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This bill temporarily modifies local road wetland replacement requirements under the state's Wetland Conservation Act until wetland bank credits in all wetland bank service areas are available.

Under existing law, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is required to replace wetlands drained or filled for certain local public transportation projects on existing roads. Traditionally, BWSR has met this obligation by restoring, replacing, and preserving wetlands throughout the state's wetland service bank areas to provide wetland banking credits. Currently, a number of wetland bank service areas do not have any credits for local road projects available due to the lack of funding in recent years (priority must be given for wetland replacement in the same county or wetland bank service area).

This bill would temporarily require BWSR to meet its wetland replacement obligations by using wetland replacement credits from outside the applicable wetland bank service area if necessary.

The bill would also temporarily exempt wetland impacts up to 10,000 square feet resulting from certain local road projects from wetland replacement requirements provided they are conducted in accordance with an applicable general permit issued by the United States Army Corps of Engineers under the section 404 permit program (a federal Clean Water Act program that often overlaps with state wetland replacement requirements).