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Lucas case show trial, DA charges

EL PASO (UPI) — The Henry Lee Lucas trial here is becoming the last stand of the Texas Rangers Task Force, a Central Texas district attorney said Friday.

Vic Feazell of Waco, McLennan County District Attorney, said the Task Force is using the El Paso trial as its "last chance to vindicate itself for sloppy police work."

Feazell testified at a pretrial hearing that the Waco grand jury spent thousands of hours investigating the alleged Lucas confessions and concluded that he could not possibly have committed all the crimes of which he is accused.

The district attorney, speaking after the hearing, said the one-eyed drifter's trial has become a "show trial and the last stand of the Texas Rangers Task Force."

Defense attorneys are asking state District Court Judge Brunson Moore for \$125,000 to defend Lucas.

The convicted murderer is charged with the slaying of an El Paso woman.

Court-appointed lawyers Rod Ponton and Doris Sipes said they will have to pay money out of their own pockets to defend Lucas, an indigent, if the court does not grant them more money.

The 49-year-old Lucas is charged with the brutal ax slaying of 72-year-old Librada Apodoca in El Paso in 1983.

The hearing will be continued next week. Moore said he will be pushing defense and prosecution lawyers for an April starting date for the trial.

State Sen. Craig Washington of Houston and Attorney Vince Perini of Dallas both appeared at the hearing to support the defense's request for funds beyond the \$250 a day per trial day prescribed by law.

Washington earlier in the day said he hoped the Lucas trial would not become "a side show for the Texas Rangers."