**Table 10.5-2.** **Decision matrix for disposal of old taxidermy mounts.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Action*** | ***Advantages*** | ***Disadvantages*** |
| Give mount to another non-profit institution | * Mount remains in the public trust

Mount continues to serve useful purpose* Avoids ethical dilemma of selling or destroying mount
 | * Museum must find willing taker for mount
* One institution or the other must pay to move the mount
 |
| Give mount to commercial taxidermist | * Although no longer in the public trust, mount is likely to remain on public exhibit
* Mount will likely be exhibited for a long time
 | * Some risk of negative publicity for the museum
* Commercial firm might re-sell the mount
* Mount might be altered for display purposes (e.g., actual antlers replaced with casts)
* Mount could be destroyed
 |
| Sell mount to commercial firm or trade for taxidermy services | * Although no longer in the public trust, mount is likely to remain on public exhibit
* Mount will likely be exhibited for a long time
* Parts of the mounts may be useful for repairs of other mounts
 | * Higher risk of negative publicity for the museum
* Commercial firm might re-sell the mount
* Mount might be altered for display purposes (e.g., actual antlers replaced with casts)
* Mount could be destroyed
 |
| Sell mount at public auction | * Museum gains funds that could be used to improve collections care
* Museum may or may not be identified as seller
* Mount would go to someone who wanted it
 | * High risk of negative publicity for the museum
* Possible ethical violation
* Goes against the unwritten standard for natural history museum practice
 |
| Sell mount anonymously through a dealer | * Museum gains funds that could be used to improve collections care
* Museum is concealed as seller
* Specimen would go to someone who wanted it
 | * Slight risk of negative publicity for the museum
* Possible ethical violation
* Goes against the unwritten standard for natural history museum practice
 |
| Destroy the mount | * Removes a useless specimen from the museum
* Protects the museum from liability issues
 | * Some risk of negative publicity for the museum
* Mount cannot be recovered if later information concerning value is produced
 |