

**HEATHER DAWN THOMPSON, *Vice President, Native Nations Conservation and Food Systems***

Heather Dawn is a citizen of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. Buffalo conservation is in her blood. She is a direct descendant of Mary Good Elk Woman and Frederick Dupree, one of a handful of families credited with saving the last remaining wild buffalo in the 1800s. She also hails from three generations of farmers on her paternal side and a family of ranchers on her maternal side.



Heather Dawn has been a practicing attorney in Indian Country and brings to WWF expertise in Indian law, rural economic development, Indigenous food systems, buffalo conservation, and the intersection of economic development, self-sufficiency, and Indigenous values.

Most recently, she served as Director of Tribal Relations at the United States Department of Agriculture. While at USDA, she launched the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Initiative and the joint USDA-Department of Interior Tribal Buffalo Initiative.

Past roles include serving as the Director of Government Affairs for the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and former President of the National Native American Bar Association. She has a J.D. from Harvard Law School and is also known for her TEDx Talk, “Surviving an Invasion & Understanding Your Neighbors.” Heather Dawn is an enthusiastic outdoorsman and splits her time between South Dakota and Alaska.