Chief Minister, Clare Martin, has congratulated the tourism industry in the Barkly for developing innovative ways of attracting more visitors to a remote region of the Territory.

Ms Martin was speaking at the launch of the Barkly Region Tourism Strategy in Tennant Creek, a document designed to guide the development of the industry into the future.

“The local industry has risen to the challenge of attracting tourists to a region that’s thousands of kilometres from the closest international airport and covers far-flung attractions, from Tennant Creek to Borroloola to cattle stations on the Barkly,” she said.

“The strategy focuses on the region’s primary market, domestic self-drive travellers, and aims at increasing visitation and increasing the length of stay.

“The NT Government is right behind the industry in its push to develop local tourism, committing more than $1.3 million to projects designed to enhance visitation to the Barkly.”

Some of the projects include:

- $255,000 to the Tennant Creek Regional Tourist Association;
- $280,000 to upgrade facilities at the Battery Hill Mining Centre;
- $150,000 for improved parking and landscaping at the Nyinkka Nyunyu Culture Centre;
- $75,000 each to visitor information services at Battery Hill and Nyinkka Nyunyu.

Ms Martin said money had also been allocated to urban enhancement and signage projects around the Barkly.

“The Government is committed to supporting the local industry to develop and grow, keeping the Barkly moving ahead,” she said.

Member for Barkly Elliot McAdam said tourism meant more jobs for Territorians.

“With millions of dollars going into projects such as roadworks, urban enhancement and recreational fishing facilities on top of the tourism commitments, the Barkly is poised to reap the benefits,” Mr McAdam said.

The infrastructure development funding for the Barkly includes:

- a share in $500,000 for boat ramps at Borroloola and Mule Creek;
- $150,000 for marketing the Savannah Way drive between Cairns and Broome;
- Upgrade of the Tennant Creek railway station (tenders are currently being assessed);
- $75,000 for landscaping at Elliot;
- $4.5 million for major upgrades to the Carpentaria and Wollogorang Highways

“Providing the funds for these infrastructure projects will help develop the regional economy and give the Barkly a strong base,” Mr McAdam said.