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

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| ***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 |