

Section 203 Success: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Meeting Federal Feasibility Requirements

Anchor QEA brings together the multidisciplinary expertise required to deliver complex Section 203 feasibility studies that satisfy USACE planning, engineering, environmental, and economic requirements. Our studies are developed to the same federal standards applied to USACE-led feasibility studies, positioning them for efficient federal review and Congressional authorization.

Under Section 203 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), a non-federal sponsor leads and funds a feasibility study and coordinates with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) throughout its development and review.

Rather than wait for the traditional USACE study process, Section 203 allows sponsors—including navigation districts, ports, states, and local governments—to control the pace and direction of project development by preparing an independent feasibility study that satisfies federal planning requirements and positions the project for congressional authorization, which puts the sponsor in the driver's seat.

Section 203 success is more than just a completed study—it is a technically sound, economically justified, environmentally compliant, and constructible project supported by defensible analyses and coordinated decisions.

Our Section 203 Services

Plan Formulation

Complex plan formulation, technical integration, risk-informed decision-making, and integrated feasibility documentation

Engineering and Technical Studies

Hydrodynamic, wave, sediment-transport, salinity, vessel-wake, and storm modeling; dredged-material management strategies integrating placement capacity, constructability, beneficial use options, habitat creation, shoreline protection, and resilience

Cost Engineering

Construction cost development, cost-and-schedule risk analysis (CSRA), design-maturity evaluation, lifecycle cost considerations, and support for USACE cost certification

Environmental Studies and Regulatory Coordination

Integrated NEPA, CEQA, and SEPA strategies; environmental studies; mitigation strategies; agency consultation; permitting support; and decision-document development

Anchor QEA understands the individual technical requirements of WRDA Section 203 and the connections among them—where scope, design, cost, environmental review, and federal expectations can either reinforce one another or place a project at risk.



**Insights:
Section 203 Reshapes How
Critical Water Resources
Projects Move Forward**

Cedar Port Deep-Draft Ship Channel

Anchor QEA delivered an Integrated Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement (FS/EIS) for the Cedar Port Navigation and Improvement District that transformed an initial concept to deepen an existing navigation channel into a Recommended Plan for a new federally authorized deepwater navigation channel.

As the lead consultant, Anchor QEA integrated planning, engineering, environmental compliance, and cost engineering to navigate the entire Section 203 process—from execution of the Memorandum of Agreement with the USACE to review by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA(CW)) and issuance of the Record of Decision—in less than three years. The FS/EIS was developed in accordance with the latest Civil Works guidance and achieved the 35 percent design maturity required by EC2023-9, demonstrating the level of technical rigor necessary for successful federal review and congressional authorization.

A Trusted Non-Federal Sponsor Partner for More than 20 Years

Anchor QEA has worked on Civil Works dredging and infrastructure development projects over the past two decades, including at the Port of Long Beach, Port of Hueneme, Newport Harbor, and other major ports. We have built repeat, cross-project experience with USACE.

As recognized national leaders in the beneficial use of dredged material, our specialists help clients evaluate, design, and implement beneficial use strategies that satisfy evolving federal guidance, support National Economic Development (NED) objectives, and provide long-term, environmentally responsible dredged material management.

This expertise enables us to integrate beneficial use into project planning from the outset, creating solutions that reduce lifecycle costs, enhance environmental outcomes, and improve the overall feasibility of Civil Works projects.

Planning a Section 203 Project?

Connect with the Anchor QEA team about decisions, technical studies, and delivery frameworks to establish a strong project path forward.

Contacts



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