**Why Should Colorado Care?**
Similar programs can be used to restore native species to Colorado rangelands. Rangelands are managed for multiple uses including ranching, recreation, natural resources, and wildlife conservation. Just like coral reefs, a healthy functioning ecosystem of appropriate and diverse species offers beneficial ecosystem services for both humans and wildlife. In rangelands, these include healthy habitat for wildlife and increases in tourism, recreational opportunities, and protection from weather. Proper management can also promote long term sustainability of grazing resources and increases the ability for the land to support various livestock operations.

**Restoring Rangelands**
Just like using native coral species to restore reefs, Indian ricegrass is one example of a native Colorado plant species that can be used to restore several different rangeland types. It is a quality source of nutrition for livestock, and its seeds are a preferred food source by rodents making it ideal for lands managed for both grazing and wildlife habitat. Indian ricegrass is also efficient at protecting the land from soil erosion due to strong winds.

**Environmental Conservation is Key**
Instead of focusing on saving individual species, we should be focusing on conserving their habitats and the environments in which they live. Without the proper environment, individual species will not survive. Increasing diversity and abundance of plant and animal life in coral reefs helps decrease storm damage and erosion, increases fish populations for industry, and encourages tourism in healthy ecosystems.

**Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences**
RIMS has been successful in growing Staghorn and Elkhorn coral in their coral nurseries as part of their Coral Reef Restoration Program. Transplanting coral colonies to suitable parts of the reef helps improve the diversity of species native to the reefs found in Roatan.


Pictures

https://www.amazon.com/Great-Art-Undersea-Coral-Photo/dp/B00W3LGPS0
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