

Biographical Sketch

Thora Padilla, President
Mescalero Apache Tribe

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Thora Padilla was elected as President of the Mescalero Apache Tribe and sworn into office on January 12th, 2024. Prior to serving as President of the Tribe, Thora worked for the Mescalero Apache Tribe as Director for the Division of Resource Management and Protection. She helped to establish and develop this program, which started out as the Office of Environmental Protection in 1994. She also worked 8 years with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Mescalero Agency as a Timber Sale Forester. Ms. Padilla has served on the New Mexico State Parks Advisory Board, the U.S. Forest Service Collaborative Forest Restoration Program Technical Advisory Panel, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service Western Regional Tribal Conservation Advisory Council. She graduated from New Mexico State University in 1985 with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, with a major in Horticulture, and minors in Botany and Fine Art.

Thora has 2 children, East Thunder and Aspen Leaf, as well as 2 granddaughters, Oceanna Rayn and Heaven Sunrise. In her spare time, she does grandma duty and makes traditional Apache teepees.