

Sex offender pleads guilty to rape

Samson man held at jail; faces life in prison

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A Samson man faces the possibility of life in prison after prosecutors say he threatened a woman with a knife as he raped her in an abandoned Samson home.

District Attorney Kirke Adams said 34-year-old Jimmy Wells pleaded guilty to felony first-degree rape earlier this week in front of Geneva County Circuit Court Judge P.B. McLauchlin. Samson police arrested Wells in January 2009,



Jimmy Wells

"He put a knife to her throat and dragged her into an abandoned house."

Kirke Adams

Geneva/Dale District Attorney

and he's been held in the Geneva County Jail since then on a \$250,000 bond.

"She was walking to work, and he accosted her on the street," Adams said. "He put a knife to her throat and dragged her into an abandoned house."

Adams said McLauchlin will sentence Wells at a later date. He faces life in prison or life in prison without the opportunity for parole because he has three prior felony convictions. At least two of those convictions include a felony sex

abuse charge along with a failure to properly register as a sex offender.

"I think the only safe sentence for the community would be the maximum sentence of life without parole," Adams said. "He's obviously a violent sexual predator."

A jury acquitted Wells of a similar first-degree rape charge in 2007, except Adams said the alleged victim in that case was a 14-year-old girl. Adams said he thought the jury found Wells not guilty of the first rape charge because there was no DNA evidence linking him to the crime.

"There was a DNA match in this case," Adams said. "His DNA matched through the rape kit, which is very, very rare in rape cases that you actually get DNA evidence."