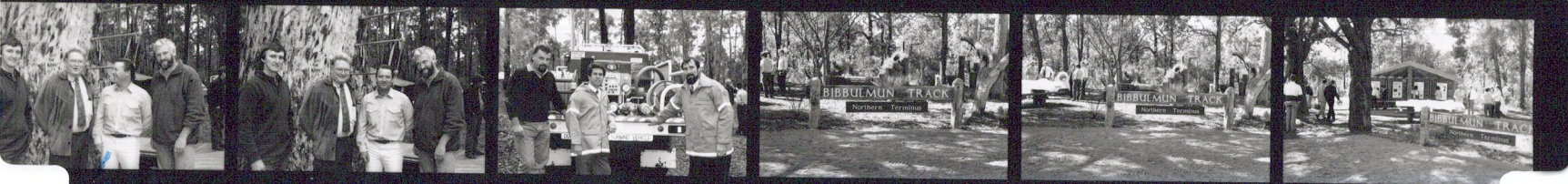
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