

June 3, 2024

Mount Desert Land & Garden Preserve names new CEO

The Mount Desert Land & Garden Preserve, a renowned land and gardens organization based in Seal Harbor, Maine, is pleased to announce that Patrick MacRae has been appointed Chief Executive Officer. His tenure begins at the Preserve on July 15.



In his role as CEO, Patrick will oversee the strategic vision and all operational aspects of the Preserve's three exceptional historic gardens and over 1,000 acres of natural lands with ten miles of carriage roads and ten miles of hiking trails.

"On behalf of the board of the Mount Desert Land & Garden Preserve, it is our distinct pleasure to welcome Patrick to this organization," said Kate Macko, board chair. "As an ambitious horticultural leader with a proven track record of innovation and excellence, Patrick brings significant experience and an energized vision to the Preserve. We are confident that under his leadership, the Preserve will continue to flourish and expand its role as a premier destination for botanical beauty, conservation, serenity, and education. We look forward to the exciting future ahead and to all we will accomplish under Patrick's leadership."

Patrick's expertise in horticulture and nonprofit management has been honed over many years in positions at some of this country's premier institutions. He joins the Preserve after overseeing tremendous growth as Doolittle Family Director of Gardens & Horticulture at the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens in Jacksonville, Florida. Patrick's tenure at the Cummer Museum was marked by a dramatic increase in the Gardens' endowment, the professionalization of the horticultural program at the Museum, and the elevation of the Museum's historic gardens as core mission assets.

Patrick served as Director of Public Programs and Education at The Garden Conservancy, a national garden preservation organization based in Garrison, New York. He is a trained professional horticulturist with a background in plant research. He previously served as research manager for the Cornell University Urban Horticulture Institute in Ithaca, New York.

Patrick is an alumnus of the distinguished Longwood Gardens Fellows Program at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania.

During his career, Patrick has led successful efforts in strategic planning, fundraising, and horticultural exhibitions. His experience extends to the development of collaborative partnerships and educational programs, which aligns with the Preserve's ongoing initiatives. He brings with him an expansive and global network in the Public Gardens and Museum sectors.

"I am humbled and honored to be selected to lead the Mount Desert Land and Garden Preserve into its exciting new chapter," said Patrick. "The Preserve is a phenomenal organization with a strong record of growth and accomplishment, and with a stellar reputation as a place of beauty and serenity. I look forward to working with the talented team to build on that momentum through my passion for nature and the craft of fine gardening."

Patrick's appointment comes at an exciting moment in the history of the Preserve. With the recent approval of a visionary five-year strategic plan and active implementation of a comprehensive Framework Plan, the Preserve is poised to elevate its role as a premier steward of historic lands and gardens.

The Preserve conducted a national search to identify its next CEO. A Search Committee composed of seven board directors and chaired by board director Sam McGee led the CEO search process.

"As a Search Committee we intentionally gathered input from board and staff leadership, and thoughtfully reflected on our mission, vision, values, and strategic initiatives to articulate the Preserve's leadership needs – both present and future," said Sam. "We are thrilled our search process has culminated in identifying and welcoming Patrick as the Preserve's next CEO."

Patrick was educated at Cornell University. He holds a Master of Professional Studies in Horticultural Biology and a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science.

The Preserve is excited to welcome Patrick to the team and looks forward to his leadership in advancing our mission to conserve and share the beauty of our historic lands and gardens.

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Land & Garden Preserve is a nonprofit organization that thoughtfully manages, cares for, and stewards 1,400 acres of historic natural lands, gardens, trails and carriage roads on Mount Desert Island, Maine, between Seal Harbor and Northeast Harbor, abutting Acadia National Park. The gardens include the Asticou Azalea Garden, Thuya Garden, and the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Garden. The natural lands surround Little Long Pond and Hunters Cliffs.