

# What's new in project management?

## A Look at the JGI Project Management Office

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### Overview of PMO

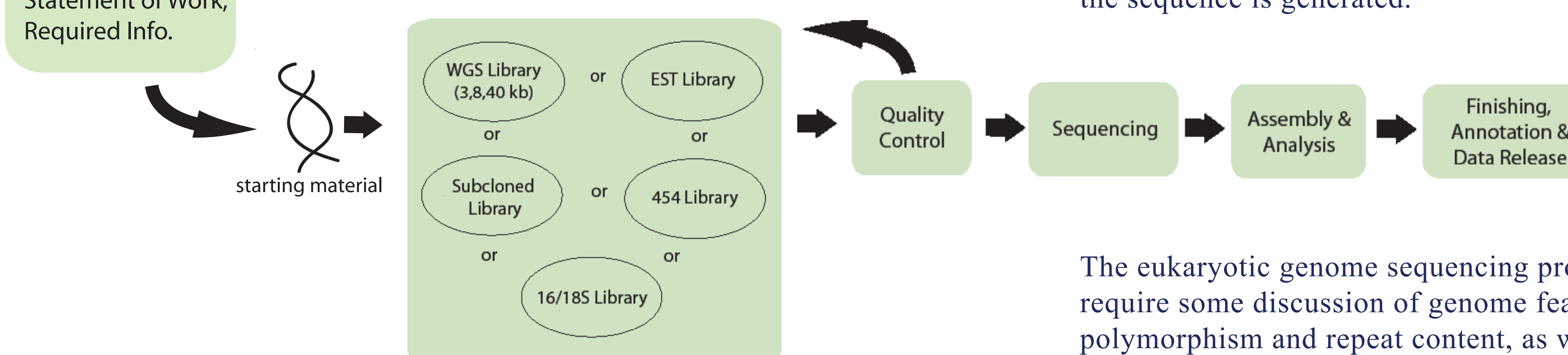
As high throughput sequencing centers move from managing a small number of large projects to managing many simultaneous small projects, the ability to govern schedule, cost, quality, and project specification becomes more difficult. To better handle the tracking, organization and flow of sequencing projects through the JGI sequencing pipeline, the JGI Project Management Office (PMO) was formed in January, 2006. The PMO consists of a team of five project managers. Each project manager is dedicated to a group of projects based on specific microbial communities.

Throughout the life cycle of a sequencing project, the project managers oversee its stepwise progression throughout the JGI sequencing pipeline with particular emphasis on active, ongoing communications with the PI and associated collaborators. The JGI Global Project Tracking System (GPTS) database is the project manager's primary resource for tracking and communicating project progress through the sequencing pipeline process to both the internal and external collaborators.

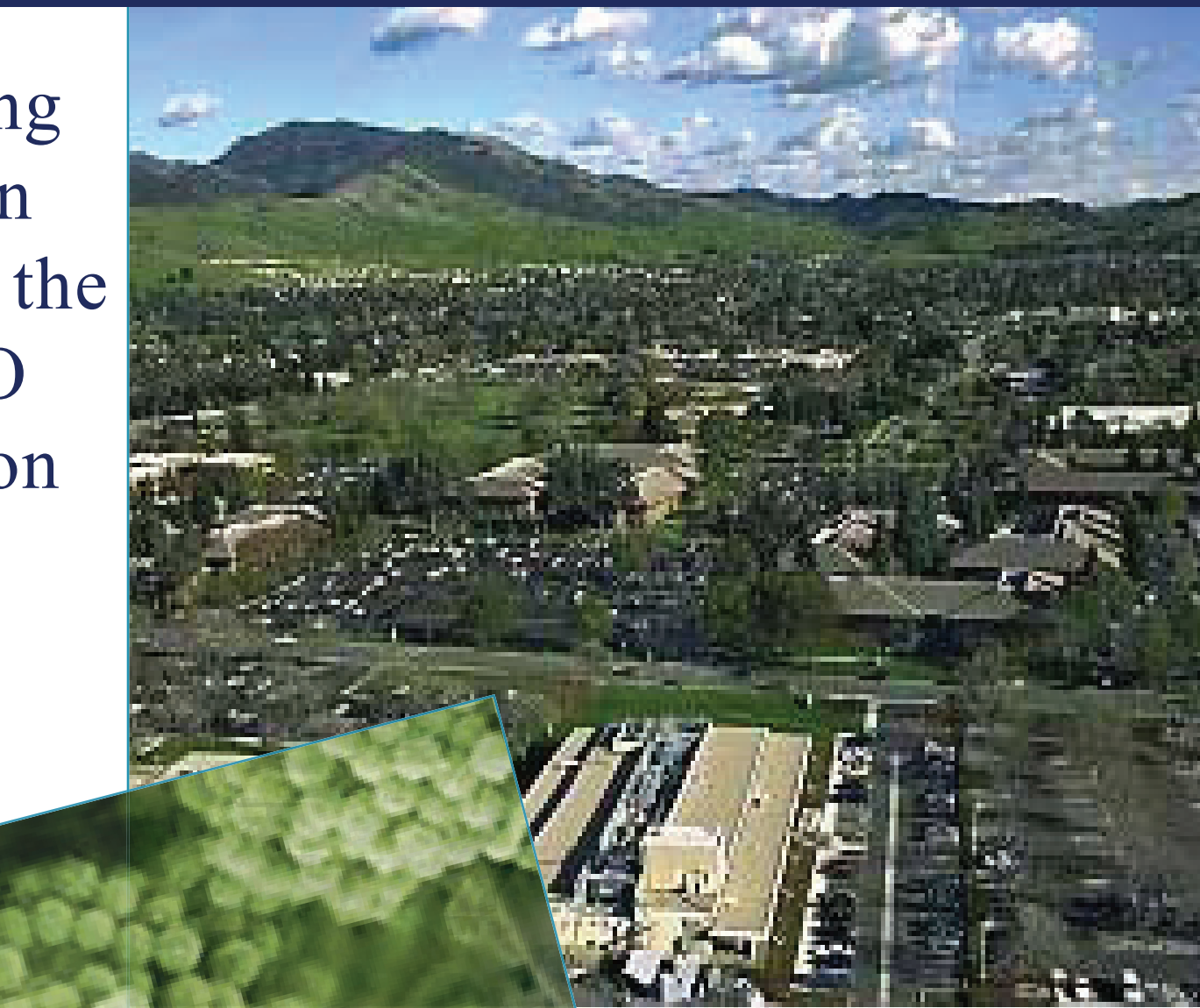
### The Process

The PMO is involved in a project from the moment a proposal is approved to the close out of the research. Proposals generally comprise several projects that follow different paths through production, and each path consists of several steps. The accompanying figure illustrates a high level view of the sequencing pipelines. A project manager (PM) is assigned to oversee the progression of each project throughout the pipeline steps, and to facilitate communication between the JGI functional groups and the PI to ensure the research goals set forth by the proposal are being met in a timely fashion. After the approval process, the PM contacts the PI to discuss the necessary steps for getting a project initiated at the JGI. Once all the documentation is in place, the PM works with the PI to approve and ship samples for sequencing at the JGI.

Once samples are received the PM's focus shifts to the production line. PM's help navigate a project through the various phases of production sequencing by providing the functional group leads information about the project, helping the PI resolve problems, and tracking the project in a global project tracking database.



The PM tracks a project's progress and communicates with the PI on a regular basis until the project is completed. A project is considered closed-out once the requested data is provided to the PI, the traces and/or assemblies are submitted to GenBank, and the work has been published in a peer reviewed journal.



### The faces of the PMO



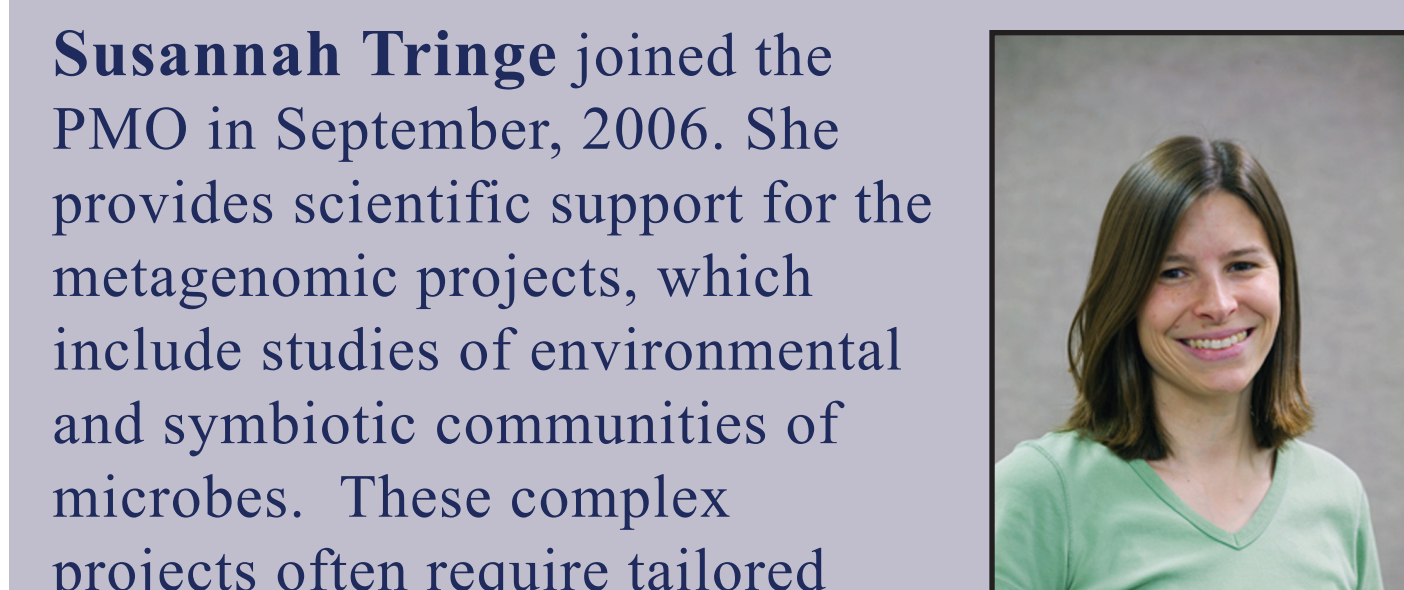
**David Bruce** formed the PMO in January, 2006. David supervises the PMO team and works with JGI management to define the roles and responsibilities of the PMO. David has been certified by the Project Management Institute as a Project Management Professional since 1999.



**Lynne Goodwin** joined the PMO in January, 2006. Lynne is responsible for managing the GTL, CSP and DOEM Archaeal and Eubacteria projects. Lynne has been certified by the Project Management Institute as a Project Management Professional since April, 2006.



**Kerrie Barry** joined PMO in September, 2006. She is responsible for managing the LSP projects and the DOEM & CSP eukaryotic and environmental projects. Kerrie has been certified by the Project Management Institute as a Project Management Professional since January, 2007.



**Susannah Tringe** joined the PMO in September, 2006. She provides scientific support for the metagenomic projects, which include studies of environmental and symbiotic communities of microbes. These complex projects often require tailored sequencing and analysis approaches to generate interpretable data.



**Tijana Glavina del Rio** joined the PMO in September, 2006. She manages sequencing projects through the production line and is responsible for scheduling, organization and allocation of resources for all genomic sequencing projects for the PMO.



Project managers face several challenges in helping a PI achieve the research goals set forth in a proposal. The most common problem is obtaining appropriate starting material. Often

collaborating labs have difficulty obtaining sufficient DNA or DNA of sufficiently high quality for the desired amount of sequencing. In such cases, the PMO directs the scientists to protocols that have worked for other groups, or in some cases puts them in touch with JGI scientists who offer advice.

Microbial community sequencing projects often yield vast amounts of data that are difficult to interpret. For this reason one of the JGI Scientists, Susannah Tringe, joined the PMO to provide user support for mixed genome projects. Susannah helps the collaborators decide how much of what type of sequencing they need to achieve their goals, as well as helping guide the data analysis once the sequence is generated.

The eukaryotic genome sequencing projects generally require some discussion of genome features such as polymorphism and repeat content, as well as potential sources of contaminating data. The project manager may set up several teleconferences with JGI Scientists and the PI prior to the preparation of DNA to assure the right organism is selected and the appropriate steps are taken so that the goals of the project are met efficiently and in a timely manner.

For more information, contact:  
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