Demand Analysis for Future Electronic Records Holdings Storage Needs
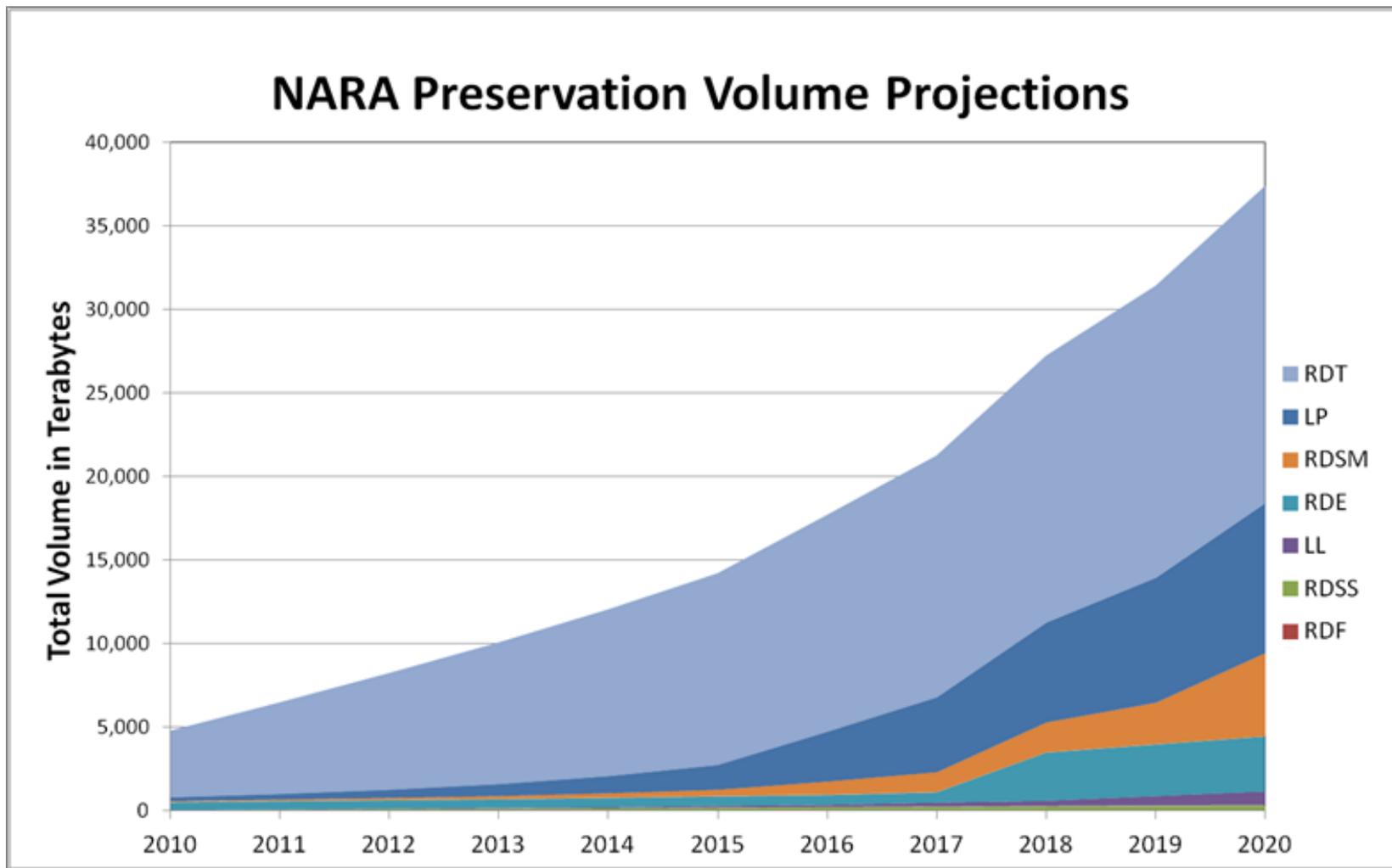
Leslie Johnston, NARA
Designing Storage Architectures for Digital Collections Meeting
2015

Charting the Projected Growth of the Holdings

- **Demand Analysis**
  - A study done in collaboration with stakeholders from each unit of NARA expecting to receive or create digital records on the amount of incoming material.
    - Several stakeholder units: LL (legislative records), LP (Presidential libraries), RDE (federal born digital textual records), RDF (FOIA release), RDSS (federal born digital and digitized still pictures), RDSM (federal born digital and digitized motion pictures), RDT (federal textual digitization), and VI (digitization partnerships).
  - The survey was scoped to include all backlogs and known scheduled transfers over the next five years.

2015 Demand Analysis

Lessons learned from the Analysis

- This type of analysis is absolutely required to estimate future storage needs for an organization that works in a two-year budget planning cycle.
- Forecasting scale and growth have a direct impact on the system architecture and network architecture design.
- Communication about the analysis must always make it clear that this is an estimate and not a fixed storage need.
- NARA backlogs are difficult to account for in storage volume forecasts because the status of the backlog changes rapidly.
- Predicting the size and count of incoming records is difficult because disposition schedules are not always implemented on a fixed timeline:
  - It is up to agencies to decide when the need to retain their records is really over, which will likely not exactly match the schedules.
  - The time needed to process records for transfer to NARA is also variable.

Discussion

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