The body was reported to have been laying face down and decomposition may have already begun including the area of the hands making identification doubtful by fingerprints, according to Mickelsen.

Where the body had been placed was shielded from view from the highway and protected somewhat from the weather and sunlight. Only late afternoon rays of the sun reached the area making it hard to determine how long the body had been there.

"Because of the lack of blood or evidence of any scuffle or footprints in the area, we know the crime was committed elsewhere and the body place there later," Mickelsen said.

A search by law enforcement officers for the rest of the body had not brought any results by Wednesday. The head had been severed at a joint in the neck with what was evidently a knife rather than a cleaver or saw. The only other marks the sheriff reported as being on the body were some lower on the neck which he believed could have been made by animals.

The first indications are that the victim was under five feet tall, weighed between 120 and 140 pounds and could have been anywhere from 20 to 40 years of age. An autopsy is being performed.

Anyone who may have seen unusual activity in this area in recent weeks that believes it is worth investigation should contact the Platte County Sheriff's Department or the state crime bureau.

No missing person has been reported from Wheatland, a description of the victim is still too vague to be linked with missing persons from elsewhere.