

## *Winter Recreation in Seekonk Meadows*

Seekonk, MA March 6, 2011..... Seekonk Meadows, a project, in the making for eighteen years, is scheduled to be officially open to the public in Summer, 2011. Seekonk Meadows overlies an existing landfill and will provide passive recreation opportunities and environmental education to members of the Seekonk community. This natural resource is protected by a rubber membrane and vented by pipes. The site was formerly the town dump, active until the 1970's, and then left abandoned for decades. The concept of developing a meadow on top of the abandoned dump began with Ken Lagerquist in 1993, when he was President of the Seekonk Library Trust. In early 2008, construction work began to transform the nine-acres into Seekonk's first community gathering space.

Seekonk Meadows has two miles of trails that are available for easy walking in this quiet and natural setting. The Meadows also provide access to the Gammino Pond conservation area, a sixty-acre property that includes a five-acre pond. Passive recreational activities are allowed in the Meadows that do not endanger the capped landfill and respect other users. Passive recreational activities include: Walking, running, wildlife observation, photography, cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

The nine-acre plot of land is already becoming a place where Seekonk residents can enjoy passive recreation. During this snowy winter, Seekonk residents have enjoyed making snowmen and snowshoeing.

During 2008 and 2009, Phase I, the construction phase, of converting the landfill into a community meadowland was underway. This summer we will see Phase II of the plan being implemented. Phase II includes picnic tables, benches, bushes and shrubs and an amphitheater with a stage for outdoor summer concerts. Phase II is being overseen by the Seekonk Meadows Committee, a volunteer group made up of a cross section of community members including Cheryl Faria, Seekonk Library Trustee member, Dave Cabral, Town Engineer, Rob Emlen, Seekonk Land Trust member, Bob McKenna, Conservation Commission member, Larry Hindle, Evergreen Nursery Owner, Cynthia Corbett, Friends of the Seekonk Library member and David Pinsonneault, Parks and Recreation Commission member.

The goal now is to be open to the public for Summer, 2011. So far, tall grasses and wildflowers have been planted, the fence and gate have been put up and stone dust walking trails are in place. Anyone looking to donate to the Meadows can make gifts payable to the Seekonk Library Trust with a memo line designating the Seekonk Meadows project, to the Seekonk Public Library, 410 Newman Avenue 02771.

PHOTO CAPTION: Larry Hindle, Owner, Evergreen Nursery, enjoys snowshoeing in Seekonk Meadows.

