OPEN PIT MINING, UNDERGROUND MINING, OPEN PIT MINING

Following the Veins of Ore

Mining evolved from surface to underground back to open pit.

Like a little girl overwhelmed by a large blueberry patch, the early miners must have thought the iron ore would last forever. They worked the exposed outcrops with picks and shovels.

Within decades, however, shafts and tunnels were dug into the ore body to follow the high content ore. Drilling, electricity, and explosives aided in the development of underground mining. In the 20th century, underground miners delved to depths of 3500 feet in their continuing quest to extract the ore.

As the high grade iron became too costly to mine, advances in technologies in lower iron content ore allowed for large open pit mining to become the preferred mining process.

You are looking at the flooded Section 16 mine pit. In the distance you can see the mine waste rock from the modern Tilden Mine. Waste rock is discarded during the iron ore separation process.