Press Release

Central Oregon’s largest horse show, the Oregon High Desert Classics will be cancelled this summer.

The Oregon High Desert Classics, Central Oregon’s premier hunter-jumper show and J Bar J Youth Services’ largest fundraiser of the year, will be cancelled in July. The organization had been working on plans for months, in coordination with US Equestrian Federation, Deschutes County, and the State of Oregon, to keep staff and participants safe. They were able to address numerous safety concerns and had the space to allow for 6’ social distancing on the 40 acre J Bar J Boys Ranch.

The hope was to hold the competition without spectators, allowing only staff and riders on the grounds. The guidance laid out in the state’s phase 2 COVID-19 opening restrictions however, allow only 250 people at an event, regardless of the space available. This has made plans unworkable, and has pushed J Bar J Youth Services into the difficult decision to cancel this year’s events.

This is the second of three annual events J Bar J Youth services will have cancelled, and by far the largest. Bowl for Kids’ Sake was also cancelled in May, a primary fundraiser for J Bar J’s Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon program. The organization is looking for help from sponsors and the community to bridge those losses.

The Oregon High Desert Classics provides funding not only to the non-profit organization and their many programs in the region, but brought an estimated three million in revenue to Central Oregon’s tourism industry annually. With over 600 horses and thousands of participants including trainers, riders, and staff coming from all over the western US and Canada, The Oregon High Desert Classics is one of the largest events in Bend each summer. The Classics were scheduled for July 15 – 19 and 22 – 26 this year. J Bar J Youth Services plans to hold the event again in 2021.

J Bar J Youth Services operates many programs helping youth facing challenges on their path to self-sufficiency: Cascade Youth & Family Center, Grandma’s House, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon, J Bar J Boys Ranch and J5, The Academy at Sisters, Kindred Connections, and at: project.